



CESTOUR
ERASMUS +



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

EXPLORING

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Case Studies from CESTour's Centers of Excellence

Editors

Emma Zavarrone
Martha Friel



Exploring Sustainable Tourism: Case Studies from CESTour's Centers of Excellence

Editors

Emma Zavarrone

Associate Professor, Social Statistics and Demography, Faculty of Communication,
IULM University, Milan, Italy

Martha Friel

Assistant Professor, Economics and Business Management, Faculty of Arts and Tourism,
IULM University, Milan, Italy



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Project Number – 617991-EPP-1-2020-1-AT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

The present document was developed and edited by the partner institutions of the Erasmus+ project CESTour “Centers of Excellence in sustainable tourism to boost economic development and enhance university-business cooperation in Southern Area”, under the coordination of the University of FHJ. The results, views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. All contents generated by the CESTour project are protected by intellectual property laws, in particular copyright.



® Publication and Editorial services facilitated by

Journal Press India
Delhi, India

Title: Exploring Sustainable Tourism: Case Studies from CESTour's Centers of Excellence

Editors: Emma Zavarrone and Martha Friel

Print published by: JOURNAL PRESS INDIA
Publisher's address: A-4/17, 1st Floor,
Sector-15, Rohini,
Delhi - 110 089, India
Mobile: 8826623730; Tel: +91-11-42631517
Website: www.journalpressindia.com
E-mail: info@journalpressindia.com

First Edition, April 2024

e-ISBN: 978-81-970159-1-5

Copyright © 2024 Editorial matters IULM University, Milano, Italy; individual chapters, the contributors

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

The publisher is not responsible for authors' and editors' expressed opinions, view, and the contents of the published manuscripts in this book. The originality, proof reading of the manuscript and errors are the sole responsibility of the authors and editors.

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	v
<i>Editorial Members and Case Mentors</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix

Part 1: Birla Institute of Management Technology, India

Case Study 1: Global Himalayan Expedition: Integrating Sustainability in Adventure Tourism	1
Case Study 2: Ecoplore: Truly Eco-friendly and Sustainable	21
Case Study 3: Kumbh Mela and Sustainable Tourism	38
Case Study 4: Not on Map	62
Case Study 5: Snowlion Expeditions Pvt Ltd: A Case Study on Adventure Tourism	77

Part 2: Institute of Public Enterprise, India

Case Study 6: Agri-tourism and Local Community Development: The Case of SAMTFMACS in Araku Valley, Andhra Pradesh	100
Case Study 7: Local Art Development and Sustainable Tourism: A Case of Mahabalipuram	115
Case Study 8: Community Based Eco-tourism: A Case Study on Vana Vihari, Maredumilli, Andhra Pradesh, India	130
Case Study 9: Tourism on Tribal Culture and Development: A Case Study on ITDA and TSTD, Medaram Eturunagara	145
Case Study 10: A Case Study on Cruise Tourism: A Case of Ponnami Tourism	166

Part 3: NIRMA University, India

Case Study 11: Net Zero Sustainable Tourism: A Case Study of Vinyasa Ashram	176
Case Study 12: Empowering Local Artisans through Sustainable Tourism: A Case Study on Kachchh	182
Case Study 13: GMVN's (Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam) Holistic Approach to Sustainable Tourism	190
Case Study 14: Virtual Tourism – Scope and Opportunities: A Case on Adoption of Virtual Tourism in India	207
Case Study 15: Sustainable Tourism – Over Tourism: A Case Study on Nainital	219

Part 4: Global College International, Nepal

Case Study 16: Panauti Community Homestay	242
Case Study 17: A Case Study on Tourism Event and Research Center	256
Case Study 18: Bhaktapur Jatra Committee: The Role of Bisket Jatra in Promoting Local Traditions & Preserving Cultural Heritage	267
Case Study 19: Bhairavnath Topi Pasal	282
Case Study 20: A Case Study on SASA: TWA - ससः त्वाः	294

Part 5: Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Case Study 21: Royal Mountain Travel	313
Case Study 22: Kritipur Community Homestay	328
Case Study 23: Gorkhali Handicraft	348
Case Study 24: Lavie Garden	360
Case Study 25: Best Heritage Tours	378

Part 6: Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

Case Study 26: Heritance Kandalama Where Sustainability Blooms	394
Case Study 27: Loris Conservation at Jetwing Vil Uyana	409
Case Study 28: Walawe Nadee: Sustainable River Safari	428
Case Study 29: Wild Glamping Gal Oya: Beacon of Responsible Luxury Camping	440
Case Study 30: Heeloya Village: Community-based Sustainable Tourism Heaven	455

Part 7: Uva Wellassa University, Sri Lanka

Case Study 31: CIC Agro Farm, Hingurakgoda, Sri Lanka: Icon of Sustainable Agriculture in Sri Lanka	468
Case Study 32: Wildlife Tourism with Responsibility: The Role of Yala - Eco Team in Promoting Sustainable Tourism	500
Case Study 33: Tea Tourism and Sustainability: A Case Study of Heritance Tea Factory Hotel, Sri Lanka	527
Case Study 34: Sustainable Whale Watching in Sri Lanka: A Case Study on Sayuri Whale Watching	540
Case Study 35: Nature-Culture-Human Connectedness for Sustainable Tourism: A Case Study of Hiriwadunna Village, Sri Lanka	555

Preface

In the evolving landscape of global tourism, the imperative shift towards sustainability has transformed from a matter of discussion to an essential mandate, profoundly influencing education and research. The tourism sector, pivotal for the socio-economic development of numerous countries and communities, finds itself at a crossroads, grappling with the dual challenge of leveraging its growth potential while mitigating its environmental and cultural impacts. This sector has been among the pioneers in acknowledging the urgent need for innovation towards more sustainable practices, recognizing that sustainable development is not just a goal but a comprehensive approach to preserving our world for future generations.

In this framework, the CESTour initiative centred on elevating sustainable tourism practices in Southern Asia, specifically in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and India, was launched to enrich educational standards, promote sectoral awareness, and facilitate specialized training. This endeavour, backed by European Union funding through the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education scheme, boasts a consortium comprising FH JOANNEUM Gesellschaft mbH in Austria, the University of Alicante in Spain, IULM University in Italy, the Birla Institute of Management and Technology, the Institute of Public Enterprise, and Nirma University in India, Tribhuvan University, and Global College International in Nepal, and Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka and Uva Wellassa University in Sri Lanka.

Through academic rigour, industry insight, and community engagement, the project seeks to harness the transformative power of education in cultivating a new generation of leaders equipped to navigate and shape the sustainable tourism landscape.

This initiative emerges against a backdrop of growing recognition of the critical role that knowledge, innovation, and strategic collaboration play in advancing sustainability within the tourism sector. Key figures, including researchers, educators, and industry managers adhering to sustainable development principles, have fostered awareness and embedded sustainability practices within the hospitality and tourism industries. In particular, in my role as Dean of the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting at IULM University, I would like to emphasize the important role that linguistic and cultural mediators also play in this framework in maintaining the long-term sustainability of tourism.

The efforts of all these key figures are not only pivotal in environmental conservation but are also crucial for supporting employment, ensuring equitable income distribution, and safeguarding the cultural and historical heritage that forms the bedrock of tourism.

The project's outputs include national and cross-national reports, case studies illustrating effective practices in sustainable tourism, and the development of centers of excellence across the project's partner countries. These efforts have yielded new educational programs, enhanced faculty and student skills, practical case developments, and networks between academia and industry, all aimed at sustaining and expanding these centers of excellence.

Work Package 5 (WP5) is central to the project's objectives, which has been pivotal in fostering enhanced collaboration between the tourism industry and academic institutions. By engaging students from centers of excellence in sustainable tourism in competitive case challenges, WP5 has provided invaluable practical experience and contributed to creating a comprehensive guide of best practices. These case studies, developed under the mentorship of leading academics and industry experts, offer insightful analyses of innovative products, services, and initiatives that pave the way for sustainable tourism in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. This volume serves as a testament to these efforts, showcasing the rich diversity of sustainable tourism initiatives and the potential pathways for their replication and scaling across different contexts.

As we navigate through the pages of this book, we delve into the essence of the CESTour project and its contributions towards fostering a culture of sustainability in tourism. Through the lens of comprehensive case studies and the project's overarching educational initiatives, we aim to inspire a broader audience comprising educators, students, policymakers, and industry professionals to embrace and advance the principles of sustainable tourism. The collaboration networks created among European and Asian partners, the international exchange of knowledge and experiences, and the innovative educational approaches highlighted in this volume collectively underscore the project's enduring legacy and role in shaping sustainable tourism's future.

Prof. Giovanna Rocca
Pro-Rector for Research
IULM University, Italy

Editorial Members and Case Mentors

Prof. Harald A. Friedl, *FH JOANNEUM - University of Applied Sciences at Bad Gleichenberg, Austria*

Prof. Oana M. Driha, *University of Alicante, Spain*

Dr. Raquel Simón, *University of Alicante, Spain*

Prof. Giovanna Rocca, *IULM University, Italy*

Dr. Alessia Forciniti, *IULM University, Italy*

Prof. Rahul Singh, Project National Lead - India
Birla Institute of Management Technology, India

Dr. Veenu Sharma, *Birla Institute of Management Technology, India*

Dr. Shalini Singh, *Birla Institute of Management Technology, India*

Ms. Svadha Rai, *Birla Institute of Management Technology, India*

Prof. Manohar Sajnani, *Amity University, India*

Prof. S. Sreenivasa Murthy, *Institute of Public Enterprise Hyderabad, India*

Prof. Ch Lakshmi Kumari, *Institute of Public Enterprise Hyderabad, India*

Dr. Maschendar Goud, *Institute of Public Enterprise Hyderabad, India*

Prof. Parag Rijwani, *Nirma University, Ahmedabad, India*

Prof. Diljeetkaur Makhija, *Nirma University, Ahmedabad, India*

Prof. Punit Saurabh, *Nirma University, Ahmedabad, India*

Prof. Himanshu Chauhan, *Nirma University, Ahmedabad, India*

Prof. Mayank Bhatia, *Nirma University, Ahmedabad, India*

Prof. Ram Thapaliya, Project National Lead - Nepal
Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal

Prof. Ghanashyam Bhattarai, *Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal*

Prof. Kanhaiya Sapkota, *Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal*

Dr. Pashupati Nyaupane, *Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal*

Ms. Pinkey Bogati, *Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal*

Ms. Isha Karki, *Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal*

Ms. Simran Shrestha, *Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal*

Mr. Nishan Kumar Aryal, *Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal*

Mr. Rajendra Prasad Ojha, *Global College International (GCI), Kathmandu, Nepal*

Dr. Subash Shrestha, *Global College International (GCI), Kathmandu, Nepal*

Dr. Dev Raj Paneru, *Global College International (GCI), Kathmandu, Nepal*

Mr. Kishor Kumar Gautam, *Global College International (GCI), Kathmandu, Nepal*

Ms. Manuza Khatiwada, *Global College International (GCI), Kathmandu, Nepal*

Mr. Rishav Dev Khanal, *Kathmandu, Nepal*

Ms. Mahima Karki, *Kathmandu, Nepal*

Prof. Athula Gnanapala, *Project National Lead – Sri Lanka
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka*

Prof. R.S.S.W. Arachchi, *Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka*

Mr. Namal Wijesundara, *Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka*

Mrs. J.A.R.C. Sandaruwani, *Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka*

Mr. G.V.H. Dinusha, *Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka*

Prof. Ruwan Ranasinghe, *Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

Ms. Chandi Karunarathne, *Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

Mr. A.M.D.B. Nawarathna, *Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

Ms. U.G.O. Sammani, *Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

Ms. W.G.S.R. Wijesundara, *Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

Acknowledgements

The essence of this book is represented by the contributions of the challengers from the centers of excellence of the seven partner universities in Asia: Birla Institute of Technology, Nirma University, and the Institute of Public Enterprise in India; Tribhuvan University and Global College International in Nepal; Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka and Uva Wellassa University in Sri Lanka, accompanied by their academic mentors.

The preparation of these cases was significantly supported by numerous business mentors and entrepreneurs in the hospitality and tourism sectors in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, to whom the authors are deeply grateful.

Special thanks to Kumar Anubhav, Not on Map; Anuruddha Bandara, Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd; Anil Dhakal Community Homestay network; Shiva Dhakal, Community Home Stay Network; Bimal Dhamala, Best Heritage Tours; Laxmi Bhakta Chhyamusu, Jatra Samiti; Ashan Karunananda, Wild Glamping; Manoj Kumar Giri, Tourism Events and Research Center; Vinayak Koul, Snowlion Expeditions Pvt. Ltd.; Paras Loomba, Global Himalayan Expedition; Ganga Maharjan, Kirtipur Homestay; Sudarshan Paudel, Lavie Garden / Biryani Aadda; Ajith Perera, Heeloya Community Based Village; Upendra Perera, CIC Agri Farm; Kiran Pradhananga, Bhairavnath, Topi Pasal; Rishard Preena, Kandalama Hotel; Yeshitha Rodrigo, Jetwing Vil Uyana; Ganidu Rochana, Sayuri Whale Watching; Sankalp Sharma, Vinyasa Earth | Contemporary Dance; Feroze Singh, Sasa Nawa; E.A. Sirisoma, Walawe Nadee River; Priya Swarnathilaka, Heritance Tea Factory Hotel; T Bhaskaran, Creative Sculptures; Veera Babu, Vana Vihari Ecotourism; Satish Korothu, SAMTFMACS; Araku Valley Punnami Tourism and Integrated Tribal Development Authority; Eturnagaram. Kanika Anand, Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam Ltd.; Deepak Rawat, Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam Ltd.; Ajay Kant Sharma, Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam Ltd.; Mr. D.M.D. Sameera, Hiruwadunna Village.

These business mentors and entrepreneurs have provided invaluable contributions to students and challengers through their experience in innovation and sustainable development in the tourism, hospitality, and events sectors.

Acknowledging this collaboration is a tribute to their dedication and commitment to shaping the future of industry professionals, thereby significantly contributing to the richness of this work.

**Emma Zavarrone
Martha Friel**

CASE STUDY 1

Global Himalayan Expedition: Integrating Sustainability in Adventure Tourism

Samreen Kaur and Sidra Rehman

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the fastest-expanding industries in the world and a significant employer, contributing significantly to the economies and environmental development of many nations, particularly in developing nations. The sector is evolving, though, and becoming progressively more conscious of the threat posed by environmental damage as time passes. The worldwide community of tourism is considering methods to have a lower environmental impact across all industries. According to the World Tourism Organisation, sustainable tourism “addresses the needs of travellers, the industry, the environment, and host communities, taking into consideration both the present and future financial, societal, and ecological impacts.”

Sustainable Development Goals target 8.9 (SDG goal) lays emphasis upon devising policies and execute policies to encourage sustainable tourism that produces employment and promotes regional traditions and products. SDG Goals target 12.b, intends to “develop and execute methods for observing the impacts of sustainable development for a tourism sector,” also emphasises the significance of sustainable tourism. Inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals and their agenda for making the tourism industry more sustainable, the Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) target a tourism start-up and social enterprise based in Ladakh, India is founded in 2013 by Paras Loomba in Ladakh, located in northern India known for its stunning landscapes and vibrant Tibetan- Buddhist culture. However, the region faces challenges in tourism development due to its remote location and limited infrastructure. GHE operates in this context, combining adventure tourism with social impact by improving living conditions for local communities and at the same time enhances the tourism experience of travelers through authentic cultural exchange. GHE success is well reflected through awards received from UNWTO & NTTC for developing sustainable tourism as Catalyst for positive change in Ladakh.

Figure 1: Ladakhi Women Welcoming Expeditionists



Sources: GHEInstagram

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: The vision of the Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) is to create a sustainable and responsible tourism ecosystem in the Himalayan region. GHE envisions a world where tourism promotes environmental conservation, empowers local communities, and fosters cultural preservation, ensuring the long-term well-being of the Himalayas and its inhabitants (GHE-Travel for Impact, n.d.).

Mission: GHE's mission is to provide transformative travel experiences while addressing the challenges remote Himalayan communities face. Through its unique model, GHE aims to bring renewable energy solutions, promote education and healthcare, and develop livelihood opportunities, thereby improving the quality of life for the local population and positively impacting the region (GHE-Travel for Impact, n.d.).

1.3 Products/services

GHE's Unique product & services on offer include:

Impactful Expeditions: GHE organizes transformative expeditions that combine adventure, cultural immersion, and community service. Travellers have the opportunity to explore remote and breath taking Himalayan landscapes while actively participating in solar electrification projects and engaging with local communities (www.ETTravelWorld.com, n.d.).

Solar Electrification through installation of solar microgrids: GHE specializes in implementing solar energy solutions in off-grid Himalayan villages by providing not only the improved quality of life but also fostered socio-economic development in the region.

Figure 2: Installation of Solar Water Heaters in Ladakh by GHE Team



Sources: GHEInstagram

Sustainable tourism consultancy: GHE offers consultancy services to tourism organizations, communities, and governments in the area of sustainable tourism development, in responsible tourism practices, community engagement, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation, helping stakeholders to create tourism experiences that are both beneficial and sustainable.

Community development initiatives: GHE conducts various community development programs aimed at empowering local communities including training programs, capacity- building workshops, education support, and income-generation initiatives.

Advocacy and awareness: GHE actively raises awareness about the challenges faced by remote Himalayan communities with reference to, environmental conservation, and sustainable tourism. GHE engages in advocacy efforts, organize campaigns, and

collaborate with local and global partners to promote responsible tourism practices and encourage positive change.

As a result of their unique products and services, GHE not only offers immersive adventure experiences but also contributes to the well-being of local communities, environmental sustainability, and cultural preservation in the Himalayan region.

Figure 3: A Women Weaving a Cloth. This is One of the Community Development Initiatives by GHE to Empower Women



Sources : GHE Instagram

1.4 Target market(s)

GHE primarily target three key groups:

Adventure Travellers adventure enthusiasts who seek unique and immersive travel experiences, eager to explore remote and off-the-beaten-path destinations. GHE offers them the opportunity to embark on transformative journeys that combine adventure, culture, and sustainability in the rugged beauty of the Himalayas.

Responsible Travelers who are conscious of the impact of their visits on the environment and local communities. These travellers prioritize sustainable tourism practices and seek meaningful interactions with local cultures. GHE provides them with

a platform to engage in responsible tourism initiatives, contribute to community development, and support environmental conservation efforts (Apollo et al., 2022).

Corporate and Educational Institution Groups looking for experiential learning and team- building activities with a purpose to value responsible tourism and seek to engage in socially impactful projects while enhancing team dynamics and a unique learning and bonding experience.

Additionally, *GHE addresses the following stakeholders:*

Local Himalayan Communities: GHE actively engages and empowers local communities in the Himalayan region by creating sustainable livelihood opportunities and helps to preserve their cultural heritage through homestay, operations, guiding and the sale of handicrafts and local produce.

NGOs and Social Enterprises to leverage their expertise and resources for community development projects and to contribute to the overall sustainable development of the region as a whole.

Environmental Organizations to promote conservation efforts in the Himalayas through incorporating renewable energy solutions, waste management practices, and sustainable tourism practices. As a result, is able to minimize its ecological footprint and actively contributes to the preservation of the fragile Himalayan ecosystem. (IRTA Summit & Awards 2022 | Responsible Tourism India, n.d.).

Figure 4: Women Engineers Trained by GHE Team



Sources: GHE Instagram

As a whole while addressing the concern and aspiration of diverse, stakeholders, HE aims to create a holistic and sustainable tourism ecosystem in the Himalayas.

1.5 Organization and management

Team GHE works to create the life changing experience for travellers as well as to make the life long impact on the community they work with.

The Organizational Structure has Mr. Paras Loomba, Founder of GHE, as the head, supported by Partner Mr. Anubhav Jain, CEO Mr. Jaideep Bansal, Advisors (05 in number), Ambassadors (06 in number) and the operational team heading communications, project division and operations.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

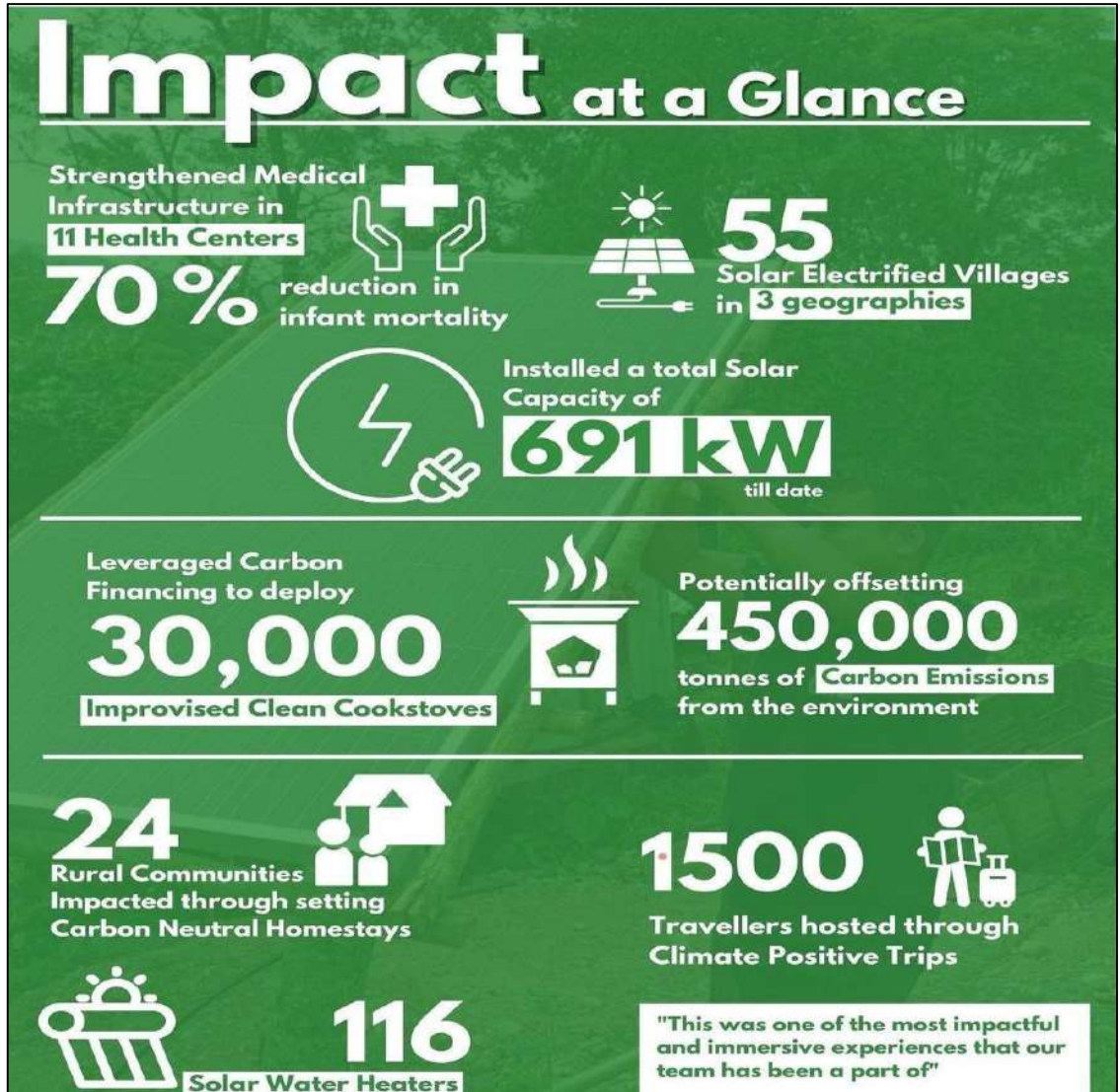
Depending on where the hamlet that has to be electrified is located, the process for each trip varies. It usually ranges from \$1,200 (about Rs. 86,00) to \$3,000 (around Rs. 2.15 Lakh) per person (outlook traveller, 2020).

1.7 Other information

The Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) was founded with a unique vision of using adventure tourism to bring positive change to remote Himalayan communities. Through "Impact Expeditions," participants directly contribute to funding and implementing solar electrification projects in these off-the-beaten-path locations. GHE's initiatives have successfully electrified numerous villages, improving education, healthcare, and economic opportunities while reducing reliance on traditional energy sources. GHE's work has earned them awards and recognition for their contribution to sustainable tourism and social development. They prioritize community involvement, collaborating closely with local leaders and residents to ensure long-term sustainability (Sustainability Tourism and Development in Developing Economies: A Policy Implication Perspective, n.d.).

The organization also empowers women by training them as solar engineers and entrepreneurs, promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment. Education and awareness about environmental conservation and responsible tourism are central to GHE's mission, achieved through workshops and initiatives. Operating in some of the most remote and challenging terrains, GHE continues to make a profound impact, inspiring support from individuals, corporations, and institutions worldwide (Environmental Impacts of Tourism, n.d.).

Figure 5: Impact Created by GHE



Sources: GHE Instagram

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

The Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) faces several challenges in promoting sustainable tourism in the Himalayas.

Firstly, preserving the fragile and pristine environment while encouraging tourism can be a delicate balance. GHE must ensure that tourist activities do not degrade natural resources or disrupt local ecosystems.

Secondly, maintaining cultural integrity is crucial, as increased tourism can lead to cultural commodification or loss of traditional practices. GHE works to involve local communities in tourism initiatives to retain their authenticity.

Thirdly, limited infrastructure in remote areas poses challenges in providing essential services to tourists, ensuring waste management and responsible water usage is critical (ETTravelWorld.com, n.d.)

Finally, the organization must raise awareness about responsible tourism practices among visitors to minimize their environmental and social impact. Despite these challenges, GHE's commitment to sustainable tourism empowers communities and promotes conservation while offering unique and immersive experiences to visitors.

2.2 The business/project idea

The business project idea of Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) is to create a sustainable tourism platform that offers immersive and responsible experiences in the Himalayas. GHE has dealt with these challenges by the following ways:

- By curating eco-friendly and culturally enriching tours and collaborating with local communities to showcase their heritage and traditional practices while preserving the fragile environment.
- Utilizing renewable energy and eco-conscious accommodations. Revenue generated from these tours would be reinvested to support GHE's mission of bringing sustainable energy solutions to remote Himalayan communities (How This Himalayan Project Is Taking Electricity, Sustainability and Tourism to Remote Areas | Life-Style News - The Indian Express, n.d.).
- By providing training and capacity-building opportunities for locals to become guides, artisans, and service providers, empowering them to actively participate in the tourism sector, through offering such transformative and ethically curated experiences, GHE aims to promote sustainable tourism, support local livelihoods, and protect the Himalayan region's unique natural and cultural treasures.

2.3 External analysis

The Indian adventure tourism industry is anticipated to grow to 2.0 billion dollars by 2028.

From a perspective of advantage:

One of the favourable points is the scope of adventure travelling in 70 % of the Himalayan range (Bureau, 2022). The youngsters particularly from the age of 20

onwards are keen to undertake adventure tourism amounting to almost 86% of the adventure travellers (Anuar, 2017). Adventure tourism is a part of the policy goals of the country where it is envisioned to bring revenue of about 2 Billion dollars by 2028, in an effort to promote sustainable tourism and to cater to the needs of the local communities where tourism is operating to share funds on a 60-90 % level with a mission to make the residing communities empowered, resilient and sustainable (Koul, 2023).

Women Empowerment has come to become a very important national issue considering the contemporary importance to values such as self-reliance, skilling and gender equality, sustainable goal development no. 5 places importance internationally in order to achieve overall sustainability in any realm of life.

From a perspective of disadvantage:

- Excessive natural resource exploitation to satisfy visitor demand.
- Unstable environmental conditions and frequent natural disasters by implementing massive tourist projects by other travel organizations.
- Natural landscapes are being converted, degraded, and the usage of land is changing.
- Mismanagement of tourist transport demand by local travel agencies or host communities.
- Destroy grassroots and ethnic culture due to the adverse influence of tourist on local youth.
- Large investments may not yield the desired returns.
- There is always a ‘risk factor’ associated with adventure tourism. There have been many instances of reported accidents due to which it is feared by tourists to a certain extent.

A novel strategy is suggested for GHE to meet the challenges. GHE has to combine all of its resources to speed things up. The commercial sector, as well as—and maybe most importantly—the general public, must innovate on all fronts. To guarantee that people are fully involved in this situation, they must concurrently work on the factors listed below:

1. On a fundamental level, people must shift the mentality from one of “freebie” to one of “self-dependency.” This will motivate individuals to follow their entrepreneurial aspirations. They must eventually be informed of and participate in the development process. At all levels, the politics of mass ‘handicapped’ mass production must be abandoned.
2. The need for innovation in the social sector is great. The players must figure out how to bring development to these areas. The same can be done by volunteers, business teams, and local governments.

3. Participation in the development process is required from the departments operating at Ground Zero. They possess all the knowledge and expertise required for the position.
4. In light of the guidelines, they need to create technical solutions that are workable and applicable for rural people. In this instance, social enterprises, NGOs, and consultants all need to contribute significantly (Gaurav, 2021).
5. They can serve as a provider of raw materials and spices, along with business possibilities.
6. Youth can be developed to become a source of talent for human resources requirements since they are willing to gain knowledge.
7. Culture and heritage is one distinctive subject that is essentially popular and might be considered for the reinvestment scheme.
8. Since most sites are in rural areas, there aren't many resources for education there. Therefore, reinforcing the educational institute can benefit the area. It will ultimately result in improved tourism-related livelihoods and education.
9. Create concrete marketing plans to promote the tourism industry to both domestic and international visitors.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Relevant strengths

1. **Expertise in sustainable tourism:** Global Himalayan Expedition has a proven track record in developing and promoting sustainable tourism initiatives, leveraging their expertise and experience to address environmental challenges responsibly.
2. **Community engagement:** GHE's strong collaboration with local communities empowers them to actively participate in tourism activities, promoting authentic cultural experiences and ensuring the support of the local population.
3. **Renewable energy solutions:** GHE's proficiency in implementing renewable energy projects in remote areas provides a unique selling point for eco-conscious travellers seeking adventure tourism.
4. **Credibility and recognition:** The organization's recognition through various awards and media coverage enhances its credibility and attracts socially responsible travellers. ("Astro- Stays" Bring Tourists and Solar Power to Himalayan Villages | Reuters, n.d.).

2.4.2 Relevant weaknesses

1. **Limited infrastructure:** The challenging terrain of the Himalayas may hinder the development of adequate infrastructure, affecting transportation and communication, making logistics and access to certain areas more difficult.

2. **Financial constraints:** Implementing sustainable tourism projects can require substantial financial resources, and GHEs may face challenges in securing sufficient funding for their initiatives.
3. **Competition:** As adventure tourism gains popularity, GHE may face increased competition from other organizations and initiatives, necessitating ongoing innovation and differentiation.
4. **Regulatory hurdles:** Navigating complex bureaucratic processes and adhering to stringent environmental regulations in the region may pose challenges to the expansion of their tourism offerings (Engineering Challenges for Sustainable Road Access in the Himalayas, n.d.).

To effectively address these challenges, GHE should capitalize on its strengths, maintain strong community partnerships, seek strategic partnerships, and explore innovative ways to overcome financial limitations. Additionally, working closely with local authorities which can be district administration of the area to streamline regulatory processes and addressing infrastructure constraints proactively will contribute to the continued success of their sustainable tourism initiative in the Himalayas.

2.5 Activities

To implement the new initiative of sustainable tourism in the Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE), several key activities were required:

1. **Market research and analysis:** Conducting thorough market research to identify target audiences, assess competitors, and understand the demand for sustainable tourism experiences in the Himalayas. These can be Qualitative and Quantitative in nature.
2. **Stakeholder engagement:** Collaborating with local communities, government authorities, and relevant stakeholders to build partnerships and gain support for the initiative. Eg- Community mapping can be a great source of knowing about the local communities at various regions.
3. **Product development:** Designing and curating sustainable tour packages that showcase the region's natural beauty, cultural heritage, and renewable energy initiatives while minimizing environmental impact.
4. **Capacity building:** Providing training and skill development to local communities to actively participate in tourism activities as guides, artisans, and service providers, ensuring they benefit economically and culturally. Example – Installation of solar panels in a community, it is important that the community understand its utility and knows how to operate it this shall not only be helpful to the local communities but will be of service to tourists coming from outside.

5. **Sustainability integration:** Implementing eco-friendly practices throughout the tourism operations, such as waste management, energy-efficient transportation, and sustainable accommodation.
6. **Digital marketing and promotion:** Utilizing digital platforms to reach a broader audience, raise awareness about sustainable tourism offerings, and enhance the organization's online presence. There is a need apart from static digital content for an engagement to take place with the audience. Creative ideas like "Share your Sustainability moment", "The Responsible Traveller moment" can take place with the larger audience in the form of an open interaction through Webinar or even as a testimonial from the travellers.
7. **Monitoring and evaluation:** Establishing a system to monitor the impact of the initiative on local communities, the environment, and overall sustainability, and making necessary adjustments based on evaluations. Example- Social Impact assessments can be used a tool to study the Social Return on investment.
8. **Obtaining certifications:** Acquiring recognized sustainability certifications and labels to build trust and credibility among environmentally conscious travellers.

By effectively executing these activities, GHE can successfully implement its sustainable tourism initiative, contribute positively to local communities and the environment, and offer transformative experiences to responsible travellers in the Himalayan region (Electrifying Himalayan Villages through Sustainable Tourism: Interview with Paras Loomba, n.d.).

2.6 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of the Global Himalayan Expedition's sustainable tourism initiative are diverse and multi-faceted.

1. **Local communities:** Local communities in the Himalayas benefit from increased economic opportunities through active involvement in tourism activities, preserving their culture and heritage, and gaining access to sustainable energy solutions implemented by GHE.
2. **Tourists:** Responsible and eco-conscious travellers seeking authentic experiences in the Himalayas are beneficiaries. They get to explore pristine landscapes, immerse themselves in local cultures, and participate in sustainable activities, leaving a positive impact on the environment and communities they visit. The other part of the story is giving an experiential learning and leading to a gradual yet incremental change in behaviour orientation towards travelling in sustainable manner.

Environment: The initiative's focus on sustainable practices, renewable energy adoption, and low-impact tourism helps preserve the fragile Himalayan ecosystem and mitigate the effects of climate change.

2.7 Partners

Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) partners with the following:

1. **Local communities:** They play an instrumental role in giving a tourist/traveller their share of a true on ground travelling experience by making them witness the cultural diversity and also being a participant in the development of the area of operation.
2. **Government authorities:** In order to implement any initiative successfully the role of the administration remains of utmost importance when it comes to making things happen especially from the lens of a Regulatory and compliance authority.
3. **NGOs:** As NGOs are well aware about various ground realities, they can play a helping hand when it comes to mitigating challenges related to participation in skill building and training.
4. **Tourism associations/ board:** Meetings at regular intervals can help them give a better idea about the issues related to tourism in the area, demand and supply of various facilities in the region and the scope for further operation of GHE in the area.
5. **Eco-friendly accommodations:** Accommodations in the area which can provide eco- friendly stay to the tourists can be looked at as a partnership which will also promote the GHE project and in a way gathering customer goodwill.

These collaborations support GHE's mission to empower communities, preserve the environment, and provide responsible travellers with authentic experiences in the Himalayas ("UIAA | Nominee – Global Himalayan Expedition UIAA," n.d.).

2.8 Finances

The Global Himalayan Expedition's sustainable tourism initiative is primarily financed through a combination of grants, donations, sponsorships, and revenue generated from tourism activities. Funding is acquired from individuals, organizations, and partnerships that share GHE's vision of promoting sustainable tourism and empowering remote Himalayan communities with renewable energy solutions. (Swot Analysis of Global Himalayan Expedition Touching Lives of Millions, n.d.)

2.9 Human resources

Additional human resources needed: sustainable tourism experts, community engagement coordinators, renewable energy engineers, environmental specialists, marketing team, and monitoring officers. (GHE-Travel for Impact, n.d.)

2.10 Marketing & communication activities

Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) uses a combination of communication channels to inform target markets and stakeholders about its sustainable tourism initiative and promote its brand. Some of the medium for promotion are as follows:

1. **Website:** Their website showcases sustainable offerings, community engagement, and environmental efforts. The very usage of words like 'social enterprise' and 'community orientation' are plus points when it comes to gathering the attention of visitors on the website.
2. **Online presence:** An active presence on social media platforms, email marketing, and press releases can play a great role in extending their reach. online travel portals display their tour packages. Considering it being a Start-up there is much need for visibility which can come through sources such as blogs, e-magazines, research papers etc, this shall help in building more credibility in the eyes of the customers.
3. **Collaborative partnerships:** As their approach is both B2C and B2B therefore they collaboration on an Institutional level can take with Corporates, Universities can also cater to individual tourists. Special travel packages can be curated as per the income capacity of each target group.
4. **Volunteering networks and workshops:** By conducting these workshops it can help in raising awareness about the business ideas of GHE and about the concept of sustainable tourism in practice. Considering the GHE focuses on contributing to the well being of stakeholder communities in the area of operation , it is likely that it can create a strong volunteering network with individuals willing to participate from the community. (GHE-Travel for Impact, n.d.).

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact on the target market(s)

1. **Customers:** Customers are an important target market Global Himalayan Expedition. These can include individual customers as well as corporates and other institutions, given the services of GHE which vouch on Sustainability of immersive experiences in the Himalayas with the communities. One gets to learn the practical experience about sustainability.
2. **Local community:** These can be also proposed as Community building practices in front of corporates, this can help in getting funds and play an instrumental role in the economic development of the communities where the GHE operates. This will make the community willing and eager to be a part of catering to tourists and in promoting their culture while sensitizing about preserving environment.

3. **Region's sustainable development:** Development of the local community will lead to a gradual yet incremental positive growth in the development of the region economically and culturally. This can be looked at the population becoming a 'collaborator' as well as a 'probable customer' in the future. (How This Himalayan Project Is Taking Electricity, Sustainability and Tourism to Remote Areas | Life-Style News - The Indian Express, n.d.)

3.2 Impact on the stakeholders

Stakeholders of the Global Himalayan Expedition experience significant impacts through the organization's sustainable tourism initiative.

1. **Local communities:** Stakeholders in the local communities benefit from economic empowerment through increased tourism-related opportunities, preserving their cultural heritage, and gaining access to sustainable energy solutions that improve their quality of life. This gives them a chance while preserving their culture. On a Macro level with economic opportunities increasing migration to other areas / states can be prevented to a certain extent.
2. **Government authorities:** The initiative aligns with government goals of promoting sustainable tourism and renewable energy adoption, enhancing the region's socio-economic development and environmental conservation. In areas such as Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh tourism contributes to a big extent in the development of the economy, however as per recent developments in the state policy much focus has been given to practicing sustainable tourism and the states are looking forward to more such initiatives.
3. **NGOs and development organizations:** Collaborating stakeholders gain a platform to promote sustainable practices, community development, and cultural preservation, amplifying their impact and fostering positive change. They get an opportunity to develop their credibility and goodwill therefore increasing the scope for getting funds for various other human development initiatives in the area.
4. **Tourism associations and chambers of commerce:** Stakeholders in these organizations witness the growth of sustainable tourism in the Himalayas, attracting eco-conscious travellers and boosting the region's reputation as a responsible tourism destination.
5. **Environmental conservation efforts:** Stakeholders involved in environmental conservation observe reduced environmental impact, thanks to GHE's eco-friendly practices and renewable energy initiatives, contributing to the preservation of the Himalayan ecosystem.

6. **Sustainability certifying bodies:** By working with GHE, sustainability certifying bodies witness successful examples of sustainable tourism implementation, enhancing the credibility of their certifications and encouraging more organizations to follow suit (GHE- Travel for Impact, n.d.).

Overall, stakeholders experience positive impacts through Global Himalayan Expedition's sustainable tourism initiative, creating a win-win situation for communities, the environment, and the region's socio-economic development.

3.3 Impact on the environment

The influx of tourists in big numbers, the indiscriminate urban settlements the Himalayan region is facing high biotic pressure and solid waste dumping. As per reports from the WorldBank the Indian Himalayan region generates huge amount of waste and plastic pollution which can cause disturbance in the ecosystem affecting the marginalized communities with the least infrastructural Support .GHE's eco-friendly initiatives, such as renewable energy adoption, waste management, and low-impact tourism, contribute to preserving the fragile Himalayan ecosystem and mitigating the effects of climate change (Leveraging Energy Tourism to Provide Clean Energy Sustainable Access to Himalayan Communities | India | UNFCCC, n.d.).

3.4 Impact on the company

Global Himalayan Expedition's sustainable tourism initiative will have the following impact on the company:

1. **Build on its reputation:** Considering GHE is working on making travel a sustainable experience by impacting the lives of people involved in its operations socially, economically and culturally definitely is building public goodwill.
2. **Attracting social and eco-conscious travelers:** One set of travellers are not only looking for travelling, they look forward to experiences, people and stories. The working model of GHE is one such travel platform which caters to something which is more than travelling.

3.5 Strategic partnerships

Increased revenue expands their sustainable energy projects, benefiting more communities. This can be taken from a B2B Perspective (GHE- Travel for Impact, n.d.).

3.6 Impact on the CoE

The Centre of Excellence (CoE) within the Global Himalayan Expedition experiences enhanced expertise and knowledge in sustainable tourism practices. They

contribute to the organization's growth by providing valuable insights, ensuring responsible tourism, and further establishing GHE as a leader in sustainable travel in the Himalayas (Pu et al., 2022).

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

All tourism-related activities, including leisure travel, business travel, adventure travel, wildlife travel, cultural travel, eco-travel, etc., must be sustainable. Respect for the environment, cultural history, and local residents is the hallmark has positive consequences for the local communities.

The tourism sector needs to set up the necessary procedures to classify the advantages and disadvantages of tourism expansion and to include stakeholders for the development of sustainable tourism. There is also a need to evaluate socioeconomic and environmental impact methodologies and develop an action plan for the growth of sustainable tourism so that they can cultivate a critical understanding of the ways that tourism may improve human wellbeing and safeguard our natural and cultural heritage.

The awareness of leadership, teamwork, ethics, and judgement are developed through GHE Impact Expeditions. The type of self-reliance, judgement, respect, and feeling of responsibility that may help leaders flourish in today's changing organisational context are fostered by a strong connection with the natural world.

The largest contributors to mainstreaming ethical travel are likely to be tour operators and travel and hospitality businesses. Practitioners may include the idea of sustainability into each of their offerings before customers start to demand sustainable travel goods and services.

Using a holistic strategy that combines renewable energy, community-based education, and business possibilities, IEEE Smart Village (ISV) supports communities that are energy-poor across the world. The Global Himalayan Expedition's creative ideas and dedication in the Himalayan area of India are also appreciated by IEEE Smart Village (ISV, n.d.).

GHE offers an adventure excursion that is unmatched for showcasing team and individual strengths and giving employees the chance to learn to make up for inadequacies in the isolated locations where every move counts.

India is known for its rich cultural heritage. Every village and region in this country is a preserver of a unique custom and tradition. So they can expand their work to other remote areas of the country by collaborating with other stakeholder of particular tourist destinations, as there are lots of opportunities for sustainable tourism

developments, and provide opportunities for local communities to grow further as well as establish themselves for a sustainable, eco- friendly future. Establishing rules and guidelines for visitors to use natural resources wisely.

Encouraging tales of local communities and the environment to establish standards for tourists so they interact responsibly, and providing locally made-to-order products in hotel accommodations as a luxury service are some simple practices any travel company can implement.

Travel, hospitality, and tour operators may use their influence to put ethical practices in place rather than waiting for the government to establish rules and guidelines for responsible travel. Every tourist organisation needs to start a global movement of change- makers who travel and discover the world in a sustainable manner, such as GHE.

Endnotes

1. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CDDmGgLpjfa/>
2. https://www.instagram.com/p/CXc7i_YIJKK/
3. https://www.instagram.com/p/Cqz4qxbymFn/?img_index=5
4. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CA4XaZqJSKv/>
5. https://www.instagram.com/p/CnMatVeSuAn/?img_index=2

References

Anuar, N. F. (2017). What draws you here? Intention of youth's participation in adventure. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, 9(2), 153-162.

Bureau, T. (2022, May 17). Retrieved from today's traveller. Retrieved from <https://www.todaystraveller.net/indian-adventure-tourism-to-cross-2-b/#:~:text=A%20highlight%20is%20that%20the,at%20a%20CAGR%20of%2020%25>.

Koul, V. (2023, June 16). Retrieved from <https://www.outlookindia.com/national/india-g20-presidency-making-the-most-of-adventure-tourism-news-295370>

“Astro-stays” bring tourists and solar power to Himalayan villages | Reuters. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/india-solar-tourism-idINL8N2HK461>

Carbon Footprint of Tourism. (n.d.). Sustainable travel international. Retrieved from <https://sustainabletravel.org/issues/carbon-footprint-tourism/>

Electrifying Himalayan villages through sustainable tourism: Interview with Paras Loomba. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://travindy.com/2021/12/interview-with-paras-loomba/>

Engineering challenges for sustainable road access in the Himalayas | Request PDF. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313826198_Engineering_challenges_for_sustainable_road_access_in_the_Himalayas

Enhancing the effectiveness of work groups and teams—Steve W.J. Kozlowski, Daniel R. Ilgen, 2006. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1111/j.1529-1006.2006.00030.x>

Environmental impacts of tourism. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.gdrc.org/uem/ecotour/envi/four.html>

GHE-Travel for Impact. (n.d.). GHE. Retrieved from <https://www.ghe.co.in/>

Global Himalayan Expedition. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.responsibletourismindia.com/operators/global-himalayan-expedition/345>

Global Himalayan Expedition—Equator Initiative. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.equatorinitiative.org/2020/04/24/solution11336/>

How this Himalayan project is taking electricity, sustainability and tourism to remote areas | Life-style News—The Indian Express. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/life-style/himalayas-sustainable-living-climate-change-tourism-education-solar-technology-ghe-climate-change-impact-expedition-7027697/>

IRTA Summit & Awards 2022 | Responsible Tourism India. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.outlookindia.com/irta/2022/>

Leveraging Energy Tourism to Provide Clean Energy Sustainable Access to Himalayan Communities | India | UNFCCC. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/financing-for-climate-friendly-investment/global-himalayan-expedition>

Pu, P., Cheng, L., Samarathunga, W., & Wall, G. (2022). Tour guides' sustainable tourism practices in host-guest interactions: When Tibet meets the west. *Tourism Review*, 78(3), 808–833. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-04-2022-0182>

Sustainability | Free Full-Text | Tourism and Development in Developing Economies: A Policy Implication Perspective. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/4/1618>

Swot Analysis of Global Himalayan Expedition Touching Lives of Millions. (n.d.). 247caseanalysis. Retrieved from <https://www.247caseanalysis.com/case/49707-Global-Himalayan-Expedition-Touching-Lives-of-Millions-Swot-Analysis>

UIAA | Nominee – Global Himalayan Expedition UIAA. (n.d.). *UIAA*. Retrieved from <https://theuiaa.org/uiia/mpa-globalhimalayanexpedition/>

www.ETTravelWorld.com. (n.d.). Sustainable tourism is still unheard of by the masses: Paras Loomba - ET Travel World. ETTravelWorld.Com. Retrieved from <https://travel.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/news/tourism/wellness/sustainable-tourism-is-still-unheard-of-by-the-masses-paras-loomba/78946270>

CASE STUDY 2

Ecoplore: Truly Eco-friendly and Sustainable

Swati Khanna and Akansha Kesarwani

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

India is undergoing a transformational policy change and innovations in all major industries affecting sustainable development such as waste management, water treatment, energy management, material consumption etc. to develop a path to sustainability practices and systems. Tourism is one of the 5Ts of the new economy verticals of India which will not only contribute significantly to the economy but also will respect the principles of sustainable development. This new approach has motivated the policy to modify the Tourism Policy of India, and work on country level Strategy for Sustainable Tourism 2020. These new developments supporting sustainable tourism ecosystem brought many incumbents and startups in creating new models of tourism and new practices in industry.

Ecoplore is one example of a transformational change in the industry. Even though India's systems are smooth and functioning well, the essence of our existence lies in recognizing that without clean air and water, everything else becomes meaningless. This realization served as the driving force behind our mission to contribute to environmental conservation. Back in 2016, when Ecoplore was founded, only a handful of people were actively engaged in environmental conservation, and there was a lack of concrete action on sustainability. It was at this juncture that we saw an opportunity to make a difference and combine our passion for travel with our commitment to protecting the environment.

Ecoplore was born out of the belief that travel can be a powerful tool for positive change. By providing opportunities for travellers to experience nature in its purest form, we aim to raise awareness about the importance of environmental preservation. Vision was to create a platform that not only offers unique and authentic travel experiences but also contributes to the conservation of natural resources and supports local communities, and it has been made in reality now (Ecoplore, n.d.).

'Today, we take pride in being pioneers in the field of sustainable tourism', says the founder Prerna Prasad. The focus on hand-picked eco-hotels, environmental-friendly practices, and cultural preservation has garnered appreciation and recognition from various quarters, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

With a dedicated team of individuals who share the passion for sustainability, we continue to grow and innovate, seeking new ways to promote responsible travel and minimize our ecological footprint. We understand the importance of constantly evolving and embracing technology while staying true to our core values.

Ultimately, our journey is fueled by the belief that each step we take, no matter how small, can make a difference in protecting our planet for future generations. Through Ecoplore, we strive to inspire travelers to not only cherish the beauty of nature but also actively participate in its conservation. We are committed to creating an environmental impact, and our love for travel is intricately woven into our dedication to preserving the environment for generations to come.

Ecoplore is a sustainable and eco-friendly solution to the detrimental impact of tourism on nature. It is a portal for booking hand-picked eco-hotels that prioritize green practices. These hotels have at least 33% of their campus covered in greenery and are made from natural materials like mud, wood, bamboo, and stone. They practice organic farming, composting, and have eco-friendly amenities such as no-plastic zones, solar panels, and rainwater collection. Ecoplore offers a unique opportunity to stay in mud, wood, or stone houses and enjoy homemade organic meals sourced from their own fruits, vegetables, and herbs. The business is led by women and has earned praise from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for achieving SDG 12. Headquarters are located in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, India. (Rajesh Aithal, 2023)

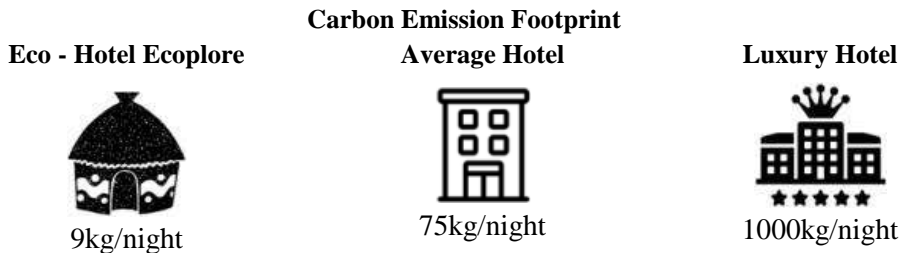
1.2 Vision and Mission

Mission: Ecoplore’s mission is to raise awareness among travelers about sustainable travel practices encouraging responsible behavior and cultural sensitivity and also promote responsible and environmentally friendly travel practices and prioritizing the cultural preservation, respect local tradition. And its aim to contribute to the economic growth of destination by generating income and employment opportunity for local communities.

Vision: the vision of the Ecoplore company “is to create an environmental impact” on the tourism and to make the Ecoplore a youngster choice.

Table 1: Vision-Mission Matrix of Ecoplore

	VISION	MISSION
Sustainable Factor	Conservation	Minimize, Engage, Educate
Business Model Factor	Integration	Collaborate, Implement, Innovate

Figure 1: Carbon Emission Footprint Mapping

1.3 Products/services

Ecoplore emphasize Stay Local, Eat Local, Play Local, Buy Local thereby enabling local communities. Ecoplore offers a lifetime experience of living in a mud, wood, or stone house. Their Eco-hotels are located near waterfalls, beside rivers, inside forests or on mountains, far from the noise, crowd, and pollution of the cities. Most of their stays grow their own vegetables, fruits, and herbs. You will be served homemade organic meals. Ecoplore is the only aggregator platform that personally visits and verifies Eco-hotels. A female traveler from their team personally visits and verifies the Eco-hotels.

Sustainable tourism aggregator: Ecoplore offer services to tourism organization, cultural This is done to ensure safety, comfort, hygiene and also encourages ‘solo woman travel’. Preservation, conservation to the environment, and helping their stakeholder to create tourism experience that are both beneficial and sustainable.

Hotels and accommodation: as per the study undertaken by European union the carbon emission generated by the luxury hotel room is 1000kg/night and with the solution of this Ecoplore Eco-stay generated the only emission of 9kg per night so, for the accommodation of the customer Ecoplore provide the Eco-hotels.

Adventures experience: Ecoplore provide their customer the adventures experience for their vacation because most of their stays are near waterfalls, inside forests or on the mountain besides the rives, so, the customer can experience the beauty of the nature and can feel the peace and be far from the crowded area.

VAN BHOJ (Eco- Live Museum): Prerna Prasad has visited Van Bhoj in Delhi NCR, which she considers the most sustainable place she has been across India. It’s a mud house transformed into a living museum. The Eco-hotel uses 80% of its construction material from its own campus and implements eco-friendly methods like anaerobic bacteria for waste treatment, rainwater harvesting, and reusing 200-year-old

doors and windows. The aim is to create a living museum where visitors can experience sustainable living during their day visits from 11 am to 5 pm.

1.4 Target Market

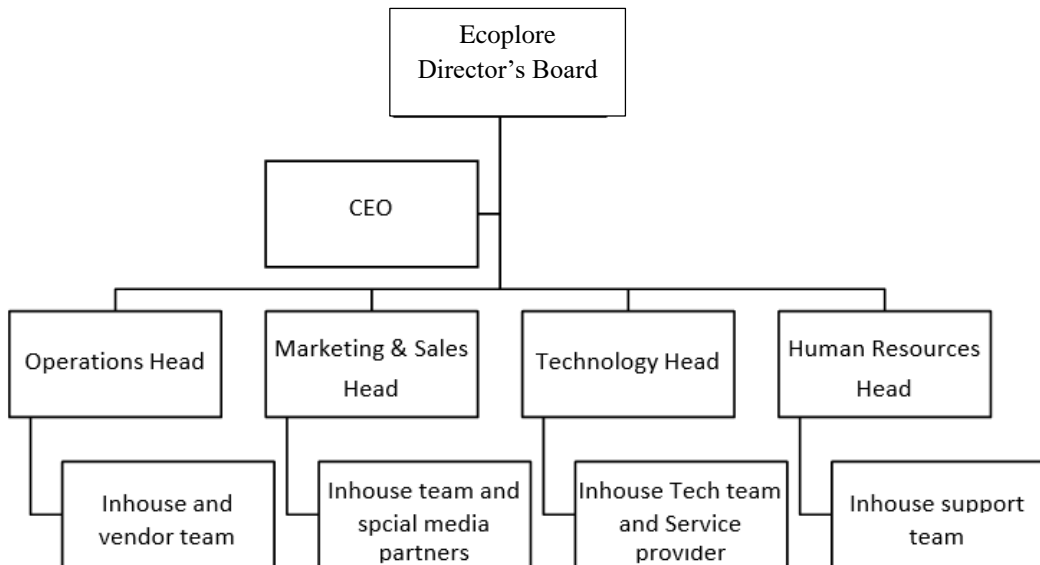
The target customers for this place are nature enthusiasts who seek to spend quality time in natural surroundings and show some level of concern for environmental conservation. It caters to families with children who wish to enjoy a holiday together. Additionally, the resort attracts environmentally conscious individuals who prioritize green services and products (Ecobnb, n.d.).

According to their analytical survey, the primary target customers fall within the age range of 30 to 50 years old, while the younger youth demographic shows less interest, likely due to the price being a challenge and barrier for them. The average ticket size for this age group is around 5000 to 6000 rupees.

- Adventure traveler who are seek to unique experience and want to spend some time with the nature.
- Traveler who are conscious of the impact of their visits on the environment and local communities.
- There are two type of target market for the Ecoplore Demand side and supply side, demand side which is for customer. Customer who is willing to spend their vacation with the nature.
- Supply side which is for the Eco- Hotels, Resorts, who tie up with the Ecoplore online platform for their services to the customer because Ecoplore is a aggregator company who fulfill the demand and supply of the customer.
- People who are more towards the conservation of nature and believe in sustainability.
- Tourism who wants to spend the time with the nature but not getting the right platform to search for it because with the adventures experience people need the safety also so, Ecoplore provide both.

1.5 Organization and management

Due to being a startup, their organizational structure remains lean and highly flexible, which is also source of focused actions with clear responsibilities and deliverables for performance. The key focus while hiring or bringing people onboard is to find individuals who are genuinely passionate about sustainability. This criterion holds significant importance for them when considering new team members for the organization. Following organizational structure explains the professional working style of the organization.

Figure 2: Ecoplore Organizational Structure

Operation department is responsible for liaising and coordinating with hotels. They are the ones who interact with hotels to manage and oversee various aspects of the operation.

Sales and marketing, which are closely intertwined, have a strong emphasis on establishing partnerships with schools, colleges, and other organizations, which serves as VAN BHOJ's flagship property. Customer feedback also plays a significant role in influencing sales and marketing strategies.

Technology department is responsible for handling all technological aspects within an organization. involved in developing and updating the organization's website, managing databases, and exploring innovative solutions to improve overall efficiency and productivity.

Human resource department, the team is composed of 12 full-time individuals, while photographers, content writers, and video editors are part of the temporary workforce. During special occasions or periods of increased workload, they hire temporary staff to assist with their tasks.

Miss Prerna Prasad the CEO & and the founder of the Ecoplore private limited she worked more than 8 years in prominent English news channels like CNN-IBM & India Today, with this disorientation profession of her path she entered into a sustainable world with less knowledge, she did 2 years of research before initiating her startup. She

developed a great team of those who believed in the principles of sustainability and practices that organization can develop through innovation. Khushbu Agrawal is the COO (chief operating operator) in Ecoplore. she is a law graduate but her passion for the sustainability aligned her to Ecoplore. Jyoti Raghavan Khanduja she is the creative head and handle creative team in the Ecoplore jyoti raghavan is a writer, animal lover and environmental crusader who firmly believes that through mindful living, it is possible to heal the wounds caused to Mother Earth. Gary (Gaurav) Dalal he is the project manager in the company and his background is he is a techno commercial Geek who expertise in designing technology architectures. He has 10+ years of experience in a variety of software engineering, product management, technical support and IT consulting positions at leading technology companies and educational institutions. And, Ankit Lal is the Tech Coordinator his background is he is Author of 'India Social', a book on the journey of Social Media in India. And he is providing his continuous support to the Ecoplore.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Ecoplore's cost structure and income are balanced, with their expenses being approximately equal to their income. Ecoplore's total expenses (cost structure) amount to around 15,00,000 units in a year, and their total income is approximately the same amount. This balance suggests that Ecoplore is managing their costs and revenue effectively, resulting in a break-even or near-break-even situation. It indicates that their business model is sustainable without significant profits or losses. The three revenue streams for Ecoplore are:

Aggregator model: 20% to 30% Revenue: Ecoplore operates as an aggregator model, wherein they partner with hotels and market their accommodations. The revenue for this vertical comes from the commission they receive from the hotels for bringing in customers. The commission is typically in the range of 20% to 30% of the booking cost. However, the cost to the customers will not be higher than what the hotels offer directly. Ecoplore takes a portion of the marketing cost from the hotels as their revenue (Outlook Traveller, n.d.).

Van Bhoj (Eco-live museum): Owned Revenue: Ecoplore has a service called "Van Bhoj," which they fully own. The revenue generated from this vertical goes entirely to Ecoplore. Van Bhoj is likely a dining or culinary experience that they offer to customers, possibly in natural or eco-friendly settings.

Sustainable construction - revenue from construction services: In the sustainable construction vertical, Ecoplore offers services related to the construction of mud houses. People approach Ecoplore seeking assistance with building their mud

houses. Ecoplore has a pool of experts from across the country to help with the construction. They generate revenue by charging fees for their construction services, either for the entire end-to-end construction process or for specific parts of the building (Chahat Trivedi, n.d.)

1.7 Other information

Being a woman-owned business, they believe that women empowerment is equally important. Stays offer local women employment and various roles on their properties. All of their activities are focused on providing visitors with a nature-centered experience, so everyone of their accommodations is near a mountain, a beach, a forest, or a river.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Educating individuals about environmental tourism and the concept of eco-friendly hotels is challenging, they spend approximately 30 minutes per customer delineating the distinctions between eco-friendly accommodations and traditional ones, as well as elucidating the reasons behind selecting environmentally conscious travel. Nevertheless, following the period of lockdown and confinement due to the pandemic, people have developed a heightened appreciation for the intrinsic worth of nature. Consequently, the need for exhaustive explanations regarding the concept of eco-friendly hotels has diminished.

The absence of an automated booking system is creating challenges in customer management, leaving them vulnerable to losing customers frequently. The manual process consumes time and increases the risk of errors, potentially causing dissatisfaction due to delays or mistakes in reservations. Additionally, the lack of real-time occupancy tracking hinders efficient decision-making. Implementing an automated system can streamline processes, reduce errors, and enhance customer satisfaction, contributing to improved customer retention and business growth.

The challenge of sourcing adequate funds persists for the startup, and its primary method of acquiring capital remains bootstrapping. This approach is primarily driven by the fact that the startup is still in a phase of development where revenue generation is gradually taking shape. As the business is in its nascent stages and hasn't fully established a consistent revenue stream yet, relying on internal resources and self-funding through bootstrapping appears to be the most viable option. This approach allows the startup to maintain control over its operations while navigating the complexities of financial

uncertainty during this formative period. However, as the startup progresses and matures, it will likely explore additional avenues for funding to fuel its growth and expansion initiatives.

2.2 Business idea

To overcome the challenge of educating individuals about eco-friendly hotels and environmental tourism, the company is planning to utilize condensed informational materials, interactive workshops, virtual reality experiences, and collaborations with influencers to make the concepts more accessible and engaging. Integrating sustainability into the customer experience, gamification, online webinars, and tailored communication can further enhance understanding and appreciation. Additionally, partnerships with educational institutions and consistent updates about the company's sustainable efforts extend the reach of these educational initiatives.

In response to the issue of insufficient fund generation and overreliance on bootstrapping, the startup is taking steps to broaden its funding streams. This includes seeking support from angel investors, venture capital firms, and crowdfunding platforms. To attract potential investors, the startup is refining its revenue model and creating an engaging business plan. It's also tapping into industry networks, investigating government grants, and forging strategic partnerships to secure more financial options. By emphasizing customer acquisition, scalability, and prudent financial handling, the startup is working towards decreasing its reliance on bootstrapping and securing a more sustainable path to growth.

To address the absence of an automated booking system, the company is planning to invest in a user-friendly system allowing online reservations and real-time occupancy tracking. Integration with a CRM, mobile-friendly options, and automated notifications enhance customer experience. Data analytics informs strategies, while staff training ensures smooth operations. Encouraging customer feedback, regular system updates, and effective promotion contribute to streamlined processes, reduced errors, and improved customer satisfaction, fostering business growth.

2.3 External analysis

It seems that Ecoplore has experienced positive effects on their business due to key shifts in consumer behaviour, particularly related to meso and macro trends. Additionally, Ecoplore as a company is actively trying to influence customer behaviour to align with sustainability options.

Meso trends (intermediate-level trends): Increasing Awareness of Sustainable Options: There has been a noticeable shift in consumer behaviour towards greater awareness

and interest in sustainable options. People are becoming more conscious of the impact of their choices on the environment and are actively seeking eco-friendly alternatives.

Growing interest in eco hotels: Consumers are now considering eco hotels as a viable and attractive accommodation option. This trend indicates a preference for environmentally friendly and sustainable hospitality experiences.

Macro trends (broader societal shifts): Influence of Media and Articles: The media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and behavior. With the rise of articles and news stories focused on sustainability and eco-friendly practices, consumers are exposed to information that encourages them to make conscious choices.

Herd mentality and social influence: In societies like India, where herd mentality and social influence are strong factors, trends can spread rapidly. When consumers observe others making sustainable choices, it creates a positive reinforcement loop, leading more people to follow suit.

Impact on ecoplore's business: The positive shift in consumer behaviour towards sustainable options has had a beneficial impact on Ecoplore's business. As a company that focuses on sustainable travel and construction solutions, they are well-positioned to capitalize on this growing trend. The increased awareness and interest in eco-friendly options have likely resulted in a higher demand for their services, leading to increased bookings and revenue.

Furthermore, Ecoplore's efforts to influence customer behaviour towards sustainable choices align with the prevailing trends, making their initiatives more appealing and relevant to the target audience. By proactively promoting eco-friendly holidays, electric cars, and eco hotels, they are likely attracting a larger customer base seeking greener alternatives.

2.4 Internal analysis

As a start-up, Ecoplore has great strength in its idea and creates a blue economy market for itself since there are very few players, and some of them do not have the museum concept for branding and business.

2.4.1 Strengths of ecoplore

- Unique and Innovative Concept
- Strong commitment to reducing carbon emissions
- Vision-driven company with a focus on sustainability
- Attracts customers from India and around the world

2.4.2 Weaknesses of ecoplore

- Limited funding and reliance on bootstrapping
- Challenges in scaling up due to funding constraints
- Need significant investment for automating the booking system and marketing efforts.

In conclusion, Ecoplore's strengths lie in their innovative concept, strong environmental core value, and commitment to their vision. However, their bootstrap approach and limited funding could present challenges in scaling up and competing with larger, well-funded players. Striking the right balance between growth and staying true to their vision will be crucial for their long-term success.

2.5 Stakeholders

Like tourism, sustainable tourism is also multi-sector industry. Thus, stakeholder definition in this sector will be flexible depending on the nature of the product, however there are few common stakeholders connected to their business.

Customers: Nature enthusiasts, adventure travelers, and environmentally conscious individuals who seek unique experiences in sustainable and eco-friendly accommodations and travel options.

Eco-hotels and resorts competitors: The properties that partner with Ecoplore to offer their services and experiences to the customers, which align with the platform's focus on sustainability and responsible tourism.

Local communities and environment: As Ecoplore emphasizes staying local, they also engage with and impact local communities and the environment through their tourism initiatives, aiming for preservation and conservation.

2.6 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The target market benefits from Ecoplore and this place by enjoying immersive nature experiences, supporting environmental conservation efforts, and accessing family-friendly activities and amenities. They can opt for unique and responsible travel choices while ensuring safety during adventure activities. The platform offers green services and eco-friendly products, simplifies booking and planning, and supports Eco-hotels and resorts that align with their values. Overall, customers can have meaningful and sustainable vacations in natural surroundings, catered to their preferences and concerns for the environment.

- Immersive nature experiences.
- Support for environmental conservation.
- Family-friendly activities and amenities.

- Unique and responsible travel options.
- Safety and security during adventure activities.
- Access to green services and eco-friendly products.
- Streamlined booking and travel planning.
- Support for eco-hotels and resorts to attract environmentally conscious travelers.

Figure 3: Ecoplore Stakeholders



2.7 Partners

Ecoplore has formed partnerships with over 250 hotels and Eco BnB, an Italy-based company with similar interests. These partnerships can enhance ECOPLORE's offerings and reach a broader audience through their network of hotels and shared values with Eco BnB (EcoBnB, n.d.). Apart from this they are currently in talks with architectural colleges that teach environmental science to form a partnership for Van Bhoj. Within the next six months, they expect to finalize a new collaboration.

2.8 Finances

It's commendable that ECOPLORE is 99% primarily bootstrapped and driven by passion. Relying on personal funds and resources can be challenging, but it also allows for more creative freedom and independence.

Additionally, ECOPLORE attempted to secure government grants, but the success in this area has been limited due to the challenges and competitiveness associated with obtaining such grants. Government grants have stringent criteria and limited funding availability, making it difficult for many projects to secure significant financial support through this channel.

2.9 Human resources

The main team comprises 12 full-time individuals, including photographers, content writers, and a photo editor. However, during special occasions or when extra assistance is needed, they hire temporary staff to support their operations. They regularly bring in interns who are genuinely passionate about sustainability and actively engaged in case studies, eager to become a part of the organization.

2.10 Marketing and communication activities

They heavily rely on organic social media as their primary marketing source and do not utilize paid social media advertising. They generate significant marketing efforts through various non-paid channels, such as news articles, case studies, media articles, and interviews. Remarkably, all these marketing efforts are also conducted without any payment involved. Their most crucial and impactful marketing medium is word-of-mouth. The reason behind avoiding paid marketing activities is their remarkable ability to attract 30 to 40 leads daily without the need for paid promotions.

Table 2: Ecoplore's Communication System of Branding and Dissemination

Communication Instruments	Communication Channels
Interviews	Academic Institutions
Articles	Informal Channels
Awards	Social Media
Word of mouth	Media & TV
Research Paper	Publications
Seminars	Blogging
Case Study Competitions	Magazines
Influencer interaction	Public Relation

The customer finds great joy in personally guiding other customers because she believes that providing personal attention creates a unique experience that differs from being assisted by a professional waiter or a receptionist. This personalized approach is something she genuinely enjoys and values.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

For the demand side: Ecoplore empowers travelers to explore lesser-known destinations and engage in eco-friendly activities, promoting responsible tourism practices. This, in turn, leads to a positive impact on local communities and the environment, as tourism revenues are channeled towards conservation efforts and community development.

On the supply side: Eco-hotels and resorts benefit from Ecoplore's reach and visibility, gaining access to a niche market of conscious travelers. By associating with Ecoplore, these accommodations demonstrate their commitment to sustainable practices and attract more guests who prioritize environmental responsibility.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

For customers, the platform offers unique and sustainable travel experiences, providing nature enthusiasts and adventure travellers with opportunities to connect with the environment responsibly. The focus on eco-friendly accommodations and local experiences contributes to the conservation of natural resources and supports local communities.

Eco-hotels and resorts partnering with Ecoplore benefit from increased visibility and access to a niche market of environmentally conscious travellers. This exposure helps these properties to grow their businesses while adhering to sustainable practices, thus enhancing their reputation and appeal to eco-conscious consumers.

The founder and team members, driven by a passion for sustainability, find purpose in promoting responsible tourism and leaving a positive impact on the environment and local communities. Their commitment to this cause aligns with their values and creates a sense of fulfilment.

Moreover, the local communities and environment also benefit from Ecoplore's focus on stay local, eat local, and buy local. The platform encourages travellers to engage with local communities, contributing to their economic well-being, and supports eco-friendly practices that aid in environmental preservation and conservation.

Overall, Ecoplore's business positively influences its stakeholders by promoting sustainable tourism, fostering economic growth in local communities, and encouraging responsible environmental practices within the travel industry.

3.3 Impact for the environment

Ecoplore, being a company with a strong focus on sustainability and eco-friendly practices, has a positive impact on the environment in several ways:

- **Reducing carbon emissions:** Ecoplore promotes eco-friendly travel options, including electric cars and sustainable accommodations. By encouraging the use of electric cars and reducing the carbon footprint associated with traditional transportation, they contribute to mitigating greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Supporting eco-friendly accommodations:** Ecoplore's aggregator model allows them to partner with eco-hotels and resorts that follow sustainable practices. By promoting and supporting these establishments, they encourage the adoption of environmentally responsible methods in the hospitality industry.
- **Sustainable construction:** Ecoplore's expertise in sustainable construction, particularly in building mud houses and eco-friendly structures, helps minimize the environmental impact of construction activities. Using eco-friendly materials and construction techniques can reduce resource consumption and waste generation.
- **Conservation and environmental education:** Through their eco-tours and experiences, Ecoplore raises awareness about environmental conservation and sustainable living. By educating travelers and clients about the importance of preserving natural habitats, they contribute to fostering a sense of responsibility towards the environment.
- **Promoting responsible tourism:** Ecoplore encourages responsible tourism practices, such as leaving no trace, respecting local cultures, and supporting local communities. These efforts help in preserving natural and cultural heritage while minimizing negative impacts on fragile ecosystems.

In summary, Ecoplore's focus on sustainability and eco-friendly practices leads to a positive impact on the environment. By promoting responsible travel, supporting sustainable accommodations, and engaging in environmentally conscious construction projects, they play a role in preserving natural resources, reducing carbon emissions, and promoting environmental awareness among their customers and partners.

3.4 Impact for the company

Strong brand reputation: By focusing on Stay Local, Eat Local, Play Local, and Buy Local, Ecoplore demonstrates its commitment to supporting and enabling local communities. This approach enhances its brand reputation, attracting conscious travelers who seek authentic experiences that positively contribute to the destinations they visit.

Niche market penetration: Ecoplore's focus on Eco-hotels located amidst nature, away from crowded cities, appeals to a niche market of adventure travelers and nature enthusiasts. By offering a platform that caters to this specific audience, the

company can establish itself as a go-to resource for those seeking eco-friendly accommodations and experiences.

Environmental impact: With the emphasis on Eco-hotels that have significantly lower carbon emissions compared to traditional luxury hotels, Ecoplore aligns with the growing trend of Eco-consciousness among travelers. This environmental focus can attract more customers who want to minimize their impact on the environment while enjoying unique stays in nature.

Positive word-of-mouth: Sustainable practices and unique experiences offered by Ecoplore's Eco-hotels can lead to positive word-of-mouth marketing. Satisfied customers are likely to share their experiences with friends and family, further promoting the company's services and contributing to its growth.

Advancing sustainable tourism: Ecoplore's commitment to preserving and conserving the environment aligns with the growing global movement for sustainable tourism. By actively promoting responsible travel experiences, the company can play a role in driving positive change in the tourism industry.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

By embracing sustainable tourism not only creates a Blue Economy for CEOs but also provides a platform for them to demonstrate impactful leadership. By driving economic growth, enhancing reputation, and contributing to environmental and social well-being, CEOs can leave a meaningful and lasting mark on both their organizations and the broader tourism industry.

Sustainable Tourism and Blue Economy

- Creates a Blue Economy opportunity for CEOs.
- Serves as a platform to showcase impact-full leadership.

Reputation and Brand Value

- Elevates reputation by demonstrating environmental responsibility.
- Attracts socially conscious guests, investors, and partners.

Community Impact and Cultural Preservation

- Empowers local communities through sustainable projects.
- Preserves and celebrates cultural heritage and traditions.

Economic Growth and Innovation

- Drives economic growth through eco-conscious practices.
- Encourages innovation in sustainable technologies and services.

Personal and Professional Fulfilment

- Leaves a meaningful legacy of positive impact.
- Inspires peers and teams to embrace responsible leadership.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

4.1.1 What eorked well

Strong eco-friendly focus: Ecoplore's emphasis on promoting eco-friendly practices and supporting sustainable accommodations resonated well with the target market of nature enthusiasts and environmentally conscious travelers. This clear focus helped differentiate the company in the competitive tourism industry.

Unique and authentic experiences: Offering stays in mud, wood, or stone houses near natural attractions like waterfalls and forests provided customers with unique and authentic experiences. This aspect aligned well with the demand for adventure and nature-based tourism.

Women empowerment: By empowering and employing local women in various roles within their accommodations, Ecoplore showcased a commitment to social responsibility and community development, which further enhanced its brand reputation.

Personal verification and attention: The personal verification process conducted by a female traveler from their team added a sense of trust and credibility to the platform. Additionally, the personalized attention given to customers created a positive and memorable experience.

Word-of-mouth marketing: Relying on organic social media and word-of-mouth marketing proved to be effective in generating leads and attracting customers who were genuinely interested in sustainable travel practices.

4.1.2 Areas for improvement

Automated booking system: The absence of an automated booking system resulted in difficulties in managing the overwhelming influx of customers. Implementing a user-friendly and efficient booking system would streamline the reservation process and improve conversion rates.

Targeting younger demographic: While Ecoplore successfully attracted customers in the 30 to 50 age range, targeting a younger demographic could be beneficial for future growth. Exploring ways to make sustainable travel more affordable and appealing to younger travelers might be a strategy worth considering.

Enhancing technology solutions: As technology plays a crucial role in the travel industry, continuous efforts to enhance the website, database management, and operational efficiency can lead to a better customer experience and streamlined operations.

Collaboration with supply side: Strengthening collaborations with eco-hotels and resorts is essential to ensure a consistent supply of eco-friendly accommodations and to expand the range of offerings on the platform. Building strong partnerships can lead to more diverse and attractive options for customers.

Monitoring and measuring impact: While Ecoplore has been successful in promoting sustainable practices, establishing a comprehensive system to monitor and measure the environmental and social impact of their initiatives can provide valuable insights and strengthen their sustainability efforts.

References

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://ecoplore.com/>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://ecobnb.com/>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.responsibletourismindia.com/stay/ecoplore/182>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://ecobnb.com/>

Chahat Trivedi, V. S. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://aim2flourish.com/innovations/eco-stays-a-new-way-of-tourism-1>

Rajesh Aithal, R. A. (2023). Retrieved from <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/WHATT-08-2022-0104/full/html?skipTracking=true>

CASE STUDY 3

Kumbh Mela and Sustainable Tourism

Rohit Mukhopadhyay

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

The Kumbh Mela (a temporary religious gathering) is one of the largest gatherings of pilgrims on earth. The festival is celebrated by religious rituals and taking a dip in the sacred river of the Ganges. The Kumbh is a celebration of spirituality and Sanatan (Hindu) faith where devotees take this as a ritual to liberate themselves through this festival of knowledge, asceticism and devotion. The 49-days Ardha (Half) Kumbh Mela that concluded in March 2019 had about 240 million visitors including 1.03 million foreign tourists.

Figure 1: Arial Photo of One Location of Ardha Kumbh Mela, March 2019



Source: Kumbh Mela, *Business Today*, January 16, 2019 from <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/economy-politics/story/kumbh-mela-2019-at-rs-4236-crore-this-year-mela-costliest-ever-160612-2019-01-16>ⁱ

It is believed in religious history that the fight between Rakhshasas (Demons) and Devas (Gods) the nectar of immortality ‘Kumbha’ fell in the rivers of Ganga, Jamuna, Sarasvati, Godavari and Shipra river, all the rivers are located in Allahabad, Haridwar, Ujjain and Nasik where this mesmerising and auspicious festival is held every four years. The Festival is usually celebrated for 55 days (Indian culture, n.d.).

The event condenses the science of astronomy, astrology, spirituality, ritualistic traditions, and a variety of cultural, social customs and practices making it very vibrant and rich in terms of knowledge and culture with a blend of regional ethnicity according to the areas of the country where it is celebrated.

An extraordinary observation in the celebration of the festival has been the participation of millions of people, irrespective of their caste, creed, gender, religion and nationality. People as devotees and tourists reach the place without any invitation. One gets to observe a conflux of all cultures contributing to the image of a ‘Mini India’ assembled at one place.

It is important to note that city population of Prayagraj is about 1.40 million with its usual infrastructure and economy. In addition, it receives about 240 million floating visitors within less than 2 months, however city receives about 50 million visitors on a particular scared dayiii. With such a huge congregation and hosting of devotees and pilgrims, the program requires special arrangements and logistics to be done by the municipal and state government to meet the requirement. It gives a significant boost to local economies in India’s most regions (north and center).

Table 1: UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity Location, Cities and Rivers for Kumbh Celebration

Place	River	Zodiac	Month	Note
Prayag (Allahabad)	Ganga and Yamuna	Jupiter in Aries / Taurus, Sun and Moon in Capricorn	Magha (January-February)	(February)”Magh Mela”, called the “mini Kumbh Mela”, is held annuall
Haridwar	Ganga	Jupiter in Aquarius, Sun in Aries	Chaitra (March-April)	
Trimbak (Nashik)	Godavari	Jupiter and Sun in Leo or Jupiter, Sun and Moon in Cancer on lunar conjunction (Amavasya)	Bhadrapada (August-September)	Also known as Simhastha / Sinhastha, when Leo is involved
Ujjain	Shipra	Jupiter in Leo, Sun in Aries or Jupiter, Sun, and Moon in Libra on Kartik Amavasya	Vaisakha (April-May)	Also known as Simhastha / Sinhastha, when Leo is involved

Source: Panchayati Akhada Mahanirvani, Prayag, (Kumbha Parva Chakra)ⁱⁱ

The large population of saints and religious gurus at one place is sufficient attraction for devotees to visit the festival and observe the company of the participants. This demands a serious work at the end of city administration and government for transportation, stay, food, safety and security, religious activities, disaster management, waste management, and every other possible requirement and threat in design. This is largest gathering within sustainable tourism context and management of such large visitors without city being de-shaped and destroyed with pressure. This case presents the Kumbh event, base planning and innovations to manage large gathering with sustainability practices.

1.2 Purpose

Kumbh Mela is gathering of saints, devotees, and other faith citizens to experience peace and spiritual reflections by the saints and religious gurus. The purpose is to observe the churning of our minds to go deeper into ourselves from where all powers and auspicious things arise, eventually leading to liberation or immortality.

1.3 Planning and services

In order to manage a huge gathering of millions of pilgrims and devotees it has been recognised over a span of years for proper amenities to be set up. Some of the amenities provided by the Kumbh are as follows:

Temporary housing facilities, called as “tent cities” or “pandals,” are erected up to offer lodging for pilgrims. The size and features of these tents can range from basic to opulent. The lodging spaces have amenities such as beds, blankets, and rudimentary sanitary facilities.

Crowd management facilities: The Mela administration deploys personnel to safeguard the pilgrims for smooth and safe movement. Mela police deploys around 35,000 officers and paramilitaries to regulate crowds and ensure women's safety.

Medical facilities: Specialized medical facilities are set up to supply participants with healthcare services. Temporary hospitals and clinics with physicians, nurses, and medical personnel are put up to provide medical assistance, emergency services, and first aid. (Verma, March 23, 2022).

Security and safety: Police officers, security guards, and volunteers are on hand to handle crowd control, preserve law and order, and help as required. CCTV cameras, barriers, and other security measures are used to ensure a safe atmosphere. Police department procured and installed 30 cameras for a cost of Rs 1.05 crores which stored a minimum of 10 pages of graphics and data for GPRS.

Transit and infrastructure: During the event, temporary bridges, roadways, and other infrastructure are built to control the flow of people and vehicles.

Figure 2: Tents Put at the Kumbh Mela for the Stay of the Pilgrims, Devotees and Tourists



Figure 3: Overview of the Kumbh Mela 2019, Government Assessment



Overview of Kumbh Mela 2019



- **24 crore pilgrims** experienced a safe and memorable pilgrimage
- Set up over **3200 hectares** around the Sangam
- More than **5337 institutions** set up camp in the Mela
- **>15 Lakh Kalpvasis** stayed for the entire duration
- First-ever **Swachh Kumbh**
- **User-experience centric design thinking**, with innovative governance structure
- Secure and **Incident-free** Mela
- Flawless **transport and crowd management**
- **Digital Kumbh**
- Inclusive Kumbh – **Gender sensitive** and **senior-citizen friendly** planning
- **Focus on aesthetics** through Paint My City campaign
- **3 Guinness World Records** created
- Appreciated by Hon'ble **President of India**, Hon'ble **Prime Minister of India**, and Hon'ble **Vice-President of India**, Hon'ble **CM of UP**, among others
- International event, hosted **Heads of Missions of 70 countries**, **3200 Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas Delegates**, and **Delegates from 182 countries**






President of India
@PranabKumar

As the Kumbh Mela begins, greetings to fellow citizens and to pilgrims from across the world. The Kumbh is an important part of India's spiritual and cultural heritage. Appreciate efforts of the Union and Uttar Pradesh govts in this logistically massive exercise #PresidentKovind

Source: Kumbh Mela report 2019, <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/Prayagraj.pdf>

Cultural activities and exhibitions: The Kumbh Mela offers a wide variety of cultural activities, exhibitions, and performances. Renowned artists, musicians, dancers, and spiritual leaders perform and lead cultural events, religious talks, and spiritual discourses. For example, Vodafone India, engaged customers by showing videos and providing musical earmuffs with built-in speakers that played religious songs. They put religious music in the earmuffs and branded them with the Vodafone logo and a message telling consumers to phone 123 to listen to devotional tunes (Verma, March 23, 2022).

1.4 Market and profit aspects of the Kumbh Mela

As per information shared by to the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), revenues of about USD 15.5 billion in trade. The government expenditure in planning of the event is estimated to be approx. USD 900 million.

Over 600,000 jobs were created. From the total, about 1250,000 work force were engaged in hospitality alone, with hundreds of thousands more working as tour operations and in airlines, local transportation and logistics, as official and informal guides, and in emergency and auxiliary support systems. Medical tourism and ecotourism related with the event alone provide around 85,000 jobs. They also reported that around a million international tourists attend the festival.

The local government generated a revenue of about USD 2.2 billion from the Kumbh Mela. This was primarily on account of upper middle class and rich class religious tourism and contributed by about 1.03 million international tourists who attended the festival (Sengupta, 2019).

To house such a multitude, city authorities erected a mini-city of more than 4,000 tents, the city is lit by installing over 40,000 LED lights. Key infrastructure of the city is renovated and necessary projects are built, including upgrading nine railways stations and construction of a new airport terminal in Allahabad. The setting up of this new city in the huge Mela area involves 250 km of roads and 22 pontoon bridges, which is created in the largest temporary city in the world for ease of the visitors, and secured and smooth operations by city administration.

1.5 Target market

1. Saints and religious participants: The Kumbh Mela is an important spiritual and social gathering for the saints and religious practitioners. It provides them with a forum to demonstrate their ancient traditions, engage with their followers, and establish ties among their own sects.

2. **Pilgrims:** It is a one-of-a-kind event that draws people from all walks of life, allowing pilgrims to connect with their religion and take part in an incredible demonstration of devotion and solidarity.
3. **Tourists:** The Kumbh Mela provides an amazing experience for travellers interested in seeing India's rich cultural and spiritual legacy and witnessing one of the world's largest gatherings of mankind.
4. **Corporate:** Corporates must approach their engagement in the Kumbh Mela with awareness and respect for the event's spiritual and cultural importance. Participating in the Kumbh Mela may be a mutually beneficial experience, allowing corporations to connect with a large audience while also positively contributing to the festival and the local community.
5. **Vendors and agencies:** Vendors and other agencies play a critical role in ensuring the smooth management of the Kumbh Mela, handling logistical issues, and providing key services to ensure the millions of pilgrims and tourists who attend the festival have a safe and spiritually gratifying experience.

1.6 Organisation and management

The Kumbh Mela is organised and managed by government entities, religious organisations, and local organisations who collaborate to ensure the festival runs well. While the specifics of each Kumbh Mela location may differ, below is a broad outline of the important entities involved:

Figure 4: The Kumbh Mela Every Year Witnesses the Participation of International Tourists



Since the advent of Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan in 2014 a lot of effort is being put by State and Local level governments in maintaining hygiene and cleanliness apart from various units of administration and management with a huge focus on Environmental Sustainability and tourism sustainability. The concept of 'Swachh Kumbh' was an instrumental initiative in the driving an event of a huge population not side-lining hygiene and environment. Kumbh Mela issues tenders to the organizations/ NGOs/ Corporates for the provision of services. The festival is possible due to management by multiple stakeholders involved.

Figure 5: Governance Structure of Kumbh Mela 2019



Source: Kumbh Mela report 2019, <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/Prayagraj.pdf>

Kumbh Mela administration: Each Kumbh Mela location has a specific administration in charge of the event's overall management. A senior government official, such as a District Magistrate or Commissioner, is normally in charge of this administration. They oversee coordinating and carrying out operations such as infrastructure construction, crowd control, and security measures.

Municipal corporations, urban development authorities and other relevant government bodies: Municipal corporations, urban development authorities, and other relevant government bodies play an important role in providing required infrastructure and services.

Police and security forces: They are responsible for crowd management, traffic movement, and emergency response. Disaster management and rescue activities are also carried out by specialised organisations such as the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

Figure 6: Sustainability Practices Innovative Solutions, Government Invitation to NGOs, Start-ups and Corporates

#MeForSwachhKumbh

SWACHH KUMBH CHAMP

The Swachh Kumbh Champ Campaign of Kumbh Mela Pradhikaran seeks to mobilize people to come out and get directly involved with the cleanliness efforts of Kumbh 2019 by offering shramdaan for swachhta.

This is a competition to identify approaches, methods and/or solutions to identify Swachhta Champions for Swachh Kumbh 2019. Submissions can be made by individuals, students, schools, colleges, officials, partner organisations, NGOs, technical institutions, academia, CSOs, the government, private sector or others.

The Campaign aims to select, reward and share success stories and lessons from the participants, and will kickstart on October 2nd, 2018, with the launch of Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth year celebrations in India.

Identification of Swachh Kumbh Champ will happen on a weekly basis and screening will be done every Monday. Individuals/group of individuals involved in the following Swachhta activities can apply for the competition by mailing before/after photo and a write-up of not more than 100 words explaining about their effort to swachhkumbh@gmail.com

- 🌱 Innovative and engaging way of garbage hot-spot beautification through wall painting, plantation etc.
- 🌱 Successfully implementing waste segregation at household/community level
- 🌱 Converting waste to manure at household/community level
- 🌱 Re-using waste to make items of use, decoration etc eg- paper bag, cloth bag
- 🌱 Promoting cleanliness and hygiene through engaging ways in schools and communities eg- promotion of hand-wash, awareness regarding the use of toilets etc.
- 🌱 Involved in cleaning-up of Public spots, tourist spots, railway and bus stops and statues etc.
- 🌱 Involved in Ghat cleaning and eco-conservation of Ganges
- 🌱 Involved in the upliftment of the plight of Sanitation workers
- 🌱 Involved in creating awareness on the subject of cleanliness by organising events
- 🌱 Other activities that make a difference in the life of people through practice of cleanliness

Come join the Swachh Kumbh Champ Campaign to make a mark!

Prayagraj Mela Authority, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

www.kumbh.gov.in
 /PrayagrajKumbh
 /PrayagrajKumbh
 /Kumbh.2015
 /Kumbh2019

Source: Kumbh Mela website

Religious organisations and akharas: The Kumbh Mela is overseen by a number of religious organisations and sects. The akharas, which are historic organizations, play an important role in event management. Each akhara has its own administration and is responsible for its members' involvement, processions' organizing, and collaboration with authorities.

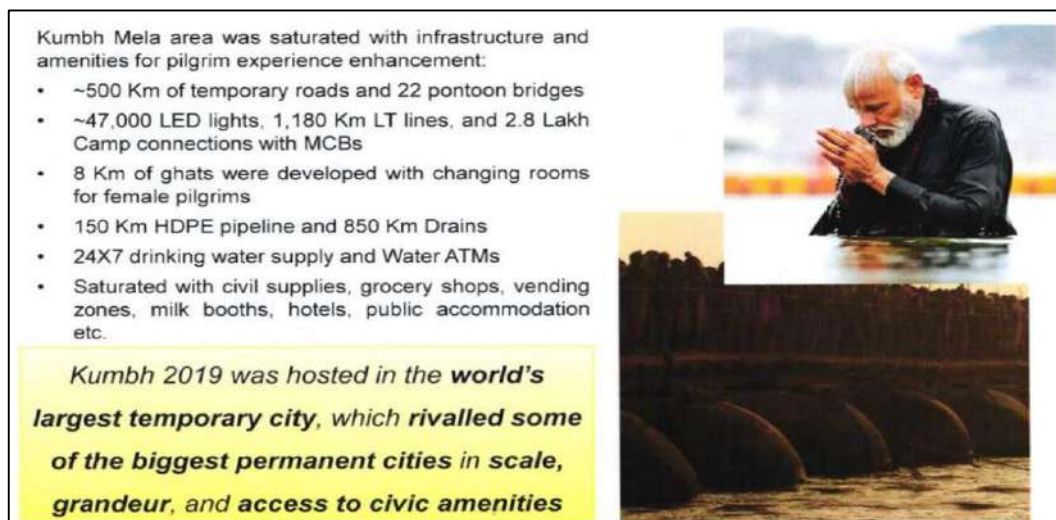
1.7 Cost Structure and Revenue Streams

1.7.1 The Kumbh Mela's cost structure and income streams

The following is the basic structure of the Kumbh Mela:

- Infrastructure Development - This entails building temporary housing, roads, bridges, sanitary systems, lighting, and other amenities for the participants.
- Security and safety measures are a top priority, as is maintaining law and order, crowd management, and safeguarding the safety of the millions of guests. The expense includes the deployment of a large number of security people, the installation of surveillance equipment, and the provision of emergency services.
- Administration and logistics expenditures include processing registrations, granting permits, collaborating with numerous government agencies, managing transportation systems, and directing overall event operations.

Figure 6: Temporary City Establishment of Kumbh Mela 2019



Source: Kumbh Mela report 2019, <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/Prayagraj.pdf>^v

1.8 Revenue streams of Kumbh Mela

- **Donations:** The Kumbh Mela receives significant donations from devotees, corporate companies, akhadas and as well as the government. These contributions will be used to support the costs of arranging and managing the event.
- **Fees and charges:** Event organizers frequently charge fees for stalls, camps and facilities made available to participants. This includes lodging, unique darshans (ritualistic viewing of deities), and other perks.
- **Corporate sponsorships** play an important part in sponsoring the Kumbh Mela. They give cash assistance in return for branding and advertising possibilities during the event. Sponsors profit from the event's high visibility and publicity.
- **Government aid:** The government releases tenders to the companies for financial aid to the Kumbh Mela at several levels. Grants, subsidies, and donations to infrastructure construction and event management are examples of this.
- **Tourism and the local economy:** The Kumbh Mela is a major tourist attraction, drawing both local and foreign visitors. The increased economic activity in the host city benefits local companies, hotels, restaurants, and transportation services.

Figure 7: Sponsors to the Pilgrims, Devotees and Tourists



Source: Kumbh Mela official website. (Kumbh, 2019)^v

1.9 Sponsors

The Sponsors for the event are either Temple Trusts, Government Administration and Corporates.

- **Temple trusts:** Many Temple Trusts such as Trimbakeshwar Temple Trust of Nashik, Ganga Sabha of Haridwar also sponsor essential services for the devotees and tourists.
- **Government administration:** Government works by way of collaborating and delegating department and tasks of the kumbh to various corporates and NGOs. The Government takes out Tenders for the requesting suitable bids for various items/products and services.
- **Corporates:** At the mela, Colgate distributed around 3,00,00,000 Vedshakti toothpastes. Meanwhile, Welspun introduced their QUICK DRY line. To build awareness, the business wants to send geo-targeted invites to pilgrims with the goal of engaging at least five lakh consumers.
- The Tata Group of Companies worked with Uttar Pradesh Administration in the 2013 Kumbh Mela for providing clean drinking water to the devotees and tourists (Annu Baranwal, 2015)
- Reliance Jio developed an app for the Kumbh that would include partner businesses and advertising, as well as a call to action.
- Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL), an Indian home and personal care company, has introduced a variety of initiatives under its names, including Goodknight Power Chip, Godrej Protekt Mr. Magic, Godrej No.1 and Godrej Nupur.

During the current Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj, Lifebuoy, a Hindustan Unilever (HUL) hygiene brand, is educating people about hygiene through 'Swasthya Chetna Thalish'. In cooperation with advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather, the country's top consumer goods company teamed with over 100 dhabas and hotels around the mela venue to serve rotis imprinted with 'Lifebuoy se haath dhoye kya?' (loosely translated as 'Have you washed your hand with Lifebuoy?') (Tewari, 29 Jan 2019).

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

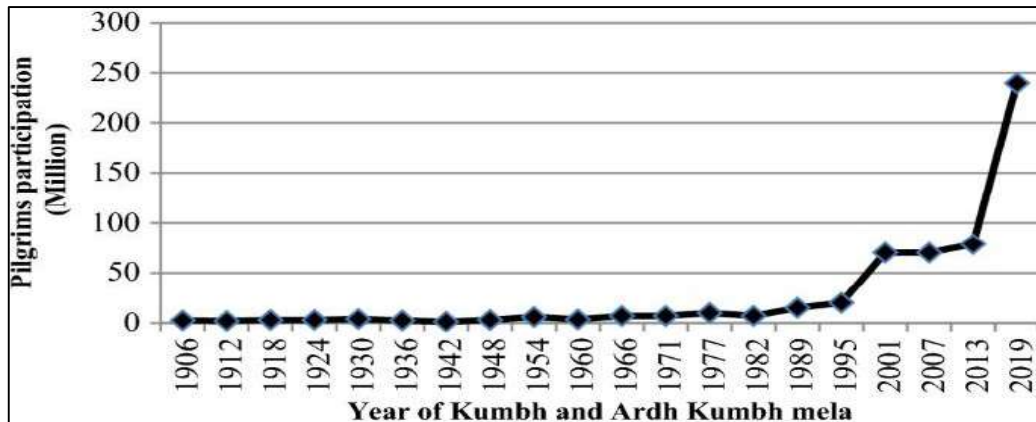
2.1 Problem faced by Kumbh Mela

Considering the participation of millions of devotees at one place at a particular point of time very obviously implies double the amount of waste generation this makes waste management, sanitation and hygiene a topic of utmost concern. There are several obstacles that are frequently encountered while organizing an event that has a negative influence on the environment.

Each year the Kumbh Mela attracts more number of devotees, pilgrims and tourists as mapping of the attendees cannot be accurate at all times therefore it poses a lot

of infrastructural issues especially when it comes to maintaining public health ,providing proper sanitation facilities and developing a proper system for solid waste management (Pulit P Kasodariya, March, 2020).

Figure 8: Pilgrim’s Participation Posing New Challenges in Each Event



Source: vi

Some of the other challenges faced and anticipated by the organising committee are as follows,

- Water and sanitation issues
- Safe stay and accommodation
- Cleanliness and hygiene issues
- Availability of sufficient food
- Medical support system
- Security and law enforcement issues
- City management with high visitor pressure
- Parking management issues
- Traffic management and transportation issues
- Any other governance challenge

2.2 The tourism opportunities and business idea

This kind and size of event is a great tourism opportunity also. City develops new economic opportunities and also invites many companies and agencies for delivering support services to strengthen the operations and governance.

A business idea focusing on synergies between the working of government administration, corporates, NGOs and majorly community participation will be instrumental in dealing with problem of waste management and challenges arising in the sanitation and hygiene at the Mela. This Idea can be justified on a Partnership Model.

- **Segregation:** To organise awareness program. Segregation to wet and dry waste at sources. Promoting recycle & reuse of segregated material. Program to ensure community participation in waste segregation.
- **Secondary collection:** Adequate number of covered storage bins. Colorization of the bins. Avoid manual handling of waste
- **Transportation:** Covered transportation vehicles. Avoid multiple handling of waste. No open dumping. Clearance frequency
- **Processing:** Recyclable should be recycled. Biodegradable waste has to be inserted and preferable reused after processing like compost. Etc. Processing done at dumping site, segregating biodegradable, and processing.
- **Disposal:** Land fill/ incineration plant
- **Community engagement and empowerment:** Collaborate with local groups to assist community development initiatives, conduct awareness programs and motivate the community to participate in waste management programs. The Ganga Action Parivar was one organization which saw the involvement of religious leaders held teaching sessions on health , hygiene and the religious importance of keeping the ganga clean, despite kumbh symbolising bathing as a ritual and auspicious dip in the river they did not participate in bathing The festival also included religious leaders who came to hold teaching sessions with their disciples and shared concerns about the river's pollution levels, but did not participate in the bathing rituals Green Kumbh initiative emphasize the importance of keeping the Ganges clean (Cash, May, 2014).
- **Marketing and promotion:** Create a strong online presence and use digital marketing tactics to reach the audience. This can be made through usage of convincing online creatives on topics of cleanliness and hygiene and a website dedicated to attracting collaboration with probable start-ups/NGOs and corporates who can contribute towards maintaining cleanliness and hygiene.

2.3 External analysis

The macro impact of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: With the advent of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan in 2014 focus has been towards progressive behavioural change communication in dealing with solid waste management . As per statistics and

reports 80% of the attendees are from rural areas, the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) has worked to a great extent in bringing about a positive shift in dealing with problems such as open defecation and garbage management. Improvements in orientation about cleanliness and open defecation has been observed, however there is still a lot of scope for achieving the pinnacle of cleanliness, sanitation and hygiene which is under process (Behera, 2021).

The concept of Swachh Kumbh: The first ever kumbh after the advent of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan in 2019 witnessed the participation of 20,000 sanitation workers, 1500 Swachhgrahis (These were the volunteers whose job was to educate and motivate the kumbh attendees to keep the area clean), the installation of sewage treatment plants to treat about 1.2 Lakhs of waste was installed, Process of Bioremediation and Geo Bag was also used in treating garbage and environment pollutants. Improvement in human and technical infrastructure dedicated towards keeping kumbh premises clean was clearly visible.

International tourism: The Kumbh Mela in 2019 witnessed the participation of about 4 lakh foreign tourists. Government did promotions of initiatives such as ‘Chalo Kumbh Chalo’.

2.4 Internal analysis

The Government administration and other departments such as municipality corporations have a huge role in the execution and maintenance of cleanliness at the Mela. While inviting probable vendors, contractors and organizations for various tasks related to sanitation and hygiene can be a step forward, the supervisory effectiveness and efficiency can take it a step backwards.

- Often Land acquisition for the kumbh has caused problems as it is a temporary city, the debate many at times has been about whether to fix the land space on a permanent basis or to occupy land as and when its time for the festival, it can be problematic even if it is done on an advance basis.
- Tendering procedures with apportionment of funds in a timely manner is critical for keeping material, human and technical resources in the right place at the right point of time.
- Planning and deployment of sewerage lines and toilets should be done with a proper layout and identification.
- A careful study and intervention plan is to be planned and executed keep in mind the crowd management, the akharas and the entire setting of the kumbh.
- Each year cities change for kumbh which poses challenges which are very impromptu in nature and all of a sudden can require mass movement.

2.5 Activities

Here are some activities and practices that can help in effective solid waste management: Source Separation: Encourage devotees, tourists and businesses to separate their waste into different categories such as recyclables, organic waste, and non-recyclables. This makes it easier to manage and recycle waste.

Recycling programs: Implement recycling programs for materials like paper, plastic, glass, metal, and electronic waste. Set up recycling collection points and educate the public about the importance of recycling. Example – Several Start-ups are working on this concept and recycling material into Fabrics and Sportswear. Example – Trash to Treasure works on creating fabric from plastic, Alcis Sport is working on manufacturing sportswear at nominal prices. Companies can also participate (Datt, 2022).

Composting: Promote composting of organic waste like food scraps and yard waste to create nutrient-rich compost for gardens and landscapes. Temple Trusts, Akharas and NGOs can plan small activities with small incentives to motivate the attendees towards such activities.

Landfill management: Properly design, manage, and monitor landfills to reduce environmental pollution and the release of greenhouse gases. This shall require the cooperation between Government Administration, Akharas and NGOs.

Public awareness and education: Conduct public awareness campaigns to educate people about waste reduction, recycling, and proper waste disposal techniques. While NGOs can easily convince children and women section of the population with activities like “Collect Plastic, get rewarded”. Temple Trusts can educate the devotees and Kalpavasis.

Street cleaning and litter removal: Regularly clean public spaces, streets, and parks to prevent littering and illegal dumping. NGOs can mobilise Youth with proper planning and execution related to the meeting spot and end spot and organize a youth brigade on Cleanliness and Litter dumping.

Waste collection and transportation: Efficiently organize waste collection routes and use appropriate transportation methods to minimize costs and environmental impacts.

Community involvement: Engage community members and local organizations in waste management initiatives and activities.

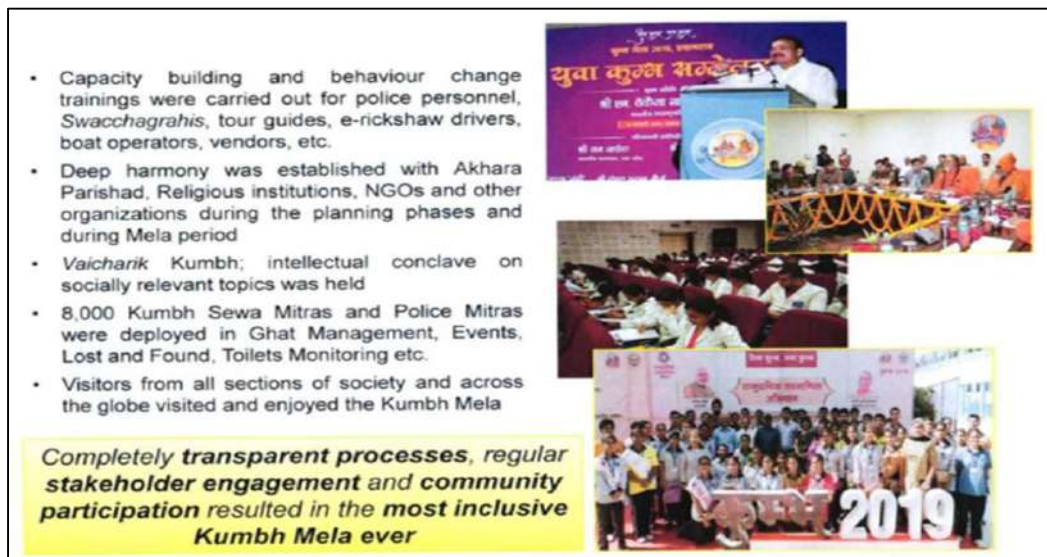
Policy and legislation: Advocate for and support policies and legislation that promote sustainable waste management practices. Laws should be stricter with Penalties for littering and open defecation.

2.6 Stakeholders

A program of such huge size demands large planning with all possible stakeholders engaged in governance, operations and security-

- **Government and regulatory bodies:** Government institutions at various levels, such as local municipalities and tourism boards, can be stakeholders. They have a huge role in planning, managing, inviting corporates/ NGOs for collaborations and administering the entire mela. The onus of managing the entire mela lies on them.
- **Local community:** the local community, including people and businesses, can be stakeholders in waste management awareness. As often the plight or introduction of any new idea/ technology can influence their lifestyle in myriad ways.
- **Pilgrims, kalpavasis and tourists:** Considering their participation in the Mela for 55 days they play an instrumental role in affecting the environment in a positive or negative way.
- **Local youth:** Involving local youths in waste management initiatives can be highly beneficial for both the environment and the community. By involving local youths in waste management activities, we can instil a sense of responsibility, just like the concept of ‘Yuva Tourism Club’ in spreading awareness about the importance of cleanliness.

Figure 9: Stakeholder Management and Inclusive Approach



Source: Kumbh Mela report 2019, <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/Prayagraj.pdf>^{vii}

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The Target Market majorly consists of attendees who attend the Kumbh Mela. These attendees are as follows:

- Tourists
- Pilgrims
- Local youths
- Local residents
- Municipal corporations
- Corporate bodies
- AKHADAS (The Target Market for Ecotourism: Who to Aim For and Why!, March 2, 2022)

2.8 Partners

From an administrative perspective it is often the Government which delegates various areas of work such as Sanitation, hygiene, public infrastructure, medical services etc. these usually take place through a 'tendering process' however many a times different corporates have also come forward to sponsor their products and services for the attendees at Kumbh Mela. Some of the key partners are the following:

- **Local municipalities and government bodies:** The local municipal authorities and relevant government departments are usually responsible for managing waste during such events. They can coordinate waste collection, disposal, and recycling efforts.
- **Regional NGOs:** Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focused on environmental conservation and sustainability can play a significant role in waste management. They often organize awareness campaigns, waste segregation drives, and recycling initiatives.
- **Waste management companies:** Collaborating with waste management companies that specialize in event waste collection and disposal can ensure efficient and organized waste removal. These companies often have the necessary equipment and expertise to handle large volumes of waste
- **Volunteer groups:** Engaging local volunteer groups or community organizations can help with waste segregation, collection, and spreading awareness about responsible waste disposal among the event attendees. These include NGOs as well as temple trust organizations.
- **Sanitation companies:** Sanitation companies can provide portable toilets, waste bins, and hygiene facilities to maintain cleanliness and proper waste disposal. Example – Sulabh International Pvt Ltd.

- **Yuva tourism club:** Collaborating with local schools or colleges having Yuva Tourism Club can be instrumental in raising awareness among younger generations.
- **Media and communication agencies:** Partnerships with media and communication agencies can help spread awareness about responsible waste disposal practices and encourage event attendees to participate actively. These include creating influencing communication material aiming at sensitizing the attendees about waste management.
- **Health and safety organizations:** Ensuring that waste management practices align with health and safety standards is crucial, so partnering with organizations focused on public health and safety is essential.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives:** Companies interested in corporate social responsibility can sponsor waste management initiatives, contributing funds and resources to ensure effective waste management during the event.

2.9 Marketing and communication activities

Social media campaigns: Despite the digital divide and with more than 80% population coming from the Rural India. Social Media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram are highly popular which can play a big role in sensitizing the attendees about the importance of cleanliness and hygiene at the Kumbh.

- Create engaging and informative social media pages, posts, videos, and infographics that highlight the importance of responsible waste disposal and recycling.
- Use event-specific hashtags to encourage attendees to share their waste management experiences and tips.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs): Develop short, impactful PSAs for television, radio, and online platforms that convey the importance of waste reduction and responsible disposal. Ideas like “Swachhta ka maan Karo, Kumbh Samman Karo”, “Swachh Kumbh, Swachh snan”

Information booths and displays: Set up information booths at strategic locations within the event area to provide attendees with information on waste segregation, recycling, and disposal methods.

2.9.1 Gamification and contests

- Create waste management challenges or contests that encourage attendees to actively participate in waste reduction.
- Offer rewards or incentives for attendees who follow responsible waste disposal practices.

2.9.2 Live demonstrations

- Organize live demonstrations of waste sorting and recycling processes to showcase how proper waste management works.
- Invite attendees to participate and learn hands-on about waste segregation.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

The Target market remains the Event attendees which usually is dominated by participation from Rural India and two tier and three tier cities of India. The Rural India represents a microcosm of the Indian Society and since waste management remains a topic of global importance for the country, the Kumbh Mela with the initiatives mentioned above also gives an opportunity for sensitization and leading the pathway to gradual behavioural change orientation towards managing and treating waste. Through the following initiatives incremental change is possible:

3.1.1 Event attendees

- Awareness and Education: The target market, comprising event attendees, will become more aware of the importance of responsible waste disposal, recycling, and overall environmental and community well-being.
- Practicing in daily lives: Attendees may adopt better waste management practices during the event and carry these practices forward in their daily lives, leading to reduced waste generation and improved recycling rates.
- Word of Mouth: Promoting the same through a word of mouth in communities and affinities can go a long way considering it coming from an 'insider of the community'.

3.1.2 Local communities

- Infrastructure and health and hygiene improvement: Effective waste management can lead to improved waste collection and disposal infrastructure in local communities, leaving a lasting positive impact on the area's cleanliness, health, hygiene and socio-economic well-being. "The buck spend on health can be spent on improving the standard of living and accessing the requisite resources and services for a nominal living"

3.1.3 Environment

- **Reduced landfill burden:** Efficient waste management reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills, extending their lifespan and minimizing their negative environmental impact.
- **Resource conservation:** Recycling and proper waste sorting conserve valuable resources such as energy, water, and raw materials that would otherwise be used in manufacturing new products.
- **Prevention of ecological harm:** Responsible waste management prevents harm to local ecosystems, wildlife, and marine life caused by litter and improper waste disposal.

3.1.4 Local economy

- **Job creation:** The implementation of waste management initiatives can create employment opportunities in waste collection, segregation, recycling, and related activities.
- **Tourism and reputation:** A clean and well-managed event space enhances the overall experience for attendees, potentially leading to positive word-of-mouth, increased tourism, and improved event reputation. “With synergies and concerted efforts everyone achieves more from the ground staff getting an earning, start-ups getting funds and visibility and great grand companies getting customer goodwill”

3.1.5 Sustainability goals

- **Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Effective waste management aligns with several SDGs, including responsible consumption and production, clean water and sanitation, and climate action.
- **Long-term impact:** Promoting responsible waste management practices can instil a sense of environmental responsibility among attendees, contributing to long-term sustainability efforts beyond the event. “From micro level impact to a macro effect”.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Here’s how different stakeholders can be affected by well-executed waste management efforts:

3.2.1 Event attendees

- With efforts made by Government and several other initiatives undertaken by Corporates and NGOs it is very likely that the impact will be visible in a gradual yet

incremental way towards the orientation in managing waste. This will result in positive behavioural change and leading to a ripple effect in their respective communities. This is very likely as Indian communities highly value “collectivism”.

3.2.2 Government authorities

- **Public goodwill:** Waste Management has come to be endorsed by the Swachh Bharat Policy. Governments putting efforts for the same shall be recognised nationally and internationally and also lead to earning public goodwill.
- **Regulatory compliance:** Successful waste management demonstrates compliance with waste disposal regulations, avoiding fines and legal issues at the National level.
- **Environmental conservation:** Reduced littering and pollution contribute to maintaining the cleanliness and health of the event area and surrounding regions. This shall save further from repercussions of ‘Over-tourism’.

3.2.3 Waste management companies

- **Business opportunities:** Collaborating with events like the Kumbh Mela offers waste management companies revenue opportunities through waste collection, transportation, recycling, and disposal services.
- **Showcasing expertise:** Demonstrating effective waste management in a high-profile event can showcase the capabilities of waste management companies, leading to more contracts and business prospects.

3.2.4 Local communities

- **Clean environment:** Well-managed waste disposal enhances the quality of life for local residents by minimizing the environmental impact of waste accumulation and reducing pollution.
- **Job creation:** Waste management initiatives may create employment opportunities for local residents in roles such as waste collection, sorting, and recycling.

3.2.5 NGOs

- **Partnerships and credibility:** Successful waste management initiatives provide NGOs with a platform to raise awareness about environmental issues and advocate for sustainable practices, collaborating with event organizers showcases the importance of NGOs’ expertise in promoting sustainable waste management. These initiatives will help in getting credibility, recognition and funds.

3.2.6 Environment

- **Reduced pollution:** Proper waste management minimizes pollution, conserving natural resources, protecting ecosystems, and benefiting the local environment.

3.3 Impact for the environment

In a world facing growing environmental challenges, prioritizing effective waste management is crucial. Principles of community sanitation and community health which is inseparable from the environment is strongly etched in the value system of India. However the challenge mostly arises in sustaining those practices in a dynamic globalised world which is ever changing. With huge growth in population also hinting at participation rates at kumbh increasing each year there is much more need of concerted efforts and synergies of institutions in effectuating positive results for the environment and in tackling the issues of environment and waste management.

3.4 Impact on the Kumbh Mela

The following impact can be cited from the perspective of impact on the organizing government administration as it has a pivotal role to play in the better execution of the Mela,

- **Environmental responsibility and overall well-being of the attendees:** If government administration is able to put the best measures for dispensing its administrative and environmental responsibilities, it shall lead to less health issues, less diseases and cleanliness
- **Regulatory compliance and setting an example:** When a Government administration is able to handle solid waste management it will be able to create a good example in front of the National Green Tribunal and also for other governments organizing such mass gatherings
- **Networking and partnerships:** Setting a good example of managing the Kumbh Mela can lead to attracting best of corporates, volunteer group who will come forward to extend their support by providing services and products and make the mela more conducive for everyone.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

Using adequate infrastructure which includes -material, human and technical can be of great help in minimizing the overall plight brought in the by the mishandling and mismanagement of solid waste. Deploying resources is one thing, however the proper execution on the ground makes a huge difference. The proper execution can take place

by involving multiple stakeholder communities and working with synergies towards focused goals allocated to each. This shall not only help in the execution of the Mela, but will also be a step forward contributing to a more sustainable and resilient society.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

In contemplating waste management, we are reminded that our planet's health is intricately linked to how we handle our waste. By embracing sustainable practices, championing innovation, and fostering a collective commitment to responsible waste management, we can reshape the narrative surrounding waste and forge a more sustainable path forward.

Endnotes

- i Kumar, C. (2019, January 2019). Economy Politics . Retrieved from Business Today: <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/economy-politics/story/kumbh-mela-2019-at-rs-4236-crore-this-year-mela-costliest-ever-160612-2019-01-16>
- ii Kumbha Parva Chakra . (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.kumbhmela.com/kumbha-parva-chakra>
- iii Prayagraj Mela Authority, Govt of U.P. (2019). Retrieved from Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances: <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/Prayagraj.pdf>
- iv Prayagraj Mela Authority, Govt of U.P. (2019). Retrieved from Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances: <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/Prayagraj.pdf>
- v Kumbh . (2019). Retrieved from UP Government : <http://kumbh.gov.in/en/pressrelease>
- vi Kanaujiya, A.K., Tiwari, V. Crowd Management and Strategies for Security and Surveillance During the Large Mass Gathering Events: The Prayagraj Kumbh Mela 2019 Experience. *Natl. Acad. Sci. Lett.* 45, 263–273 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40009-022-01114-w>
- vii Prayagraj Mela Authority, Govt of U.P. (2019). Retrieved from Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances: <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/Prayagraj.pdf>

References

Annu Baranwal, A. A. (2015). Managing the Earth's biggest mass gathering event and WASH conditions: Maha Kumbh Mela (India). *PLoS currents*.

Behera, M. R. (2021). Achievements and challenges of India's sanitation campaign under clean India mission. *Journal of Education and Health Promotion*.

Cash, D. R. (May, 2014). Toilets and sanitation at the Kumbh Mela. *Harvard University*.

Culture, I. B. (n.d.). Indian culture. Retrieved from <https://indianculture.gov.in/intangible-cultural-heritage/social-practices-rituals-and-festive-events/kumbh-mela>

Datt, A. (2022, September 16). Maps of India. Retrieved from <https://www.mapsofindia.com/my-india/society/five-indian-enterprises-that-are-upcycling-and-recycling-plastic-into-colourful-fabric>

ecobnb. (August 31, 2021). Sustainable Travel In India. ecobnb.

Galina Ekinil, V. P. (January 2020). Innovative aspects of ensuring the environmental safety of hotel enterprises. *ResearchGate*.

Grottola, C. (2021, May 16). Green hospitality: 10 eco-friendly steps for your hotel. ecobnb.

Kumar, C. (2019, January 2019). Economy politics. Retrieved from <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/economy-politics/story/kumbh-mela-2019-at-rs-4236-crore-this-year-mela-costliest-ever-160612-2019-01-16>

Kumbh. (2019). Retrieved from <http://kumbh.gov.in/en/pressrelease>

Kumbha Parva Chakra. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.kumbhmela.com/kumbha-parva-chakra>

Prayagraj Mela Authority, Govt of U.P. (2019). Retrieved from Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/Prayagraj.pdf>

Pulit P Kasodariya, H. J. (March, 2020). Sustainable climate impact management through solid waste planning: A case study of solid waste management for Maha Kumbh Mela 2025. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 7(1).

Sengupta, H. (2019). Why the Kumbh Mela is an economic blessing.

Tewari, S. (29 Jan 2019). HUL promotes its hygiene brand lifebuoy at kumbh mela. mint. (March 2, 2022). The Target Market for Ecotourism: Who to Aim For and Why!

Verma, K. (March 23, 2022). KUMBH: The holiest fiesta for brands where culture and religion meet consumers. *Alliance Manchester Business School - AMBS*.

CASE STUDY 4

NotOnMap

Anshuman Sharma

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Tourism is rebounding strongly, with twice as many travellers during the first quarter of 2023 as compared to the same period of 2022 (UNWTO, May 2023). India's travel and tourism revenue is projected to grow at an impressive CAGR of 13.59% to reach a market volume of USD 31.35 billion by 2027. However, amidst this surge in tourism, it is imperative to recognize that travel and tourism have inherent consequences, depleting valuable resources and leaving lasting ecological and social footprints. Put simple, tourism often destroys what the traveller is looking for. How do we change this? To address this issue, innovative and sustainable approaches must be adopted to transform the tourism industry, minimizing its negative impacts on the environment and local communities while preserving the authentic experiences sought by travellers.

NotOnMap is a trailblazing start up revolutionising the world of sustainable tourism. Founded in 2018, NotOnMap uses the power of travel for positive change and strives to strike a balance between traveller's exploration and conservation. While the start-up on the one hand introduces tourists to the warm hospitality of local hosts, the depth of the existential human essence found only in diverse cultural exchange, on the other hand, it uses travel as a tool to lessen distressed migration and uplift rural communities. It believes that every destination has a unique story to tell and very often these stories get overshadowed by the mainstream tourism. By doing so, it also bridges the urban with rural and equates the cultural and economic gap between the two. (NotOnMap, Home, n.d.)

Starting with a simple thought of 'Travel with Impact', the start-up champions the principles of sustainability, community engagement, and environmental stewardship and by doing so, aims to leave a positive footprint on every destination it serves.

1.1 Vision and Mission

Travel to impact travel to transform: The vision of NotOnMap is to create a world where travel is a catalyst for positive change, empowerment of local communities, preservation of cultural heritage, and conservation of the environment. The mission of NotOnMap is to revolutionize the travel industry by promoting sustainable and responsible tourism practices that benefits both travellers and the destinations they visit.

Their Vision and Mission encompass the following:

Explore the unexplored: They strive to uncover hidden, offbeat destinations that are rich in culture, nature, and heritage. By showcasing these lesser-known places, they offer travellers unique and authentic experiences while supporting local communities and reducing the strain on overcrowded tourist hotspots.

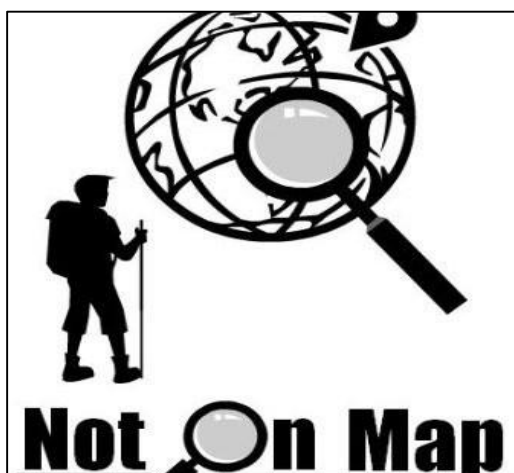
Empowerment of local communities: With the strong belief that local communities are the custodians of cultural heritage, NotOnMap creates local champions, collaborate with local entrepreneurs, tribes, and rural communities, ensuring that they benefit economically, socially, and culturally from tourism.

Fostering sustainability: Sustainability lies at the heart of their mission resulting in responsible travel practices, responsible tourism initiatives, minimising adverse environmental impact, conservation of natural resources thereby respecting and maintaining the delicate balance of ecosystems. Part of the start-up's revenue goes in development of the local people and their village.

Curating meaningful experiences: The travel experiences go beyond the surface level tourist attractions and are immersive and transformative journeys. The larger goal is to create meaningful connections between travellers and local communities, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation.

Drive social impact: NotOnMap prioritize on community development, cultural preservation, and economic empowerment by supporting local businesses, and initiating social projects.

Figure 1: NotOnMap logo



1.2 Products/services

NotOnMap offers a range of products and services for various stakeholders across the sustainable tourism ecosystem. (NotOnMap, Home, n.d.)

1.2.1 Travellers

- **Rustic & rare destinations:** NotOnMap are far away from the concept of luxury stays. They provide travellers with a curated selection of offbeat accommodations, homestays, eco-lodges and boutique hotels crafted by local villagers who want travellers to witness their livelihood, traditions and hospitality.
- **Exclusive experiences:** These experiences help travellers deep dive into the culture, people and environment of the place they travel by experiencing the raw and rustic village life, meals with locals and first-hand peep into the cultural traditions.
- **Long stay options:** Long-stay options are available for travellers who want to either enjoy a home away from home or want to literally work from anywhere.
- **Customized itineraries:** NotOnMap offers personalized itineraries tailored to the preferences and interests of individual travellers, allowing them to create their own ideal travel experience.
- **Give back to society:** With the belief that stakeholders must positively impact each other, NotOnMap encourages travellers to share their knowledge with the communities they travel to by organising interactive activities, workshops and volunteering.

1.2.2 Local communities

- **Community empowerment:** NotOnMap collaborates with local communities, creates local champions and empowers them to participate in tourism activities and showcase their cultural heritage, traditions, and craftsmanship.
- **Economic opportunities:** By promoting community-owned accommodations and facilitating tourism-related businesses, NotOnMap helps local communities generate income and improve their livelihoods.
- **Capacity building:** They provide training and support to local community members, helping them develop skills in hospitality, tour guiding, and sustainable practices.
- **Not on mart:** NotOnMart focuses on helping farmers and craftsmen who struggle to expand into urban marketplaces and connect with consumers by reducing the length of the supply chain system. Over 3000 farmers and craftsmen have been reached out to by NotOnMart and over 2000 indigenous items have been featured. (tribuneindia, n.d.)

1.2.3 Accommodation partners

- **Market access:** NotOnMap connects accommodation partners, such as homestays and eco-lodges, with a wider audience of travellers seeking unique and sustainable lodging options.
- **Promotion and marketing:** They promote partner accommodations through their platform, increasing visibility and attracting travellers who appreciate authentic and responsible travel experiences.

1.2.4 Government, NGOs and organisations

- NotOnMap collaborates with governments, NGOs, and organizations to promote sustainable tourism and raise awareness on environmental issues. They advocate for policies, form partnerships for projects, share research, and conduct training programs. (travel.economicstimes.indiatimes, n.d.)
- They work with State Tourism Boards of Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh to develop, promote and implement rural and cultural tourism experiences. They have also collaborated with Royal Enfield to develop full- scale community village clusters with sustainable livelihood ecosystem for biking routes and village communities in Chamba, Keylong and Spiti (HP).

By offering stakeholder-specific products and services, NotOnMap aims to create a sustainable and mutually beneficial ecosystem in which travellers, local communities, accommodation partners, environmental organizations, and government entities can all contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage, environmental conservation, and community development.

1.3 Target market(s)

NotOnMap target travellers who have a hunger to explore the Indian Cultural Diversity and have the zeal to Live Like a Local.

1. Travellers looking for diverse cultural exchange and learn new culture
2. Travellers looking for a warm hospitality that feels like a home
3. Travellers looking for an experience of secluded rural area and livelihood
4. Travellers who have the zeal to live like a local
5. Travellers who want to enrich the local skills
6. Travellers who want to spread positive impact while traveling
7. Travellers wanting to work out of the most beautiful places across the Country

1.4 Organization and management

The organization has a head office in Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh and a support of 26 members and employees. These 26 members are divided into 4 sub parts

- 1. Executive board:** This includes founder, co-founder, VP and social development officer
- 2. The advisory board:** This includes the highly experienced and intellectual personnel from various co-related fields and department
- 3. Team members:** This includes heads of various departments and the employees who serve their purpose like finance, reservations, creative designing, social media content, business management, business expansion etc.
- 4. Local champions:** These include some local residents who have same thinking as the organisation towards communities and impactful travel

With 782 properties spread out over India, NOM is influencing over 50,000 lives in over 14 Indian states and counting by building a sustainable rural tourism ecosystem among the locals. In order to provide travellers with a seamless experience in a culturally rich environment, they have restored more than 200 culturally significant homes and forged connections with more than 2500 communities across India. This has led to the creation of alternative livelihoods, reduced distress migration within rural community villages, and a 150% increase in the average income of the local population in these rural pockets.

Through their efforts, they have empowered 500 women and 2000 farmers and craftspeople in these communities, established over 1000 employment in rural locations, and trained over 8000 youngsters. NotOnMart has interacted with and had an effect on over 3000 farmers & artisans across India and listed over 2000 indigenous products. (yourstory, n.d.)

1.5 Cost structure and revenue streams

NotOnMap has raised a total of €250K in funding over 1 round. This was a Grant round raised on May 11, 2019. NotOnMap is funded by Booking.com. An angel round was raised when initially the business started and was funded by the founders of the start-up before the Grant Round. The fund raised in the angel round was used for various purposes like product development, marketing and hiring. As of now NOM is a private listed company. (cbinsights, n.d.)

Based on secondary research some of the Cost and Revenue structures of NotOnMap is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Cost and Revenue Structure of NotOnMap

Cost Structure	Revenue Streams
Technology Infrastructure and Maintenance	Commission
Customer Acquisition Cost	Subscription
Staffing and Operations Cost	Partnerships and collaborations
Sustainability Initiatives Cost	Customised Travel Experiences
Legal and Regulatory Costs	Govt and other Projects

2.0 Sustainable Tourism Challenge Description

Tourism is amongst one of the largest industries in the world and projected to contribute USD 250 Bn to India's GDP by 2030. Apart from being a significant economic catalyst, tourism drives job creation, infrastructure development, entrepreneurial initiatives and even healthcare. India attracts a lot of tourists due to its wide range of geographical diversity, renowned world heritage sites, and specialized tourism options like adventure tourism, medical tourism and eco-tourism.

However, as we expand on tourism, we are encountered with problems with respect to overconsumption of nature's finite resources sometimes causing severe degradation, depletion and high levels of pollution. This spirals to undesirable outcomes with negative effects on the local environment and society as a whole.

The biggest challenge therefore is to make tourism nature positive. Sustainable tourism is the only way to synergise increasing demand for travel with minimum impact on environment, local communities and cultural heritage.

NotOnMap has sustainability as its agenda to the core however, this comes along with its own set of intriguing challenges:

- **Bringing about mind-set metamorphosis:** Raising awareness about travelling to more authentic and unique locations over the popular ones, the importance of responsible travel and willingness to support environmentally conscious business requires a shift in mind-set that needs to be created.
- **Limited resources and funding:** Despite the growing interest in sustainable initiatives, securing funding for such projects can still present challenges. The lack of infrastructure and accessibility in offbeat destinations adds to this challenge and implementing sustainable practices often requires upfront investments in eco-friendly technologies, renewable energy sources, and responsible waste management systems. These investments can be costly and may impact short-term profitability.

- **Collaboration tapestry:** As sustainable practices need external support hence nurturing collaboration, aligning diverse interests and managing conflicting priorities can be complex and time-consuming.
- **Policy and regulatory challenges:** Navigating through complex regulations and policies at local, national, and international levels can be a significant challenge for sustainable tourism practitioners.
- **Destination management strategies:** issues related to seasonality, overcrowding, managing travel flows, spreading tourism benefits across the year and mitigating the impacts of over tourism require innovative solutions
- **Balancing economic and environmental considerations:** Sustainable tourism needs to find a delicate balance between economic growth and environmental preservation which requires meticulous strategy and execution.

2.1 The business/project idea

NotOnMap is dedicated to developing rural tourism and community-based sustainable tourism by improving rural villages and connecting them with travellers seeking immersive experiences in rural cultures and societies. They aim to introduce travellers to the warm hospitality of rural villages and provide them with resourceful experiences enriched with local culture.

The start-up focuses on enhancing the infrastructure and amenities in the villages to ensure a homely and comfortable environment for travellers, while also providing locals with access to training, workshops, equipment, financial support, and manpower. Through this initiative, travellers can quench their thirst for exploring rural communities, accompanied by convenience and ease.

Moreover, the start-up brings positive impacts to these villages by providing information, connecting them to the outside world, and driving economic development by emphasizing responsible travel practices, environmental conservation, cultural respect and support for local economies. Cultural heritage preservation is a priority, as NotOnMap works with communities to protect traditional practices, rituals, arts, and crafts. They prioritize eco-friendly accommodations, responsible resource consumption, waste management and conservation efforts by minimizing the ecological footprint of tourism activities. Overall, they redefine travel experiences, promote cultural exchange, protect the environment, empower communities, and foster positive socio-economic development.

2.2 External analysis

The travel and tourism industry is continuously evolving and embracing new trends making it more futuristic and feasible. These emerging trends are driven by advancements in technology, changing consumer preferences and a growing awareness of sustainability.

Table 2: Trends in Travel and Tourism

Micro Trends	Macro Trends
Rise in Conscious Travellers	Digital Transformations
Demand for local experience	Sustainable Tourism
Change in traveller`s preferences	Community Empowerment and Inclusion
Rise in Supporting activities for rural communities	Offbeat locations

These micro and macro trends provide favourable conditions for NotOnMap to grow and expand its sustainable tourism initiatives, attracting like-minded travellers and capitalizing on the increasing demand for responsible and authentic travel experiences. The tourism industry as a whole is creating a more dynamic, diverse and inclusive ecosystem driving economic growth, cultural exchange and environmental preservation.

2.3 Internal analysis

NotOnMap possesses unique offerings and strengths that set them apart in the sustainable tourism sector, including their focus on offbeat destinations and community-based experiences, empowering local communities, commitment to environmental sustainability, and preservation of cultural heritage. However, they face challenges such as limited market awareness and funding constraints. They have opportunities to tap into the growing demand for sustainable travel and leverage digital marketing platforms. Potential threats include competition from established players and external factors like political instability and global crises. By capitalizing on their strengths, addressing weaknesses, and adapting to market dynamics, NotOnMap can continue to thrive as a leader in promoting sustainable tourism and empowering local communities.

2.4 Activities

NotOnMap undertakes several essential activities to ensure the success of their rural tourism initiative which include:

- **Awareness campaigns:** By highlighting the advantages and unique experiences of rural tourism, NotOnMap creates awareness and generates demand among potential

travellers. NotOnMap has a strong online presence not only through their website but also through blogs, webinars, social media and regularly publish informative material to reach a wider audience higher visibility.

- **Development of remote and rural areas:** NotOnMap focuses on enhancing the infrastructure and amenities of rural villages, ensuring a comfortable and welcoming environment for urban travellers during their stay.
- **Engagement with travellers:** NotOnMap identifies and engages with travellers who have a desire to experience rural tourism with a suitable level of comfort, effectively communicating the value of their offerings. To prevent dissatisfaction among both travellers and locals, NotOnMap offers an end-to- end travel experience analysing and encompassing the entire journey from planning to post-trip reflections.
- **Training local residents:** NotOnMap provides training to local residents, equipping them with the necessary skills for providing hospitality services that meet the expectations of urban travellers, including hygiene, language, and quality of service.
- **Promoting local participation:** NotOnMap recognizes the importance of local support in delivering an authentic and culturally immersive travel experience. They engage with and persuade local residents to actively participate and contribute to the tourism initiative.
- **Creating customized services:** NotOnMap offers a diverse range of services tailored to the specific needs and preferences of travellers, ensuring a personalized and memorable experience.
- **Collaborating with like-minded partners:** NotOnMap collaborates with Government, Corporates, NGO's and is part of many initiatives to promote sustainable tourism in India.

By diligently executing these activities, NotOnMap aims to create successful and sustainable. (tourismbreakingnews, n.d.)

2.5 Stakeholders

1. Travellers who are keen to explore the rural side of communities and experience different cultures and a warm hospitality treatment which makes them feel homely.
2. Government authorities or specifically tourism authority of the states who have direct control and influence over tourism in the state also ties up with the start-up to promote the benefits that comes from rural tourism.
3. Residents of the rural villages who are the backbone to make this initiative successful by contributing and working towards the initiative of the start-up.

4. Local service providers; people or companies providing services like electricity, water, police that is maintaining peace in the locality will also have positive or negative impact through this initiative.
5. Local community; As this initiative will generate employment and will bring economic stability in the locality which will positively and directly impact the local communities.
6. Investors; any project is only successful when they have enough financial resources to keep the operations and development process carry on with the flow, which makes investors a crucial stakeholder in the start-up.
7. The start-up's team of employees- considering the role of the employees as important as the role of brain in a human body, without which no actions can be initiated, which makes employees the most active stakeholders of the start-up.

2.6 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Following are the target market and beneficiaries of the initiative:

1. Travellers who are either looking for diverse culture or homely hospitality treatment or who want to live like a local and learn local skills or who want to travel with positive impact.
2. Residents of the rural villages who have been listed on the start-up will be benefited by the start-up's initiative as the economic source will increase, sharing of culture and thoughts will take place and most importantly there will be development in the village.

2.7 Partners

NotOnMap partners with various stakeholders to enhance its offerings and promote sustainable tourism. Here are some of the key types of partners that collaborate with NotOnMap:

- **Local communities:** NotOnMap works closely with local communities, including tribes, rural villages, and indigenous groups. They collaborate with these communities to showcase their cultural heritage, traditions, and unique experiences, empowering them economically and socially through tourism.
- **Accommodation providers:** NotOnMap partners with a network of accommodations, including homestays, eco-lodges, and boutique hotels, that align with their sustainability goals. These accommodations provide travellers with authentic and immersive experiences while supporting the local economy.
- **NGOs and non-profit organizations:** NotOnMap collaborates with NGOs and non-profit organizations that focus on community development, environmental

conservation, and cultural preservation. These partnerships help implement sustainable initiatives and create positive social impact in the destinations where NotOnMap operates.

- **Government agencies:** NotOnMap works with government agencies at local, regional, and national levels to promote sustainable tourism policies and practices. They collaborate on initiatives that support local communities, preserve natural and cultural heritage, and develop infrastructure for responsible tourism.
- **Travel agents and tour operators:** NotOnMap partners with travel agents and tour operators who share their vision and values. These partnerships help promote NotOnMap's unique offerings and sustainable travel experiences to a wider audience, allowing more travellers to access offbeat destinations and authentic cultural experiences.
- **Social enterprises and artisans:** NotOnMap engages with social enterprises and local artisans to promote their crafts, products, and services. By connecting these artisans with travellers, NotOnMap supports fair trade practices and encourages economic empowerment at the grassroots level.

These partnerships allow NotOnMap to create a comprehensive and diverse ecosystem that fosters sustainable and responsible tourism. By collaborating with various stakeholders, NotOnMap ensures that their initiatives benefit local communities, preserve cultural heritage, and protect the environment, while providing travellers with unique and meaningful experiences.

2.8 Finances

In the early stages of its journey, NotOnMap relied on the dedication and investment of its founders. They believed in the vision of the start-up and pooled their own resources to get it off the ground. As the initiative gained momentum and expanded to include numerous villages and over 700 properties, it attracted the attention of major investor booking.com. NotOnMap secured a €250k grant from booking.com, providing essential financial support and validation for its mission. This funding helped NotOnMap further develop its network, enhance services, and solidify its position as a leader in sustainable and community-based tourism. The grant marked a significant milestone, accelerating the growth and impact of NotOnMap in promoting authentic rural experiences and sustainable travel practices. (cbinsights, n.d.)

2.9 Human resources

As of now, NotOnMap does not have a dedicated human resources team. Human resources-related tasks and responsibilities are managed collectively by the founders and

leadership team of the organization. This flexible allocation of responsibilities allows for team members focusing on their areas of strength and passion.

2.10 Marketing and communication activities

NotOnMap promotes its initiative through online platforms like its own website and social media handles. The start-up strategically utilizes social media channels such as Instagram and LinkedIn for promotion. Well-planned and designed social media campaigns are implemented to showcase and share inspiring stories and informative content. Offline promotion is also carried out through collaborations and partnerships with government authorities in various projects and schemes.

The founders and co-founders actively participate in interviews and appearances on relevant stages and platforms to share insights and experiences. The combination of online and offline promotion helps raise awareness, attract travellers, and establish thought leadership in sustainable tourism. (tashi travels, n.d.)

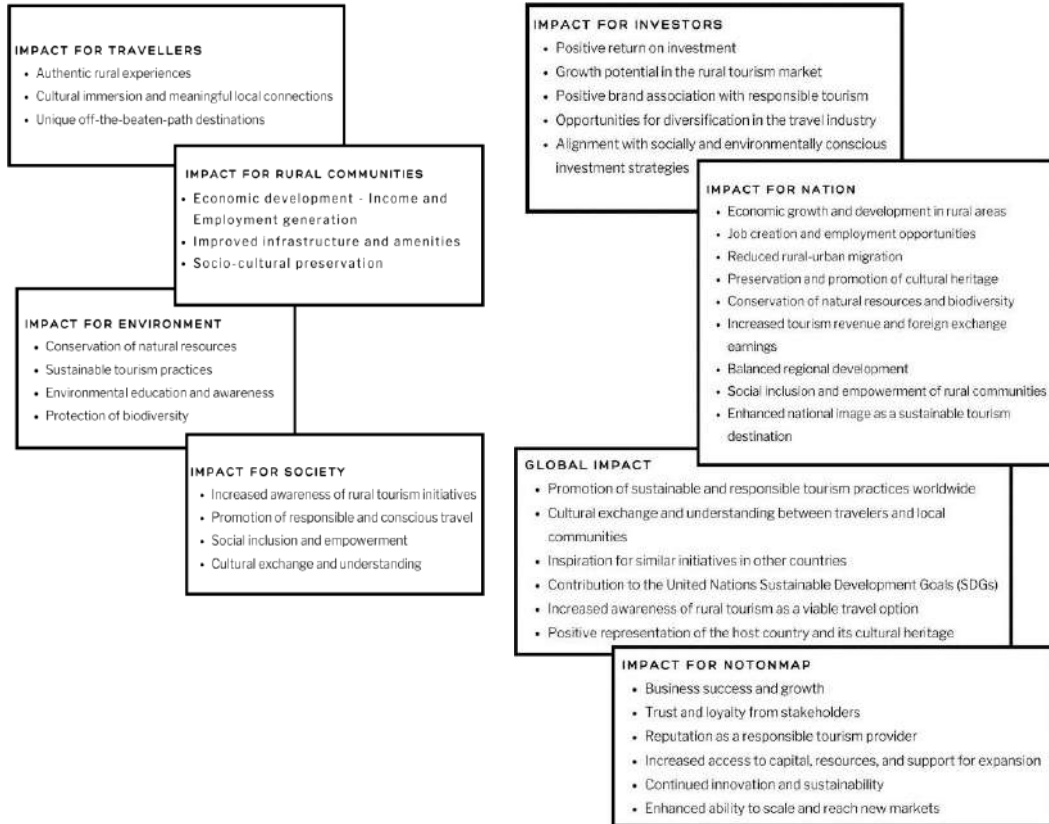
3.0 Impact for the Target Market(s)/ Stakeholders/ Environment/ Company

NotOnMap's innovative approach to sustainable tourism has led to a significant positive impact on all its stakeholders creating a virtuous benefitting cycle. By promoting sustainable tourism, it empowers local communities economically and preserves their cultural heritage. Travelers enjoy unique experiences and responsible travel, leading to increased interest and support for offbeat destinations. As the number of travellers grows, the local economy prospers, further empowering communities. The initiative's focus on environmental conservation ensures the preservation of natural ecosystems. This collective progress fosters goodwill, attracting more travellers, investors, collaborators reinforcing the circle of positive impacts. This symbiotic relationship among stakeholders is illustrated diagrammatically below (Figure 3):

4.0 Reflections

NotOnMap has been an inspiring journey of learning and development, challenging conventional beliefs, changing how we view travel and tourism and having a significant impact on local communities and the environment. In addition to empowering local hosts and supporting sustainable tourism practises, NotOnMap's mission of introducing tourists to unique and authentic experiences has opened doors to undiscovered gems and lesser-known locations.

Figure 2: Symbiotic Relationship among Stakeholders in Sustainable Tourism



Source: Author's contribution

NotOnMap has raised the bar for the sector with its dedication to responsible tourism and focus on protecting cultural landmarks and natural ecosystems. NotOnMap has a fantastic opportunity to further solidify its position as the demand for experiential travel keeps growing. By encouraging stronger ties and partnerships among its stakeholders, the start-up should strategically broaden its reach by embracing changes in current trends. It can draw in and acquire new travellers who share the same passion for the genuine and unusual travel experiences that NotOnMap offers by developing compelling brand stories, expanding outreach through increased engagement with its audience, collaborating with like-minded organisations and partners, and participating in networking events. NotOnMap can strengthen its position as a trailblazer in sustainable tourism while expanding its impact on local communities and enhancing the wanderlust of adventurous travellers around the world by coordinating its efforts to expand both its

traveller base and its network of hosts as well as leveraging the use of technology for social and economic change.

Figure 3: Awards Obtained by NotOnMap

		
<p>NASSCOM Emerge 50 Awards 11th November 2020</p> <p>NotOnMap was awarded with the coveted NASSCOM'S 'Emerge 50 Awards 2020' under the 'Bharat' category.</p>	<p>FiturNext 22nd January 2020</p> <p>NotOnMap was the only Indian organization selected among 12 companies for the "Social Innovative Replicable Model" that promotes local economic development.</p>	<p>SATTE Awards 9th January 2020</p> <p>SATTE India expo mart named NotOnMap the winner of a leading B2B travel trade engagement show and recognized us as 'The best start-up' in Asia Pacific.</p>
		
<p>World Tourism Forum Lucrene 18th December 2019</p> <p>WTFL Lucerne named NotOnMap the winner of the 'Cultural Preservation' category at WTFL Start-Up Innovation Camp.</p>	<p>NASSCOM Social Innovation 19th November 2019</p> <p>At the 11th edition of NASSCOM Social Innovation Forum (NSIF) Awards, NotonMap was awarded the winner under NASSCOM Social Innovation 2019.</p>	<p>Booking Booster 10th May 2019</p> <p>Booking.com named NotOnMap Third in the final competition for Sustainable Social Impact-driven Startup held in Amsterdam.</p>
		
<p>Global Top 100 Tourism Startups and Innovators August 2021</p>	<p>Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program Winner September 2021</p>	

References

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.cbinsights.com/company/notonmap> financials

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.indianweb2.com/2019/05/11/himachal-startup-notonmap-gets-250000-euro-grant-from-booking-com/>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/business/notonmart-aims-to-connect-20-lakh-farmers-artisans-with-consumers-137328>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://yourstory.com/socialstory/2020/09/notonmart-stayflexi-connect-20-lakh-farmers-artisans-consumers>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://travel.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/tourism/experiential/project-travival-launched-by-notonmap-and-help-tourism-to-encourage-rural-tourism/78200061>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.tourismbreakingnews.com/project-travival-launched-to-encourage-rural-tourism/>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.outlookindia.com/outlooktraveller/travelnews/story/70753/not-on-map-launches-travival-to-boost-rural-tourism-in-india>

(n.d.). Retrieved from <https://notonmap.com/>

NotOnMap. (n.d.). *Awards*. Retrieved from <https://notonmap.com/>

NotOnMap. (n.d.). *Home*. Retrieved from <https://notonmap.com/>

Tashi travels. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://tashi.travel/customers/not-on-map>

CASE STUDY 5

Snowlion Expeditions Pvt Ltd: Case Study on Adventure Tourism

Sweta Sinha and Piyush Khatri

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism Company is a renowned organization specializing in providing thrilling and memorable adventure experiences to outdoor enthusiasts. Led by Vinayak Koul, a seasoned adventurer and expert in adventure tourism, the company offers a range of exciting activities and expeditions in various locations.

1.1.1 Services and activities by the company

- Trekking and Hiking
- Mountaineering Expeditions
- Rock Climbing and Bouldering
- Rafting and Water Sports
- Wildlife Safaris
- Paragliding and Skydiving
- Camping and Outdoor Retreats

Figure 1: Vinayak Koul



1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: The vision of Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism is to be a leading provider of unforgettable and sustainable adventure experiences, inspiring individuals to connect with nature, challenge themselves, and foster a deep appreciation for the environment and diverse cultures.

Mission: The mission of Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism is to provide exceptional adventure tourism services that prioritize safety, sustainability, and customer satisfaction.

1.2.1 The company aims to

- Deliver Thrilling Experiences
- Promote Environmental Sustainability
- Foster Cultural Respect and Preservation
- Ensure Safety and Professionalism
- Engage and Empower Participants
- Contribute to Local Communities

By embracing this vision and pursuing their mission, Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism seeks to provide transformative adventure experiences that leave a positive impact on individuals, communities, and the environment, while inspiring a sense of adventure and promoting sustainable tourism practices.

1.3 Products/services

Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism Company stands as a beacon of thrilling adventure experiences, meticulously crafted to ignite the spirits of outdoor enthusiasts and leave them with indelible memories. Led by the seasoned adventurer and expert in adventure tourism, Vinayak Koul, the company's offerings span a wide spectrum of pulse-pounding escapades, all designed to challenge individuals while immersing them in the awe-inspiring beauty of nature.

Trekking and Hiking are among the company's key offerings, with expert-guided trips catering to diverse difficulty levels and individual preferences. Participants can embark on invigorating multi-day treks or revel in scenic day hikes, unveiling breathtaking landscapes and forging a profound connection with the natural world.

For experienced climbers seeking to conquer formidable summits, the company meticulously plans Mountaineering Expeditions. Throughout the demanding journey, seasoned mountaineers provide unwavering support, ensuring the highest standards of safety and logistical assistance.

Rock Climbing and Bouldering experiences allow adventure enthusiasts to test their mettle under the watchful guidance of accomplished instructors. Both novices and seasoned climbers can conquer soaring cliffs and colossal boulders, challenging their physical and mental prowess.

Figure 2: Trekking Under Mr. Koul's Troupes



For those seeking aquatic thrills, VinayakKoul Adventure Tourism Company orchestrates electrifying Rafting and Water Sports experiences. Participants brave turbulent rapids for an adrenaline-fueled escapade and engage in activities such as kayaking, canoeing, and jet skiing for exhilarating adventures on the water.

The company also offers awe-inspiring Wildlife Safaris, inviting participants to explore majestic national parks and wildlife reserves. Accompanied by seasoned experts, participants immerse themselves in the beauty of diverse flora and fauna, gaining insights into wildlife conservation efforts and fostering a deep appreciation for nature's wonders. Adventure reaches new heights with Paragliding and Skydiving opportunities. Participants glide through the skies, relishing panoramic vistas through paragliding, while heart-pounding skydiving experiences provide an unmatched rush of adrenaline.

Camping and Outdoor Retreats organized by the company offer participants the chance to disconnect from the demands of modern life and reconnect with the tranquility of nature. Activities like bonfires, stargazing, outdoor sports, and team-building exercises foster solace and inspiration in picturesque outdoor settings.

1.4 Target market(s)

Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism Company is a remarkable enterprise that caters to a diverse array of target markets, united by their shared passion for adrenaline-inducing experiences, outdoor pursuits, and immersive travel encounters. One of the key segments the company captivates is the Adventure Enthusiasts, those who crave heart-racing and audacious experiences in activities such as trekking, mountaineering, and rock climbing.

Moreover, the company allures Nature Admirers, individuals who hold a profound reverence for the wonders of nature and seek opportunities to explore and connect with natural landscapes, wildlife, and the importance of environmental preservation.

Figure 3: Travelling Via Bicycle



For Experienced Climbers and Mountaineers, the company provides professionally guided expeditions to conquer awe-inspiring summits, catering to their expertise and need for comprehensive logistical support.

Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism Company also beckons Active Families, offering a variety of family-friendly activities like trekking, camping, wildlife safaris, and water sports, creating unforgettable experiences and strengthening familial bonds.

Strategically targeting Corporate Groups and organizations, the company designs customized adventure programs for team-building, fostering collaboration, communication, and leadership development amidst challenging outdoor environments.

Additionally, the company warmly welcomes Solo Travelers and Small Groups, providing a platform for intrepid individuals to connect, share experiences, and embark on thrilling adventures together as a unified collective.

Lastly, Cultural Explorers are ensnared by the company's offerings, such as guided treks and wildlife safaris, which facilitate meaningful interactions with indigenous cultures, fostering cultural enlightenment and the promotion of sustainable tourism practices.

In essence, Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism Company epitomizes an extraordinary blend of daring exploration, environmental consciousness, and cultural immersion, making it an exceptional choice for those seeking extraordinary journeys off the beaten path.

1.5 Organization and management

Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism Company stands as a paragon of organizational excellence and impeccable management, striving to optimize operational efficiency, prioritize safety, and deliver unparalleled adventure experiences that leave customers thoroughly content. At the helm of this extraordinary enterprise is the visionary and luminary, Vinayak Koul himself, whose vast expertise as an intrepid adventurer shapes the strategic direction and oversees all operations of the company.

Central to the success of the company is its dedicated and diverse team, comprising seasoned adventure guides, adept instructors, proficient support staff, and astute administrative personnel. This cohesive ensemble shoulders various responsibilities, from meticulous trip planning and logistical undertakings to stringent safety protocols and holistic administration of the adventure experiences.

Safety is a paramount concern for Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism Company, as reflected in the rigorous adherence to industry benchmarks and the meticulous training of staff. Comprehensive risk assessments, rigorous equipment maintenance, and unwavering compliance with safety guidelines ensure the well-being of participants during their daring escapades.

Each adventure excursion is characterized by meticulous planning, with prudent destination selection, detailed route delineation, and assiduous accommodation arrangements. Transportation logistics and securing requisite permits are also handled with utmost care, culminating in well-orchestrated and seamless adventures.

Customer satisfaction is of utmost importance to the company, and a culture of unparalleled customer service permeates the entire customer journey. From initial inquiries and trip reservations to on-site support and post-trip assistance, the team ensures

open communication, unwavering responsiveness, and personalized attention to meet individual customer needs and alleviate concerns.

Figure 4: River Rafting with Proper Safety



Strategic alliances with reputable local suppliers, including accommodations, transportation providers, and equipment vendors, bolster the company's commitment to excellence and enhance the overall customer experience.

Vinayak Koul Adventure Tourism Company maintains an unwavering dedication to continuous improvement, embracing feedback from participants, monitoring customer satisfaction, and conducting rigorous staff training regimens. This relentless pursuit of refinement ensures that the company remains at the forefront of industry trends and best practices.

Moreover, the company weaves sustainability into its very fabric, actively integrating environmental conservation, constructive community engagement, cultural preservation, and participant awareness of responsible travel behavior into its ethos. This principled approach embodies the company's commitment to both providing exceptional adventure experiences and contributing positively to the world at large.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travels is a distinguished travel company with a firm commitment to sustainable tourism practices, striving to minimize the environmental impact of travel while preserving natural and cultural resources. Their core challenge lies in developing a sustainable tourism model that balances tourists' desires with the conservation of pristine environments and traditional cultures, all while benefiting local communities and minimizing negative impacts.

A paramount challenge they face is reducing their ecological footprint through various measures, such as lowering energy consumption, promoting waste reduction and recycling, and mitigating transportation-related pollution. The company actively collaborates with eco-friendly accommodations and uses environmentally conscious vehicles, while also instilling responsible behaviour among their esteemed clientele.

Figure 5: Challenges in Front of the Company



Cultural preservation holds utmost importance for them. They meticulously design itineraries that showcase the captivating cultural heritage of the destinations they operate in, fostering respectful interactions with local communities. Moreover, they actively encourage cultural exchange, support local artisans and businesses, and educate clients on the profound significance of cultural preservation.

Recognizing the crucial role of community involvement, the company actively engages and empowers local communities. This includes creating economic opportunities and encouraging participation in tourism-related activities. Working

closely with local guides, they advocate for community-based tourism initiatives and invest strategically in local infrastructure for sustainable growth.

Promoting awareness among tourists is vital for sustainable practices. Vinayak Koul Tour and Travels embrace the challenge of enlightening their clients about the importance of sustainable tourism and their role in making a positive impact. Through comprehensive educational initiatives, they disseminate information on eco-friendly practices, support local conservation projects, and encourage clients to contribute to the well-being of the destinations they visit.

Collaboration with diverse stakeholders is crucial for achieving sustainable tourism. The company passionately forges robust partnerships with local authorities, conservation organizations, and fellow tourism operators. By collectively developing sustainable strategies and sharing best practices, they address sustainability challenges. Through ongoing dialogue, they strive to identify innovative solutions that align with their vision of responsible and sustainable tourism practices.

2.2 The business/project idea

Vinayak Koul Sustainable and Tourism is a visionary business/project that aims to promote sustainable tourism while providing exceptional and memorable travel experiences. Their success in the industry stems from several key aspects of their innovative approach.

Figure 6: Project on World Tourism Day



At the core of their business/project is a meticulous process of selecting destinations that prioritize sustainable practices and preserve their natural and cultural heritage. They deliberately seek off-the-beaten-path locations, offering authentic and responsible travel experiences away from crowded tourist hotspots.

Their responsible travel itineraries are thoughtfully designed to minimize the environmental impact while providing enriching experiences. They prioritize eco-friendly transportation options and activities that have minimal negative effects on the environment, fostering a deeper connection with nature and local communities.

Community engagement and empowerment are paramount for them. They collaborate with local communities to create economic opportunities and authentic experiences that showcase local culture and traditions, benefiting the community while preserving its way of life.

Environmental conservation lies at the core of their ethos. They adopt sustainable practices, promote eco-friendly accommodations, and educate clients about protecting the natural environment, fostering a sense of stewardship throughout their travels.

They recognize the importance of raising awareness among travelers and providing comprehensive educational resources, inspiring responsible behavior and encouraging clients to become ambassadors for sustainable tourism.

Partnerships and collaborations with local organizations and sustainable tourism initiatives allow them to leverage resources and advocate for sustainable practices on a larger scale.

Accountability and transparency are central to their approach. They diligently measure their impact and regularly report progress to stakeholders, driving continuous improvement and setting new benchmarks for sustainable tourism practices

2.3 External analysis

Vinayak Koul Sustainable Tour and Tourism Company operate within a dynamic external environment, influenced by various factors and trends. One significant trend is the rising demand for sustainable tourism experiences, driven by heightened environmental awareness. The company is well-positioned to capitalize on this trend by offering eco-conscious travelers unique and responsible travel options, aligning with the prevailing preference for authentic and immersive experiences that foster cultural interactions and environmental exploration.

Compliance with regulatory and legal factors is essential, necessitating the company's proactive adaptation to evolving environmental standards and government regulations related to tourism. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic requires vigilance in

adhering to travel restrictions and safety protocols to prioritize the well-being of travelers.

Within a competitive market, the company faces the presence of existing sustainable tourism providers and the potential for new entrants. To stand out, they must emphasize their unique offerings, robust sustainability practices, and community engagement initiatives. Effective branding and marketing strategies will help establish a distinctive presence.

Technological advancements play a vital role in enhancing the company's visibility and accessibility. Utilizing digital marketing tools, online booking systems, and social media platforms are crucial for reaching and engaging with potential customers. Adopting sustainable transportation solutions, such as electric vehicles or alternative fuel technologies, further reinforces the company's commitment to eco-friendly practices.

Socio-cultural factors, such as changing consumer preferences favoring sustainability, present opportunities for the company to resonate with environmentally conscious travelers. Emphasizing sustainability and responsible travel practices can build a strong connection with this market segment. Building positive relationships with local communities through community engagement and empowerment initiatives also enhances the overall travel experience.

2.4 Internal analysis

Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism's success in the industry is driven by its deep commitment to sustainable tourism practices. At the heart of the company is a strong company culture and set of values centered around sustainability. This dedication resonates with eco-conscious travelers seeking authentic and environmentally friendly experiences, while their ethical business practices, encompassing responsible travel behavior, cultural preservation, and community engagement, reflect their strong principles and values.

The company's human resources are a key strength, comprising skilled professionals with extensive experience in the travel and tourism industry. Their expertise enables the delivery of exceptional services and the creation of unique travel experiences for clients. Moreover, the shared passion for sustainable tourism among the employees fosters a dedicated and motivated workforce aligned with the company's values and goals.

Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism distinguishes itself through its outstanding product and service offerings. Their custom-designed itineraries prioritize sustainability, cultural immersion, and off-the-beaten-path destinations, providing travelers with distinctive and authentic experiences. With a diverse range of destinations catering to

various interests and preferences, the company offers customers a wide array of options to choose from.

The company's strong brand reputation is reinforced by positive customer reviews and high levels of customer satisfaction. Their commitment to delivering exceptional service and fulfilling sustainability promises builds and preserves a positive image. Additionally, the company's longevity and industry experience instill confidence in customers and attract new clientele.

Financially, Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism's strong performance and stability provide a solid foundation for investment in sustainable practices, marketing efforts, and future growth. Effective cost management practices ensure profitability while allowing the allocation of resources toward sustainable initiatives without compromising financial stability.

Technological advancements and efficient systems further enhance the company's accessibility and convenience for customers. Their online presence, including a user-friendly website and seamless online booking systems, streamlines the travel planning process. Effective data management and analysis systems provide valuable customer insights, enabling data-driven decisions to optimize operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Strategic partnerships with local communities, NGOs, and relevant entities contribute significantly to Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism's success in sustainable tourism. These collaborations provide access to unique experiences, resources, and expertise, bolstering the company's sustainable tourism offerings and fostering a positive impact on local communities. In conclusion, Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism's internal strengths, including its commitment to sustainability, skilled workforce, unique offerings, brand reputation, financial stability, technology adoption, and strategic partnerships, collectively position the company as a leading proponent of responsible and sustainable travel experiences.

2.5 Activities

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel is a distinguished company known for its unwavering commitment to sustainable and unforgettable travel experiences. Central to their success is the meticulous selection and planning of destinations that align with their dedication to sustainable tourism and cultural preservation. By designing thoughtful travel itineraries, the company ensures authentic and unique experiences for clients while minimizing environmental impact.

Emphasizing sustainable transportation, Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel collaborates with eco-friendly providers to reduce carbon emissions. They actively

encourage clients to opt for responsible transportation choices, fostering a greater commitment to environmental preservation.

Figure 7: Activities Performed under Koul's Company



Community engagement and cultural preservation are key aspects of the company's ethos. Through meaningful partnerships with local communities, they curate authentic cultural experiences that respect and preserve traditions. By supporting the cultural heritage of each destination, the company fosters an appreciation for the local community's rich traditions.

Environmental conservation is integral to the company's operations. They implement sustainable practices, such as waste reduction and energy conservation, to minimize their environmental footprint. By educating clients about responsible environmental behavior, they empower travelers to make a positive impact on the environment.

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel actively collaborate with eco-friendly accommodations that prioritize sustainability. They recommend accommodations with sustainable certifications or a commitment to eco-conscious practices, ensuring clients enjoy sustainable and comfortable stays.

Guided tours with experienced local guides offer unique insights into the destinations, promoting engagement with the local community. Sustainability and responsible travel practices are intrinsic to these experiences.

Education and awareness initiatives impart valuable knowledge on cultural sensitivity, environmental conservation, and responsible travel behavior. By fostering awareness, the company inspires clients to become ambassadors for sustainable tourism.

Strategic partnerships with local communities, NGOs, and other organizations amplify their sustainable efforts. Collaborations with other travel agencies and industry stakeholders further contribute to sustainable tourism advocacy.

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel's exceptional customer support ensures clients have up-to-date information and emergency assistance, fostering confidence and peace of mind throughout their travels. In conclusion, Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel's diverse range of sustainable activities, combined with their commitment to education, community engagement, and exceptional service, make them a leading proponent of sustainable and enriching travel experiences.

2.6 Stakeholders

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel is a reputable company that prioritizes sustainable and responsible travel experiences. The company engages with various stakeholder groups to meet their diverse interests and expectations.

Customers are discerning and seek sustainable travel experiences, expecting high-quality services, unique itineraries, and authentic cultural encounters. They are passionate about minimizing their environmental impact and supporting local communities.

Local communities in the destinations where the company operates expect their cultural heritage to be respected and preserved, while also benefiting economically from tourism. They value fair and respectful interactions with travelers, fostering cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

Employees and local guides play a pivotal role in delivering exceptional customer service and enriching the travel experience. They are invested in the company's growth and sustainability and expect fair compensation and a positive work environment. Their passion for sustainable tourism enhances the overall travel experience.

Suppliers and partners, including accommodation providers and transportation companies, collaborate with Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship. They expect professional and ethical conduct, along with adherence to agreed-upon terms and conditions. Collaborative partnerships foster sustainable practices and contribute to the success of all involved.

Government and regulatory bodies establish policies and guidelines to ensure sustainable tourism practices. Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel diligently complies

with regulations and engages in constructive dialogue to contribute to the development of sustainable tourism policies.

Environmental and conservation organizations collaborate with the company to support conservation initiatives, promote sustainable practices, and raise awareness about environmental issues. By working together, they protect and preserve the natural resources that form the foundation of sustainable tourism.

Industry associations and competitors influence industry standards and practices. Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel differentiates itself through its strong commitment to sustainability and unique offerings. Collaborating on sustainability initiatives contributes to the collective advancement of responsible tourism. In conclusion, Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel's engagement with diverse stakeholders fosters a sustainable and responsible approach to travel, benefiting both travelers and the destinations they visit.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel is a renowned company that prioritizes sustainable and responsible travel experiences, catering to diverse target markets and creating positive impacts for various beneficiaries.

The company's target markets include eco-conscious travelers seeking destinations and operators that promote sustainability, cultural enthusiasts interested in authentic experiences and engaging with local communities, adventure seekers drawn to unique and off-the-beaten-path destinations, responsible families looking for enriching and educational experiences, and educational institutions and organizations organizing studyabroad programs and educational trips.

The beneficiaries of Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel's operations are diverse and encompass local communities, the environment, cultural heritage, and travelers themselves. Through community engagement initiatives, the company positively impacts local communities by creating economic opportunities and empowering residents. By supporting conservation efforts and promoting responsible environmental practices, the company contributes to the protection of natural ecosystems. Additionally, by fostering respectful interactions with local communities and promoting cultural preservation, Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel celebrates cultural heritage and supports traditional practices, benefiting both the communities and the travelers.

For travelers, the company's offerings provide unique, authentic, and responsible travel experiences that align with their values and interests. These experiences allow travelers to gain deep insights into local cultures, contribute to sustainability efforts, and create lasting memories that go beyond typical tourist experiences. In conclusion,

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel's commitment to sustainability and responsible travel ensures that its operations benefit both its target markets and the various stakeholders involved, fostering positive impacts on local communities, the environment, cultural heritage, and the travelers themselves.

2.8 Partners

Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism, a prominent provider of sustainable travel experiences, strategically collaborates with various partners to enhance its services, expand its reach, and promote responsible tourism practices. The company forms meaningful partnerships with eco-friendly accommodation providers, ensuring clients have a range of sustainable lodging options that align with their values and contribute to environmental conservation. By working closely with knowledgeable local guides and tour operators, Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism offer authentic experiences that foster cultural immersion and support local businesses. Additionally, the company collaborates with sustainable transportation providers, offering eco-conscious travel options that reduce carbon emissions and promote responsible transportation choices.

Through partnerships with community-based tourism initiatives, Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism actively support local communities, promotes cultural exchange, and offer unique travel experiences that showcase the authentic aspects of each destination. The company also collaborates with environmental and conservation NGOs, contributing to conservation efforts, sustainable practices, and awareness of environmental issues among clients. Engaging with industry associations and networks focused on sustainability allows the company to stay informed about best practices, share knowledge, and advocate for responsible tourism initiatives.

Collaborations with local governments and tourism boards ensure compliance with regulations and facilitate access to local resources, enabling Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism to operate sustainably and contribute to the destinations' development. By partnering with educational institutions and organizations, the company provides enriching educational experiences that align with academic goals, fostering environmental and cultural awareness among the next generation of travelers. Through these strategic partnerships, Vinayak Koul Tour and Tourism delivers unique and responsible travel experiences, while supporting local communities and preserving the environment.

2.9 Human resources

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel, a renowned sustainable travel company, maintains a dedicated team of professionals responsible for various crucial roles. Tour

Managers meticulously plan and coordinate tour itineraries, ensuring a seamless travel experience. Travel Consultants engage with clients, offering personalized advice and handling bookings while addressing inquiries with care. The company relies on experienced local Guides, providing insightful tours that enrich clients' understanding of the destinations and culture. Administrative and Support Staff efficiently manage various operational tasks.

In recruitment, Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel prioritizes individuals aligned with its mission and values. Comprehensive training equips staff with expertise in sustainability practices, cultural sensitivity, and customer service. The company values employee well-being, offering healthcare, insurance, and vacation allowances. Opportunities for continuous development, such as workshops and conferences, contribute to employees' professional growth.

The company's culture revolves around sustainability, responsible travel, cultural preservation, and community engagement. Employees are encouraged to embody and promote these values, contributing to the mission of providing sustainable travel experiences.

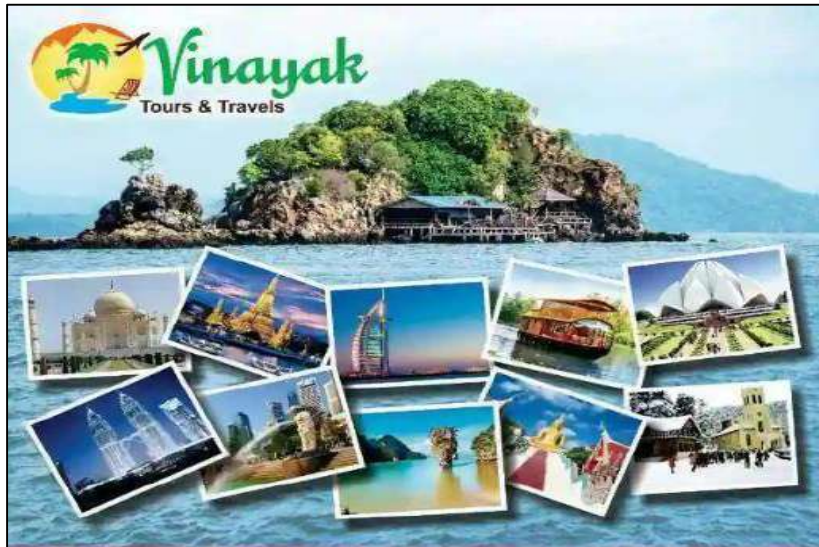
Communication and collaboration are prioritized within the company, fostering teamwork and information sharing. Regular team meetings and feedback sessions facilitate alignment and improvement.

Diversity and inclusion hold significant importance at Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel. The company embraces a diverse workforce that reflects various backgrounds and cultures, creating an inclusive environment that respects and appreciates each employee's uniqueness. By emphasizing these aspects, the company ensures a cohesive and committed team that delivers exceptional sustainable travel experiences to clients.

2.10 Marketing & communication activities

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel, a renowned sustainable travel company, strategically executes its marketing and communication activities to promote its unique and memorable travel experiences. Through digital marketing, the company maintains an informative and user-friendly website with search engine optimization (SEO) techniques and valuable content to attract organic traffic. Engaging its audience through social media platforms, Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel shares travel experiences, and sustainability initiatives, and runs targeted online advertising campaigns. The company's strong branding and visual identity are consistent across marketing materials, effectively differentiating it from competitors.

Figure 8: Marketing and Communication via Poster



Collaborations with sustainable tourism organizations, influencers, and industry stakeholders expand the company’s reach and promote its services. Customer engagement is prioritized through personalized communication, CRM systems, email marketing, and encouraging customer reviews. As advocates for sustainable tourism, the company shares thought leadership content and success stories through public relations efforts. Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel actively participates in travel trade shows and events to showcase its offerings, network, and generate leads. Additionally, the company organizes or sponsors events related to sustainability, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation, further demonstrating its commitment to these causes. By seamlessly integrating these marketing and communication strategies, the company successfully positions itself as a leader in sustainable travel, attracting eco-conscious travelers and creating positive impacts in the industry.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact on the stakeholders

Vinayak Koul’s ascent as a passionate proponent of eco-friendly and culturally sensitive tourism practices since September 2021 has garnered widespread attention within the sustainable tourism industry. This in-depth case study delves into the far-reaching impacts of Vinayak Koul’s visionary initiatives on a diverse array of

stakeholders, encompassing local communities, investors, academic researchers, and more. At the heart of Vinayak Koul's approach lies a delicate balance between mitigating negative environmental impacts and stimulating economic growth while preserving the essence of local cultures. Notably, local communities in the destinations targeted by Vinayak Koul's efforts have witnessed substantial benefits. The active engagement of residents in tourism-related enterprises has generated economic opportunities, uplifting livelihoods. Additionally, Vinayak Koul's emphasis on fostering respectful interactions between tourists and locals has instilled a profound sense of pride and ownership in their culture and heritage, safeguarding its authenticity for future generations.

Beyond the local communities, tourists embarking on Vinayak Koul's sustainable travel experiences undergo transformative journeys. By immersing themselves in environmental conservation and cultural heritage, tourists develop a heightened awareness and commitment to responsible travel practices. The resulting positive and enduring impact on the destinations they visit cements a stronger connection between tourists and local cultures, furthering the preservation of time-honored traditions.

Vinayak Koul's influence extends to the tourism industry, empowering it to attract a new wave of conscious and responsible travelers. Local tour operators and businesses embracing sustainable practices have witnessed a notable enhancement in reputation, facilitating industry growth. Governments and local authorities have also embraced these initiatives, reaping rewards such as increased tax revenues, job creation, and investments in essential infrastructure, in alignment with sustainable development goals.

Furthermore, Vinayak Koul's commitment to has garnered appreciation from environmental organizations and conservation groups. His projects contribute to the protection of delicate ecosystems, serving as a beacon of inspiration for the preservation of nature's treasures.

In the realm of culture, organizations dedicated to safeguarding heritage find solace in Vinayak Koul's endeavors. By promoting respect for local traditions, his initiatives play a pivotal role in the continuity of cultural practices, elevating the reputation of destinations as preservers of their rich heritage.

Investors and sponsors supporting Vinayak Koul's ventures have witnessed tangible returns on their investment, both in terms of social impact and enhanced reputation. His initiatives attract responsible investors aligned with environmental and social considerations, reinforcing their shared values and objectives.

Finally, the academic and research community also benefits from Vinayak

Koul's innovative undertakings, which offer compelling case studies and models for sustainable tourism practices. His projects stimulate further research and exploration in this vital field, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and driving progress toward a more sustainable future for global tourism.

3.2 Impact for the target market(s)

Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel has emerged as a distinguished sustainable travel company through the strategic implementation of its marketing and communication endeavors. Their digital marketing approach is centered around a user-friendly website, enriched with valuable content and search engine optimization techniques, attracting organic traffic effectively. Engaging their audience through various social media platforms, the company shares captivating travel experiences and highlights their sustainability initiatives, while also conducting targeted online advertising campaigns.

The company's strong branding and consistent visual identity set them apart from competitors, fostering a unique and memorable presence in the industry. Collaborations with sustainable tourism organizations, influencers, and industry stakeholders further amplify their reach and promote their exceptional services. To ensure customer engagement, personalized communication, CRM systems, and email marketing are employed, alongside encouraging customer reviews.

An ardent advocate for sustainable tourism, Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel also utilizes public relations efforts to share thought leadership content and success stories. Their active participation in travel trade shows and events serves to showcase their offerings, broaden networks, and generate valuable leads. Moreover, the company's dedication to environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and sustainability is manifested through event organization and sponsorship, further establishing them as an industry leader.

In sum, this seamless integration of marketing and communication strategies has successfully positioned Vinayak Koul Tour and Travel as a frontrunner in sustainable travel, alluring eco-conscious travelers while making meaningful positive impacts on the travel industry as a whole.

3.3 Impact for the environment

Vinayak Koul's sustainable tourism paradigm stands as an innovative and pioneering model that advocates for responsible travel and destination management. This case study delves into the underlying principles that shape Koul's visionary approach, with a steadfast focus on achieving a harmonious coexistence between tourism activities and the environment. The model's core components are meticulously examined,

encompassing community engagement, environmental conservation practices, waste management strategies, and the promotion of local culture and heritage. A comprehensive analysis demonstrates the intricate interplay of these elements, culminating in the minimization of tourism's ecological footprint.

The study places particular emphasis on assessing the impact of Koul's sustainable tourism approach on biodiversity and ecosystems in the selected destinations. It delves into vital factors such as biodiversity indices, habitat preservation, and the successful restoration of previously degraded areas, offering insight into the model's efficacy in conserving natural resources.

Another fundamental aspect under scrutiny is Koul's initiatives in mitigating the carbon footprint of tourism activities. The study delves into the adoption of eco-friendly transportation, the implementation of energy-efficient practices in accommodations, and the establishment of carbon offsetting programs as critical components in curbing environmental impacts.

While prioritizing environmental considerations, the case study also delves into the socioeconomic implications of Koul's sustainable tourism approach on local communities. It investigates how the model has contributed to poverty alleviation, job creation, and the overall improvement of community livelihoods.

However, it is crucial to address the challenges and limitations inherent in implementing such a transformative model. The study candidly acknowledges potential obstacles, including financial constraints, limited community participation, and the delicate task of balancing conservation efforts with tourism development goals.

3.4 Impact for the company

The groundwork for a comprehensive exploration of Vinayak Koul's sustainable tourism enterprise is laid in this section, meticulously presenting an overview of the company's core values, mission, and vision. By aligning itself with the principles of responsible travel and environmentally conscious practices, Koul's enterprise embodies a transformative force within the tourism industry.

A thorough analysis of the organizational structure and operational philosophy of Koul's sustainable tourism company is undertaken, shedding light on its internal policies, stakeholder engagement strategies, and resource allocation mechanisms. This insightful study delves deep into how the company fosters sustainable development while effectively addressing potential environmental and social challenges.

The focus then shifts to an in-depth evaluation of the environmental impact of Koul's enterprise, delving into its eco-friendly initiatives, waste management practices, carbon offsetting measures, and resource conservation efforts. An exploration of the

company's ecological footprint in diverse tourism destinations provides valuable insights into its commitment to environmental stewardship.

Community empowerment and socioeconomic outcomes take center stage as the study investigates the extent of Koul's company's positive impact on local communities. In-depth analysis and qualitative data reveal the company's contributions to community empowerment, job creation, cultural preservation, and overall socio-economic development in the destinations it operates.

The market penetration and long-term sustainability of Koul's sustainable tourism enterprise are meticulously examined, delving into the delicate balance it strikes between economic viability and environmental and social responsibilities. Additionally, the study explores the company's resilience and potential for enduring sustainability in the face of dynamic challenges.

An essential aspect addressed in this section is an in-depth exploration of the challenges faced by Koul's enterprise in the realm of sustainable tourism. The study candidly highlights the complexities of navigating market demands, regulatory frameworks, and ever-changing environmental factors. It further delves into the mitigation strategies employed by the company to overcome these obstacles.

Finally, the ethical dimensions of Koul's sustainable tourism enterprise are thoughtfully examined. Stakeholder perspectives from various groups, including local communities, environmental organizations, government agencies, and tourists, provide invaluable insights into the company's impact and practices. In conclusion, this section provides a solid foundation for the comprehensive study of Vinayak Koul's transformative sustainable tourism enterprise.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

This comprehensive case study embarks on a rigorous examination of the profound impacts stemming from Vinayak Koul's Center of Excellence (CoE) in Sustainable Tourism. The study employs a robust and complex research design to understand the multifaceted influence of the CoE on ecological conservation, socio-economic development, and long-term sustainability in the tourism industry.

Drawing insights from expert interviews, industry surveys, archival data, and site visits, the methodological framework meticulously unravels the diverse facets of the CoE's influence. The CoE's structural dynamics and ideological framework are intricately explored, shedding light on its strategic partnerships, knowledge dissemination mechanisms, capacity-building initiatives, and role in shaping sustainable tourism policies and practices.

The CoE's profound impact on ecological conservation takes center stage as the

study evaluates its initiatives in promoting responsible travel, wildlife protection, habitat restoration, and sustainable resource management across diverse tourism destinations.

Delving deeper, the CoE's contributions to socio-economic empowerment within local communities are meticulously investigated, analyzing its role in poverty alleviation, community engagement, cultural preservation, and equitable revenue distribution, exemplifying its commitment to inclusive and sustainable development.

The study also highlights the CoE's influence on the broader tourism industry, showcasing its efforts in advocating for sustainable practices among stakeholders, engaging with international organizations, and driving transformative changes in tourism policies and regulations at a global scale.

In navigating challenges, the study explores the innovative strategies employed by the CoE, fostering adaptability and resilience in the face of dynamic environmental and socio-economic landscapes.

Finally, ethical dimensions and stakeholder perspectives are closely examined, offering a comprehensive view of the CoE's ethical standing and societal impact. Opinions from local communities, governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector contribute to the comprehensive understanding of the CoE's significance and role in advancing sustainable tourism practices. In conclusion, this case study unveils the intricate and far-reaching influence of Vinayak Koul's Center of Excellence in Sustainable Tourism, propelling the industry toward a more sustainable and responsible future.

References

Buckley, R. C. (January 2006). Adventure tourism research: A guide to the literature. *Tourism Recreation Research*.

Florek, I. (January 2012). Sustainable tourism development. *Region formation and development studies - Journal of Social Sciences*.

Lee, Y.-C. (December 2016). An empirical research on customer satisfaction study: a consideration of different levels of performance. *SpringerPlus*.

Singh, H. (June 2014). Environmental preservation: A path towards sustainability and economic sustenance.

Xu, F. (October 2016). Travel experiences and aspirations: A case study from Chinese youth. *International Review for Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development*.

Baloglu, S., & Uysal, M. (1996). Market segments of push and pull motivations: A canonical correlation approach. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 8(3), 32-38

Abrahams, R. D. (1986). Ordinary and extraordinary experience. In Turner, V. & Burner, E. (Eds.), *The Anthropology of Experience* (pp. 45-72). Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Adler, N. J., & Graham, J. L. (1989). Cross-cultural interaction: The international comparison fallacy? *Journal of International Business Studies*, 20(3), 515-537.

Arlt, W. G. (2006). *China's outbound tourism*. Abingdon, New York: Routledge.

Arnould, E. J., & Price, L. L. (1993). River magic: Extraordinary experience and the extended service encounter. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(1), 24-45.

ÇELİK (2021, November). Tourism: Implications for the design of powerful interpretive experiences. *Tourism Management*, 32(4), 770-779.

Tian, X., An, C., Chen, Z., & Tian, Z. (2021). Assessing the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on urban transportation and air quality in Canada. *Science of The Total Environment*, 765, 144270(Kapur, March 2018).

CASE STUDY 6

Agri-tourism and Local Community Development: A Case of SAMTFMACS in Araku Valley, Andhra Pradesh

S. Sreenivasa Murthy and R. Kishore

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Agri-tourism is the act of visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation. There are a wide and innovative set of rural/agri-tourism products and services available to the traveling public in Araku Valley. It includes agritourism, agricultural festivals, special events and festivals, the celebration of village historic sites, country fairs, agricultural travel routes that feature themes. The state government, as well as local communities, are actively involved in rural tourism deployment and support agritourism networks.

The objective is to showcase rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations and in villages, which have core competence in farming, art & craft, and handloom. The intention is to benefit the local community economically and socially as well as enable interaction between tourists and the local population for a mutually enriching experience. Under this scheme, the thrust is to promote rural tourism as the primary tourism product to spread tourism and its socio-economic benefits to rural and its new geographic regions, thereby stopping the exodus from rural to urban areas.

The present case study on Araku Valley in Andhra Pradesh is an effort to highlight the agricultural development in the regions and its integration with the tourism and the development of local communities. The Araku valley of Andhra Pradesh coming under Vishakhapatnam is one of the important ecotourism destinations. Araku valley is situated in one of the ranges of the Eastern Ghats consisting of 2 miles wide and 7 miles long with the altitude varying from 300 ft to 3,827 ft above the mean sea level (msl). The other valleys of this area, which are relatively smaller in size, include

Malasingaram valley, Pedalabudu valley, Ondara Vagee valley, Balluguda valley and Gunta Seems valley. A hill stream runs through the middle of Araku valley with grasslands and cultivated lands on either side. Coffee was introduced in the Araku region in 1920 by British revenue officers who recognized the potential of the sloped hills in the area. After independence, around 1960s, the Indian Coffee Board and the

Andhra Pradesh Forest Department initiated efforts towards organized coffee cultivation and production in the area. The movement to grow coffee began in the plantations owned by the Forest Department and later spread to individual tribal farmers (the majority of whom were landless and were given land on lease by the government). The ITDA which implements government schemes in tribal areas took over the promotion and management of coffee cultivation from the Coffee Board of India from 1995 onwards. Currently an estimated 30,000 hectares are under coffee cultivation in this region. The region is also one of the highest coffee growing regions amongst the non-traditional coffee growing regions in India (1500 to 4000 ft above sea level). The predominant variety of coffee is *Coffea Arabica*, commonly known as Arabica. Yet the coffee cultivation in the region has not been very successful, for various reasons. Slash and burn cultivation tactics destroyed forests and reduced the land to semi-wasteland.

Realizing the magnitude of the project and keeping its sustainability in mind, Naandi Foundation has organised the farmers into a cooperative union. Naandi's activities have encompassed a wide scope: soil inoculation to restore organic nutrients, preservation and provision of shade trees, trainings in organic and biodynamic farming techniques, installation of a state-of-the-art processing unit, and critically organization of the farmers into a cooperative. With the help of these efforts, the SAMTFMACS cooperative has acquired fair trade certification (from FLO-CERT, headquartered in Bonn) and nearly all of its farmers are certified as organic or in-conversion to organic by IMO, Bangalore.

Naandi Foundation began its operations in Araku Valley in 2001, it was clear that support was required in the areas of livelihoods and education. Hence Naandi's first programme focused on improving incomes of small and marginal indigenous farmers growing coffee and raising the quality of education in government primary schools attended by their children. Initially, Naandi's work focused on providing technical assistance to about 1,000 tribal farmers in collaboration with a local NGO. In the recent years, Naandi – with the support of donors has become pro-actively involved in nurturing the development of an inclusive value chain. In 2007, SAMTFMACS was formed as an entity that would eventually allowed the farmers to take full control of crop production, harvest, processing, and sale. The members of SAMTFMACS are farmers with small landholdings. On average each farmer owns around 1 acre (0.40 ha) of land. Prior to the formation of SAMTFMACS, many farmers were selling their coffee to the middlemen at abysmally lower prices as they take money in advance to meet various consumption needs and thus come under their clutches. Today, SAMTFMACS buys the coffee fruit and processes it centrally, providing jobs at the central level and giving the

farmers more time to focus on the rest of their livelihood. Apart from the money earned by selling the coffee, members of SAMTFMACS also receive a bonus which is based on the profit earned by SAMTFMACS.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: To provide livelihood to the local communities. To develop and promote indigenous art and culture

Mission: To improve local communities' living standards and to popularize the local product and convert it into unique brand

1.3 Products/services

The valley and its surroundings have good potential for adventure sports and nature tourism. The mild climate attracts tourists round the year. The places of interest immediately around Araku valley are Tribal Museum, Padampuram Garden, Karaiguda Mahima Alekh Ashram, etc. All these places offer a wide range of tourism purposes and options ranging from scenic views of landscapes, unique tribal cultures, converted ecosystems and land use.

1.4 Target market(s)

Naandi established a new society for marketing of the coffee, thereby facilitating a sustainable linkage to high value global markets. Araku Originals Limited (AOL) facilitates sustainable linkages between global markets. The branding and marketing initiatives by AOL have attracted the national and international coffee experts and high value global markets. On one hand AOL is one of the main buyers for SAMTFMACS, on the other hand it p and promoting SAMTFMACS brand "ARAKU EMERALD".

A brand "Araku Emerald" was registered to give a distinct identity to the area's coffee produced in ARAKU area. The certified coffee has reached international in the year 2007 with the participation from coffee experts and vendors from around the world. This has helped in building a strong brand of Araku coffee in the global arena. AOL invested to maintain quality of the coffee and developed it further by hiring India's one of the most sought-after coffee experts. AOL is investing in this project with a long - term vision. Every year there is a substantial budget allocated to position the coffee, expand the buyer base in the global market and get a better price.

1.5 Organization and management

SAMTFMACS is led by a 21-member Board of Directors (three directors per mandal) and branch committees at the mandal level. The farmer members elect branch

representatives, who run the branch at the mandal, and they elect a Board of Directors (chosen from the branch representatives). A President and Vice President are elected by the Board of Directors. Elections for the Board of Directors and branch representatives are held on a yearly basis.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Establishment cost of araku valley coffee: The establishment cost incorporated all expenses incurred during the first four years of the coffee plantation, which is also known as the gestation phase, till it reaches the stage of economic yielding. Initial Investment cost and maintenance cost involved in setting up a coffee plantation are involved in the coffee establishment cost.

Initial investment cost of araku valley coffee (1st year): Initial Investment expenses are part of the establishment costs and function as fixed costs. Land preparation, line marking, opening and closing of pits, raising and staking of shade plants, planting material costs, fencing costs, etc. are all included as Initial investment costs for Araku Valley Coffee. It could be seen that the total initial investment cost in the Visakhapatnam district was found to be Rs. 51,663.24 (35.87 percent of the total establishment cost). The cost of land preparation was found to be Rs. 17,300.34, the cost of line marking to be Rs. 1,335.33, the cost of digging pits to be Rs. 24,081.25, the cost of raising shade plants to be Rs. 842.33, the cost for staking to be Rs. 448.33, the cost of planting materials to be Rs. 6,463.99, and the cost of fencing to be Rs. 1,191.67, respectively. The majority of the costs were incurred for the opening and closing of pits as it requires 46.61 % of the initial investment cost

Costs and returns of Araku valley coffee: It is inferred that the initial investment cost is high for the Araku valley coffee plantation establishment. Returns are generated from the fifth year onward and rise annually until the nineteenth year, at which point they start to drop as the plantation becomes older. The total returns generated from the Araku valley coffee plantations are Rs. 30,72,446.28 and net returns observed for 25 years plantations were Rs. 23,17,053.55. It is inferred that the total annualized production cost of Araku Valley coffee is found to be Rs. 9.38/kg, and annualized net returns observed are Rs. 92,682.14/ha. For coffee growers, the benefit-cost ratio worked out to be 1.68, which was favorable and more than one indicating remunerative returns per rupee of investment on coffee plantations.

The cost details of Araku Valley Coffee are presented in Table 7 which showed that the Net Present Values at a 12% discount rate for the whole life of the coffee (25 years) were favorable for the Visakhapatnam district and that the NPV was determined

to be Rs. 1,44,581. The benefit-cost ratio for Araku Valley Coffee was 1.68, showing profitable returns on every rupee invested. 28.7% was found to be the internal rate of returns

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

The major challenges addressed by the “SAMTFMACS”, i.e., new initiatives to adopt sustainable practices into the existing business after covid pandemic are Resistance to Change, Cost, Education, Difficulty in identifying skilled manpower, Reduced profit margins, Financial challenges, Demand and supply gaps.

Though the region is suitable for coffee cultivation, it suffered from a lack of traditional knowledge about growing coffee and support for the novice coffee farmers. Under these circumstances, most of the farmers failed to achieve decent yields. Some even cut down shade trees to sell as timber, leaving the coffee trees unhelpfully exposed. The farmers also lacked proper equipment to process the coffee to its full potential.

The rural people generally lack skill and knowledge in taking advantage of opportunities. The entrepreneurs are appointing corporate trainers to give soft skill training to the employees, especially those who are working in the front-line. Some of them are giving their employees training on spoken English, etiquettes and on personnel grooming. Most of the service providers are focusing on the service quality, so that they will come back again and recommend others to visit the site.

Farmers have small size holding, low quality land and little or no access to credit or irrigation. They must negotiate with consistent drought. Though some agro - tourism enterprises can be launched with very little financial support but there is lack of financial awareness, as most of the sectors in agro tourism industry is unorganized. The whole tourism concept is very indigenous in the rural areas. Though initiative attempt has been taken by the local youths, yet the professionalism is lacking. They are lacking proper training to project in the manner from a tourism perspective. Residents often have concerns about the potential noise, traffic, and trespassers because these impacts have the potential to change the overall character of the community. When farmers take proactive actions to maintain good relationships with neighboring land owners, local decision makers and the community, many of these concerns can be resolved informally. Increased noise levels can potentially diminish the quality of life for neighboring landowners Machinery, equipment, trucks and animals produce various noises. Increased traffic can also be a concern for neighboring landowners.

2.2 The business/project idea

The new initiative is to promote agricultural tourism as the primary tourism product to spread tourism and its socio-economic benefits to rural and its new geographic regions, thereby stopping the exodus from rural to urban areas. The Village Level Council (VLC) is the interactive forum for local community participation in work plan implementation, further supported by other community level institutions. For the tourists, whose expenditure creates revenue for host community service providers; agri-tourism adds value through packaged programmes in art & craft imparted by skilled local artisans. Village entertainment groups unveil local history and culture, natural and oral treasures. The tourists thus come face to face with India's rural traditions.

2.3 External analysis

2.3.1 Micro trends

Incredibly, this has done nothing to slow down a remarkable and exceptional culture of coffee cultivation, stemming from the total 900 tribal families living and working in the Valley. As Priscilla discovered on her visit, the groups are not only bound by geography, but also by a harmony in their common objective: to produce the highest quality organic coffee from the provisions of their lushly fertile and stunningly attractive terrain.

Abundant with forest, waterfalls and naturally-occurring fruit trees, the Araku region is regarded as a particularly beautiful jewel in itself. Though its tribal inhabitants' traditional farming method (or 'shifting cultivation') damages forest cover – the natural protection of top soils by the towering higher trees – the Araku Valley has maintained both its coffee-cultivating characteristics and, Priscilla says, its "scenic splendour."

There is a growing consumer demand for sustainable products, with customers increasingly seeking goods and services that are environmentally friendly. The stone carving workshop has an opportunity to differentiate itself by highlighting its sustainable practices.

Traditional crafts are experiencing a resurgence in popularity, which could be beneficial for the stone carving workshop as it showcases the unique cultural history and creative skills of stone carving.

The emergence of new technology, such as 3D printing and CNC machines, is capable of producing objects that resemble stone more quickly and cheaply than traditional stone carving techniques.

2.3.2 Macrotrends

Old-fashioned and potentially damaging farming methods replaced, the Araku peoples have been quietly shaping a considerable industry. And combined with Naandi's international influence, covering organic and fair-trade certification and export support, these colourful farmlands are now home to a coffee production industry that extends beyond its own picturesque borders.

Harsher controls on environmental impact: Governments and regulatory organizations are enforcing harsher laws to lessen industries' environmental impact. If the workshop doesn't change its operations to be more environmentally friendly, this is a threat.

The workshop has a chance to draw more tourists who are interested in traditional crafts and sustainable tourism because of the rapid global expansion of the tourism industry. There is a growing global awareness of the value of cultural heritage preservation. This would help the workshop in attracting more tourists, this means more the tourist inflow more is the opportunity for the business growth.

2.4 Internal analysis

The development in Araku region is carried out with the Coffee Plantation Agrotourism concept. It pays attention to the sustainability of the natural environment and can increase the prosperity of the people of Araku Valley.

The method used is a mixed (quantitative and qualitative) with SWOT analysis by evaluating strengths and weaknesses as internal factors (IFE), while opportunities and threats as external factors (EFE). The results showed the development of Coffee Plantation Agrotourism is still not optimal in the provision of tourism facilities and infrastructure as well as the cultivation technology used is also not optimal.

2.4.1 Strengths

- The abundant of coffee plantation.
- Almost all farmers have coffee plantation.
- The community has the ability to receive new information well.
- Establishment of Penggung Village in Nawangan District as an Agropolitan Area.
- Penggung village is crossed by an inter-provincial road (East Java and Central Java).

2.4.2 Weakness

- There is no coffee plant rejuvenation process.
- Marketing of coffee bean yields minimum revenue.

- Seedlings are used from previous trees.
- There are no hotels.
- Private and scattered land.
- The location is not bypassed by public transportation.
- Employment is seasonal, working environment in plantation is very much rigid and apart from daily wage, they do not receive any social security benefits from employers.

2.5 Activities

Identifying and developing skills necessary for agri-tourism among rural community members is of paramount importance to achieve its sustainability. The local municipalities and other private enterprises such as tour operators, that are interested in community development, can assist to build community skills capacity.

Creative development: To complement its sustainable tourist services, the startup would need to create a farmers skill set in experimenting with new methods of coffee cultivation. This could entail collaborating with national and international brands and may try to bring in more visibility to the product.

Marketing and promotion: The startup would need to create a marketing and promotional plan that persuasively conveys the special value of its sustainable tourism and innovative products. This could entail setting up a website, utilizing social media, and forming alliances with other travel and tourist businesses.

Overall, it would involve a large amount of planning, research, creative creation, and marketing to establish a new initiative or enterprise on sustainable tourism. The start-up would be well-positioned to draw customers, earn revenue, and have a good influence on the environment and nearby communities by effectively getting international recognition and popularity of the coffee.

2.6 Stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis helps in identifying the key stakeholders in the successful conduct of any business activity. Stakeholders involvement in the Tourism activities has a lot of impact on Tourism Development.

1. The stakeholders can be classified as those who have a high level of interest but low influence.
2. Stakeholders with a high level of interest and high influence.
3. Stakeholders with low interest but have high influence.
4. Stakeholders with a low level of interest and low influence.

Table 1: Stakeholder Analysis

S. No	Stakeholders	Activity	Impact	Influence
1	Integrated Tribal Development Agency	Give training to the local communities on making local handicraft products	Improve skills for craftsmen and product diversification in bringing innovative local products that attract the Tourists	High level of interest but low influence
2	Local Government	Facilitate permits for local Tourism Development Activities in Araku Valley. They work with Forest Development Authorities for the smooth functioning of Tourism related Programs and Activities.	Tourism Inflow - Increase in National and International Tourism.	High level of interest and high influence
3	Community Leaders	Protect the Local Tribal Communities and their Culture towards sustainable Tourism	Sustained customs and traditions of Adivasis/ Tribes became a part of one of the Tourism Attractions.	High level of interest and high influence
4	Farmers	Provide access to Local agriculture mainly coffee cultivation which is the main tourist attraction,	Coffee Plantation has received international recognition and Araku Valley has become one of the Agri-Tourism Destinations for Global Travellers.	High level of interest but low influence
5	AP Tourism Development Corporation	Promote local handicrafts, art of dance and heritage.	Local Art, Handicrafts and Heritage was recognized Globally.	High level of interest and high influence
6	Local Business Community	Attract the Tourist by selling the local products like souvenirs, Terracota Jewellery and Coffee, Herbs and Oils.	Helped in improving the Socio-Economic Life of the Local Communities.	High level of interest
7	Transport Service Providers	Transportation helped in improving the network and connectivity throughout the Globe that has resulted in communicating the Agri Tourism beauty of Araku Valley to the World	Increase in International travel traffic from October to March months.	High level of interest and high influence
8	Health Centers	Aims at protecting at the local people as well as the travellers' health	Promotes safe and hygiene tourism practices.	High level of interest and high influence
9	Tour Guides/ Tour Operators	Promoted/ helped in marketing the coffee plantation	Araku Valley Agri Tourism is known for its Coffee Plantations.	High level of interest and low influence

Source: Author's contribution

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Today, Araku coffee offers coffees for all palates and for every moment of consumption. With a graphic, clean and colorful design reminiscent of the bright and joyful colors, symbols of Indian energy, the small brand is forging an identity as a high-end outsider in a market long trusted by Ethiopian and Brazilian cafes. or even Colombians or by giants like Nespresso. The establishment of a lasting and fair link with the producers of the valley was very quickly successful. Initially, most of the coffee was first sold to roasters all over the world. Then the cooperative decides in 2015 to launch its own brand Araku which will be sold by the French market and by internet before opening a shop in Paris in January 2017. Selling coffee in a short circuit, from producer to consumer was the crazy gamble that this cooperative of Indian farmers succeeded. They have thus bypassed the constraints of the world market. Three million coffee trees are now planted in the valley, producing 40 tonnes each year, 30 of which are sold under the Araku brand in France and India. More than 10,500 farmers, each owner of their own small plot, work the coffee. Araku, the engine of social development in the valley over 15 years, has improved the income and living conditions of farmers in this valley, as well as the development of educational and medical infrastructure.

In March 2021, Araku opened its second store in Bangalore, India: The Araku Coffee Café. On a space of more than 1,500 m², in an elegant, modern and refined setting, designed by the architects Jorge A. Zapata, New Yorker and Shonan Purie Trehan of Delhi-based Labwers for the interior, the philosophy of Araku coffee is reflected in the design and very decor of the place. The first of its kind in India, the Araku Coffee Café offers a sensory Bar where the aroma of freshly ground coffee with Chef Rahul Sharma's inspired dishes from Japan, the Mediterranean and South Korea revive the taste buds. Along with a wide range of coffees and dishes, Araku Coffee Café is home to the Araku World Specialty Coffee Academy, the world's first SCA-certified specialty coffee school. Everything is being done so that Araku Coffee is more and more established in the world of high-end coffee by weaving its web, by increasing its distribution network and by training the young people of the Araku tribe on site with international professors.

2.8 Partners

The Village Level Council (VLC) is the interactive forum for local community participation in work plan implementation, further supported by other community level institutions. For the visitor, whose expenditure creates revenue for host community service providers; rural tourism adds value through packaged programmes in art & craft

imparted by skilled local artisans. Village entertainment groups unveil local history and culture, natural and oral treasures. The visitor thus comes face to face with India's rural traditions.

The tour operators are the potential partners for conducting the tourism activities because the valley and its surroundings have good potential for ecotourism, walking, climbing, and riding adventure sports and nature tourism. The mild climate attracts tourists round the year. The places of interest immediately around Araku valley are Tribal Museum, Padampuram Garden, Karaiguda Mahima Alekh Ashram, etc. All these places offer a wide range of tourism purposes and options ranging from scenic views of landscapes, unique tribal cultures, converted ecosystems and land use. It also attracts scholars from different subject domains like anthropology, sociology, ecology, forestry, geography, agriculture, tourism and development studies.

2.9 Finances

SAMTFMACS depends on Nandi Foundation, banks and other financial institutions for financial support.

2.10 Human resources

Experts in sustainability may be needed to assist the business in creating and putting into practice sustainable tourist practices and strategies.

Personnel in marketing and communications: The business may need to engage marketing and communication specialists with experience in agri-tourism on one hand and promoting the natural tourism activities on the other.

Project managers: The organization may need to recruit project managers with experience in agri-tourism to ensure that the new initiative or business is implemented successfully. Staff with expertise in sustainable tourism practices may need to be hired or trained by the company, including agr-tour guides, experts in coffee farming, waste management professionals, and energy efficiency experts.

Partnership coordinators: To manage its partnerships with other companies or organizations in the sustainable tourism sector, the company may need to recruit partnership coordinators.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

The business initially created a website with in-depth information about the project, its goals, the services offered, and the contact data. Additionally, it creates social media profiles on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to communicate with stakeholders and potential customers. To inform existing customers and stakeholders

about the new project/business, email marketing campaigns are employed. To inform the media about the new venture or company, a press release is written. To increase its visibility and attract new stakeholders and clients, the business participates in local events and collaborates with other businesses, organizations, and influencers in the sustainable tourism industry. To draw in more customers, it is also considering launching advertising campaigns on relevant websites, TV, hoardings at prime locations. The business would efficiently reach its target market(s) and stakeholders by combining a variety of communication and marketing platforms, and it successfully advertises its new sustainable tourism initiative/business to stakeholders.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Araku Coffee was finally launched in Paris in 2017 and won the prestigious Prix Epicures Award for Best Coffee Pod in 2018. In response to a growing demand to bring Araku to Indian consumers, Araku Coffee made its retail launch in India in 2019, followed by the opening of its flagship coffee shop in Bengaluru in March 2021.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis is a process of identifying key stakeholders in a particular business activity and assessing their interest in the success of the business and the extent to which the interest can influence. The degree of alignment, cohesion and diversity amongst stakeholders is also important; stakeholders that share common characteristics bring benefits of perceived interdependence, strong alignment of values, thus enhancing stakeholder satisfaction, commitment and engagement.

3.2.1 Visitors

Most of the visitors bought local products (e.g. coffee, handicrafts, terra cotta jewellery, honey and jam). This has a positive impact on the village economy and stimulating local activities. Visitors appreciate local products, because *they are typical and this makes all the difference*. However, in the village there are several products, mainly farm products, whose commercialization to visitors should be stimulated to increase the economic benefits of tourism. For this purpose, tourism supply agents should help integrate more of these local farm products into their offers.

3.2.2 Private sector tourism supply agents

Generally speaking, as private sector agents, they recognize mostly the economic impacts of tourism, being very satisfied with the benefits obtained from this activity. However, they also perceive tourism as an activity that brings positive social changes to the village. As one stakeholder mentions: *It is very evident that the local people, regardless the fact of having an economic activity or not, benefit from visitors: either it is the supermarket owner that welcomes them and, therefore, sells products, or the older people passing by on the street, alone... it appears that visitors like to talk with them, and they tell stories about the village. This happens a lot, and there are many people who come here exactly looking for this, to have an experience in the village, a basic and simple one: listen to a story, or a cup of coffee, and the kids end up interested in the animals. So, there is all this exchange, which is not only about selling physical goods, but also about experiences related to the village's way of living.*

3.2.3 Local community

Most residents refer that tourism had a crucial role in the rehabilitation of the architectural heritage and in the revitalization of public spaces. *Before tourism development, most of the village's houses were becoming degraded, tourism contributed to their rehabilitation.* In addition, tourism development has contributed to local people feeling proud of their tangible and intangible heritage, increasing the community self-esteem *people begin to be more aware that they had something of value.*

3.2.4 Farmers

Residents also highlight the role of tourism in social dynamics and cultural learning opportunities. One resident remarked *'the village is more alive with visitors, and the arrival of other people in the village is a breath of fresh air.'*

Farmers interact with visitors and enjoy interacting with them, although sometimes there are communication difficulties. These interactions are frequently motivated by visitors, searching information about the methods of coffee cultivation, cultural and natural attractions. However, the interactions are also very appreciated by residents, being a means of reducing loneliness, mainly for older people. Additionally, the population perceives local hospitality as one of the most distinctive elements of the village. As one resident points out, *a visitor likes to be welcomed, if he does not feel welcome, he probably will not return.*

3.3 Impact for the environment

A well-designed and organized agricultural landscape that takes advantage of various factors to optimize land use and crop production. This approach seems to involve a thoughtful consideration of factors such as altitude, proximity to roads, water sources, and shade management. Let me break down the different elements you mentioned:

Altitude-based crop selection: Growing coffee at higher altitudes is a common practice, as coffee plants thrive in cooler climates with proper elevation. Altitude affects the flavor profile and quality of coffee beans.

Strategic crop placement: Placing vegetables that require regular harvesting closer to roads makes sense for ease of access and transportation. This reduces the effort and time required to transport produce to markets.

Agroforestry: Agroforestry involves integrating trees and agricultural crops on the same piece of land. Fruit and shade trees contribute to biodiversity, provide shade for other crops, and can also yield valuable products like fruits or timber.

Cereal crops and spices: Millets, pulses, turmeric, and ginger are often grown in more intermediate levels. These crops are typically hardier and can tolerate various growing conditions.

Paddy and fodder grass: Growing paddy near water sources takes advantage of the need for consistent water supply, which is crucial for rice cultivation. Fodder grass for cattle is also wisely placed near water sources for easy access.

Shade management: Shade management is important for maintaining the optimal growing conditions for various crops. Some crops, like coffee, benefit from partial shade, while others might need more sunlight.

This type of landscape design demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the specific requirements of different crops and a focus on sustainability and efficiency. By carefully arranging crops based on their needs and environmental conditions, farmers can increase their yields, reduce resource wastage, and create a more harmonious ecosystem. This approach is in line with agroecological principles that promote the integration of ecological and agricultural practices to create more resilient and productive farming systems.

3.4 Impact for the company

SAMTFMACS through Naandi has been supporting farmers from seed to cup. They provide them with good quality seeds and train them in technical expertise to produce excellent quality coffee. They have 21 steps, and trained farmer in all these steps. They are also trained in aspects of farm management, shade management, and soil

health management to improve the methods of coffee cultivation. If the coffee plantation grows well it would attract more tourists into the valley.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

Thus, the present case study on SAMTFMACS has proved that to boost agri-tourism in rural areas, they must characterize it with a range of entertainments and attractions to stimulate sophisticated tourist clientele. Keeping in mind the ever-changing tourism demand and market trends, agri-tourism has linked with a varied set of recreational activities, which in turn will evolve over time and lead to the development of niche tourism products in rural areas. Hence, to create niche tourism in rural areas, there is a need to make rural tourism an interest destination.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

This case study examines the ways government, tour operators, and local people can help each other in the best possible ways to capitalize on these new business ideas. This case study however concludes that how niche marketing of agri tourism can help the local people in creating new businesses opportunities and expand their business and Therefore, tourism has great capacity to generate large-scale employment and additional income sources for the skilled and unskilled. Consequently, the promotion of Agro-tourism would bring many direct and indirect benefits to the local people by generating new job opportunities in rural areas in the farming sector.

CASE STUDY 7

Local Art Development and Sustainable Tourism: A Case of Mahabalipuram

Ch Lakshmi Kumar and K. Prashanth

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Tourist destinations reflect the abilities and art of local people who have worked hard to maintain rich art and culture while also they develop unique ways to impart cultural heritage to tourists through their art. Art weaves India's different cultural ethos into one fabric. The "creative sculpture" art provides adaptive ways to express India's heritage and culture. Over the past ten years, the number of artisans have grown proportionally, providing the industry with greater depth and recognition. Modern technology has simplified the process of finding and buying art.

T. Bhaskaran, an Indian stone carver, was searching within his own country for a promising opportunity to launch a business. He was enthralled by the stone art sector as a child. T. Bhaskaran earned a degree in fine arts from the Government College of Architecture and Sculpture in Mahabalipuram. He is created a business strategy for setting up his own setup, based on his basic knowledge of the market, to maintain India's cultural heritage and offer a distinctive assortment of ornamental items like idols not only to the Indian people but to the people living across the globe as well. Finally, he laid the foundation of 'creative sculptures'. The workshop has a 2,000m space, and 100 highly skilled artisans are working on a variety of fascinating sculptures. The creative sculptors have collaborated with College of Architecture and Sculpture in Mahabalipuram and Global Stone Workshop, a Swedish-Indian Co. that organizes sculpture workshops in seven countries to provide artisans with the real hand experience. The workshop provides space and raw stones to the foreign artist to carve stones into distinct decorative products. The foreign artists from Ireland, England, France, Germany, Sweden, USA, Malaysia visit this place and work together with local artisans. This enables the local artisans to gain international exposure in skill development. This has helped the creative sculptor workshop to create a space in the international market to export their finished products.

The town of Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu state in Southeast India is best known for the Monuments, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Mahabalipuram is

a unique destination in India where you can have glimpses of amazing sculpture and architecture. The structures discovered here are an astonishing representation of Pallava architecture and have a distinct place among India's ancient monuments. The most noticeable aspect is that all of the sculptures in Mahabalipuram are monolithic, which means that each sculpture, no matter how small or large, is carved from a single rock, particularly granite. These structures are found in and around the destination, which inspires tourists to visit almost year-round. Mahabalipuram is a great weekend getaway because of its advantageous location along India's east coast and proximity to important South Indian cities.

Sustainable growth of the tourism industry is also accompanied by the rise in quality demand and a variety of sustainable tourism activities, such as community involvement and local community empowerment (people empowerment). Recognizing the significance of local communities in sustainable tourism, this case study has been developed on the prominent historical tourist destination of Mahabalipuram. The present study encompasses sociocultural, economic, and environmental dimensions to understand the sustainable tourism aspects in the destinations.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: To preserve the rich cultural heritage and monuments of architectural splendour. To promote Tamil Nadu sculpture (art) and to globalize the local art.

Mission: To improve local communities' living standards and to globalize indigenous sculpture art, adopt sustainable, cutting-edge technologies in carving sculptures. To develop the skills of local artisans in creative sculpture, and end gender disparities in the area's artistic production.

1.3 Products/services

The company creates stone carvings and sculptures for monuments such as God idols for temples in India and abroad, columns, ceilings, stairs, decorative items for hotels, resorts, and public places to attract tourists. The workshop also provides service to foreigners by providing space, stones, and tools, which they then utilize in making the sculptures by promoting the 'Incredible India' Program. The Incredible India campaign's goal is to create a brand for India that reflected its history, variety, religious beliefs, and spirituality. In short, it portrayed India as the multicultural nation that it was and continues to be today.

1.4 Target market(s)

Creative Sculptures targets both business-to-business and business-to-costumers in India and foreign countries who are interested in acquiring customized sculptures.

Other businesses also interested in buying sculptures for their own use, such as corporations, event coordinators, hotels, resorts, govt, in strategic locations to highlight the rich heritage of the destination. Marketing firms searching for distinctive and personalized sculptures to use as giveaways, event decorations, or gifts. The target market for B2C customers comprises individual consumers interested in acquiring sculptures for their own use or as presents, including tourists, interior designers, and people who love art. The target audience for Creative Sculptures values distinctive and personalized works of art and may be willing to spend more money on a unique sculpture that meets their individual requirements and tastes. The company's ability to serve various needs and price points enables it to access a diverse range of potential clients and revenue sources. To successfully target their market, Creative Sculptures employ various marketing tactics, including participating in art fairs, showcasing their work on social media and their website, and contacting potential clients through specialized email campaigns or direct mailers. A significant differentiator in the custom sculpture market is the company's capacity to serve both B2B and B2C clients, which opens up a wide range of potential clients and revenue streams.

1.5 Organization and management

The workshop currently has a single-line structure, with Art Master T. Bhaskaran serving as both the CEO and founder. Two individuals manage the accounts section to maintain financial records, while five others handle logistics and transportation of raw materials and finished products. A foreign liaison officer oversees the export process, while the remaining staff members are involved in sculptor-making.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

The cost structure of this workshop which deals with stone sculptures is influenced by a number of elements, such as the type of stone used, the complexity of the sculptures, the production process, and the costs associated with shipping and logistics while exporting the products. The following are some of the workshop's primary cost components:

- 1. Materials:** The cost of purchasing the stone is a major outlay for the business. Depending on the type of stone and its accessibility to the market, this cost may vary. However it observed that the companies expenditure on raw materials has been increasing over past four years.
- 2. Labor cost:** The business covers the charge of the experienced laborers who give the stones their true shape. Mostly local artisans are involved. However the workshop has seen a substantial cost increase in labor cost from last four years.

3. **Manufacturing expenses:** They cover the price of the supplies and tools required to make the sculptures as well as the cost of keeping the factory in working order.
4. **Costs associated with shipping and logistics:** The company exports its goods, which includes the expense of transporting the sculptures to their final location.
5. **Business development cost:** The company has also allocated some portion of the expenses in order to capture a larger global market share.

1.7 Other information

Over the past few decades, the travel and tourism industry has played an unprecedented role in the socioeconomic development of various countries, including India. In India, cultural and heritage tourism accounts for most tourism revenues due to the country's abundant culture, history, and natural resources. The significance of a tourist destination is revealed through its local art and customs when its cultural heritage features prominently.

The sculpting sector represents small-scale enterprises that make a variety of precious products mostly for the travel and tourism industry. As a result, as an integral part of the informal economy, it generates income, creates employment possibilities, and improves their socioeconomic conditions.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

The major challenges addressed by the "Creative sculptors", i.e., a new initiative to adopt sustainable practices into the existing business after covid pandemic.

Resistance to change: Adopting sustainable practices may include alterations to the workshop's procedures or culture, such as working in shifts or implementing waste management practices, which may encounter opposition from stakeholders or staff members who are averse to change.

Cost: Adopting sustainable practices could require the workshop to incur expenses for new technology, supplies, or equipment. The workshop might have to strike a compromise between the cost of sustainability and the profitability of its operations.

Education: Visitors might not understand the significance of sustainability or how their behavior affects the environment. To encourage sustainable practices among tourists and local communities, the workshop may need to make an investment in teaching and outreach. (For instance, the government of Tamil Nadu may offer incentives to attract talented students to impart training in sculpture art. However, only local students are currently applying.)

Difficulty in identifying skilled manpower: Post-Covid, sculptors have had trouble finding workers with the necessary training. Due to the pandemic, practical skills development has suffered, making it hard for newcomers and sculptors to locate skilled workers. The shortage of experienced staff has made matters worse, as many talented craftspeople have left or switched jobs, leaving a talent gap. Sculptors now have a harder time hiring.

Reduced profit margins: Due to supply chain interruptions, increased material costs, and lower demand, creative sculpture companies face a struggle in achieving appropriate profit margins post-Covid. Margins have been further squeezed by the saturated online market, pushing sculptors to explore new revenue streams, strategies for pricing, and emphasis on creating excellent customer connections.

Financial challenges: Managing cash flow has become an even greater financial obstacle for creative sculptors in the Covid era and beyond. The pandemic has caused economic instability, as businesses have experienced abrupt revenue declines or supply chain disruptions. This has made it more difficult for this business to accurately forecast cash flow and control expenses while continuing to invest in growth and innovation. In addition, the transition toward remote work and digital transactions has added new complexities to cash flow management that must be addressed to ensure long-term financial stability.

Demand and supply: The imbalance between demand and supply is a significant obstacle for creative sculptors during and after Covid-19. As the pandemic disrupts supply chains and causes shortages of basic materials, it is becoming increasingly difficult for sculptors to obtain the necessary materials to create their art.

2.2 The business/project idea

Utilizing biophilic design concepts in the workshop's architecture and landscape; producing sustainable souvenirs from recycled stone materials; working with regional suppliers and craftspeople to find sustainable materials and goods.

- Installing renewable energy sources, such as solar panels or wind turbines, to power the workshop's activities.
- Conduct promotional campaigns on their website to reduce demand and supply gaps.
- Organize capacity development programs for artisans, the local community on change management and the change practices, also subsequently motivational lectures to adopt change.

2.3 External analysis

2.3.1 Micro trends

1. There is a growing consumer demand for sustainable products, with customers increasingly seeking goods and services that are environmentally friendly. The stone carving workshop has an opportunity to differentiate itself by highlighting its sustainable practices.
2. Traditional crafts are experiencing a resurgence in popularity, which could be beneficial for the stone carving workshop as it showcases the unique cultural history and creative skills of stone carving.
3. The emergence of new technology, such as 3D printing and CNC machines, is capable of producing objects that resemble stone more quickly and cheaply than traditional stone carving techniques.

2.3.2 Macrotrends

1. Harsher controls on environmental impact: Governments and regulatory organizations are enforcing harsher laws to lessen industries' environmental impact. If the workshop doesn't change its operations to be more environmentally friendly, this is a threat.
2. The workshop has a chance to draw more tourists who are interested in traditional crafts and sustainable tourism because of the rapid global expansion of the tourism industry.
3. There is a growing global awareness of the value of cultural heritage preservation. This would help the workshop in attracting more tourists, this means more the tourist inflow more is the opportunity for the business growth.

2.4 Internal analysis

These trends and challenges offer both opportunities and risks in light of the difficulty of moving towards sustainability. Some of the strengths and weaknesses that the workshop is experiencing are as follows:

2.4.1 Strengths

Professional craftspeople/ Artisans: One of the workshop's distinctive selling points that draws customers interested in traditional crafts is its staff of professional craftspeople who are experts in traditional stone carving techniques.

Local cultural heritage: The stone carvings and sculptures in the workshop are part of the community's cultural legacy, which can be used to market the workshop as a genuine cultural experience.

Established reputation: The workshop has a well-established reputation as a premier location for stone carving and sculpture among tourists and locals.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

Limited sustainability practices: The workshop may not currently employ many sustainable practices, making it difficult to adjust to shifting consumer demands and environmental effect legislation.

Reliance on conventional techniques: The workshop might be unduly dependent on conventional techniques for carving stone, preventing it from implementing cutting-edge innovations and environmentally friendly procedures.

The workshop's key assets are its talented craftspeople, rich cultural legacy, and solid reputation, all of which can be used to promote its sustainability initiatives and draw more tourists interested in traditional crafts and cultural encounters. However, its limited use of sustainable practices, reliance on conventional techniques, and narrow market penetration may limit its capacity to adjust to shifting customer preferences and legal requirements.

2.5 Activities

Artisan products increase the regional competitiveness of a destination. Artisans' products, in turn, are cultural commodities that serve an aesthetic purpose more than having utilitarian function. The workshop would need to research the market's desire for artistic sculpture and sustainable tourism. The workshop would be able to identify potential clients, and competitors.

Creating a concept: The workshop would need to create a distinct concept for its ecotourism and artistic sculpture products. This can entail deciding the locations, activities, and artistic movements.

Creative development: To complement its sustainable tourist services, the startup would need to create a portfolio of artistic sculptures. This could entail collaborating with regional artists, creating unique designs, or purchasing sculptures from other craftspeople.

Marketing and promotion: The startup would need to create a marketing and promotional plan that persuasively conveys the special value of its sustainable tourism and innovative sculpture products. This could entail setting up a website, utilizing social media, and forming alliances with other travel and tourist businesses.

Overall, starting a “creative sculpture” start-up would involve a large amount of planning, research, creative creation, and marketing to establish a new initiative or enterprise on sustainable tourism. The start-up would be well-positioned to draw customers, earn revenue, and have a good influence on the environment and nearby communities by effectively completing these tasks.

2.6 Stakeholders

The commitment and cooperation among multiple tourist stakeholders is crucial for the restoration of reciprocal support and coherence between the artisan community and tourism development.

In the present analysis stakeholders are grouped into four sections and presented in a grid with four quadrants. First one with High Influence and Low interest, second one with High Influence and High Interest, third one with Low Interest and Low Influence and fourth one with High Interest and Low Influence. Here, Influence is defined as the ability of stakeholders to influence other stakeholders in carrying out an activity. Stakeholders can influence issues by forcing, using existing legal norms and via regulations. Interest is defined as the degree to which a stakeholder has paid attention to the implementation of a business activity.

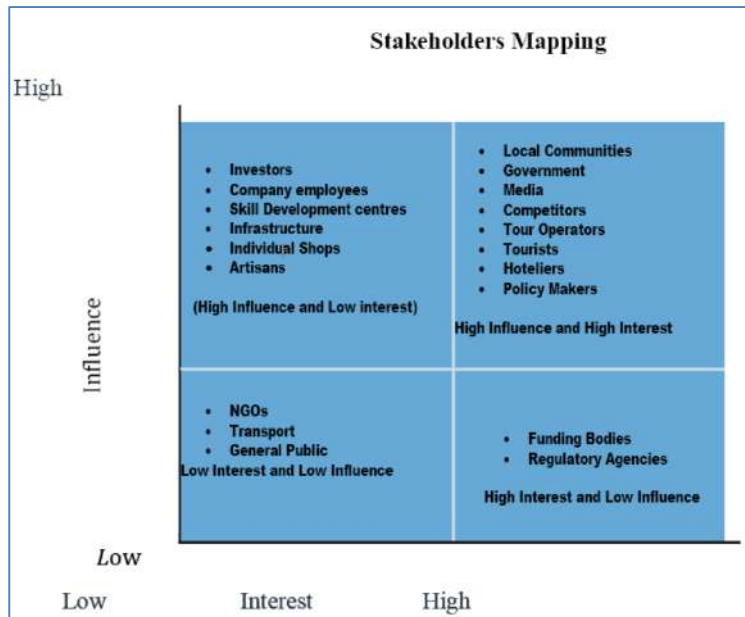
2.6.1 Identification of tourism stakeholders

The stakeholders are employees, investors, skill development centres, policy makers, Infrastructure, tourist, industry, local communities, government, Individual shops, Artisans, media, competitors, NGOs, special interest groups, and educational institutions. These stakeholder groups can influence tourism development initiatives in a variety of ways, including regulations, demand and supply, management of tourism impacts, and human resources.

- i. **High Influence and Low interest:** Investors, Company employees, Skill Development centers Infrastructure, Individual Shops Artisans. These stakeholders in the ‘Creative Sculptor’ workshop are influencing the other stakeholders like tourists, tour operators, local communities in the destination, but they are not involved at the implementation level of any decisions for the successful conduct of the business.
- ii. **High Influence and High Interest:** Government, Media, Competitors, Tour Operators, Tourists, Hoteliers, Policy Makers are influencing the other stakeholders to a greater extent as well as taking interest in implementing the decisions for the sustainable business operations.

- iii. **Low Influence and Low Interest:** The stakeholders like NGOs, Transport, and the General Public neither influence the other stakeholders nor take high interest.
- iv. **High Interest and Low Influence:** Funding Bodies, Regulatory Agencies

Figure 1: Stakeholder Analysis



Source: Authors' contribution

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

A case study on 'Creative Sculptor' an artisan entrepreneurship helps in thorough understanding of the tourism industry's sustainable practices. Many people living in this community are experiencing the benefit directly and indirectly. These types of business initiatives would pave the way for artisan community economic development.

Local community benefits: Public art installations and sculptures in prominent sites can attract visitors and boost local businesses. Workshops, courses, and public demonstrations of their craft can help engage the community. Sculptors can build community via hands-on learning and skill development. These efforts can establish a sustainable tourist ecosystem for everyone.

Local government: Local government efforts will aid in the preservation of cultural heritage and propel artisan entrepreneurship into a broader cultural revolution. These government organizations are the direct beneficiaries as they are showcasing these

sculptures in their premises, museums, art galleries as a way of preserving art and craft traditions

Local institutions: The sculpture industry is one that calls for ongoing education and fresh ideas. The development of technology has had a significant effect on the underdeveloped, underscale market. Initiating capacity-building, especially in sculpture education and training, which is crucial for community development.

Local business communities: These small business units depend on the 'creative sculpture' for the products for their business.

Tourists: Souvenirs are often bought by visitors from other countries as mementos or presents for friends and family back home. Purchasing of local crafts as souvenirs would concretize and preserve their memories of the trip. Therefore, national and international visitors stand to gain from this industry.

Tour guides: The tour guides are very well benefitted by the local business by taking tourists to these artisans. The tourists get an opportunity to experience the process of sculpture making in their natural setting and finally buy these products. This would generate income to the business as well as to the tour guide.

Employees: Majority of the individuals in this place stated that they are happy in involving themselves in making sculptures, which implies a beneficial socio-economic situation and a positive effect on the producers' well-being. Specific findings from the survey revealed that the lives of producers and their families have improved. Artwork makes producers self-reliant, and the flexible nature of informal artwork allows producers to work when they want. This creative process has built confidence, self-awareness and a sense of identity.

Transport agency: Much of the local transport services like trucks are benefitted by transporting the finished products to the concerned locations.

2.8 Partners

Local community: Community members can assist sculptors in producing works that appeal to both residents and visitors by sharing knowledge of the region's cultural past and offering support and resources. In addition to providing feedback and insights to help sculptors improve their art, the community can act as a test audience for their work. A sense of shared ownership over the artwork can be fostered by sculptors by interacting with the neighborhood and contributing to the social and cultural fabric of the place. In the end, collaborating with the local community can assist sculptors in producing significant art that is advantageous to all parties.

Municipal corporation: By giving chances for public art installations and sculptures, supplying materials and logistical support, promoting sculptors' work, and

strengthening the civic identity of the region. Municipal corporations can be beneficial partners for creative sculptors. Sculptors may produce significant works of art that enhance public places and encourage a sense of pride and ownership among locals by working with the municipality to do so.

Tour operators: By bringing their work to a wider audience, providing opportunities for showing it off, working together to create one-of-a-kind experiences for customers, and utilizing the resources and know-how of the tourism sector, tour operators may be beneficial partners for creative sculptors. Sculptors can broaden their audience and boost their exposure by collaborating with tour companies, which also helps the region's cultural and economic growth. Various tour attractions (parks, museums, monuments etc)

2.9 Finances

The "Creative Sculptures" workshop's new sustainable tourist initiative/business was exclusively funded in one way only. The workshop's proprietor(s) were able to get a loan from a bank, using the business plan and their personal credit history as collateral. It is essential that the initiative's financial plan is congruent with its dedication to responsible tourism and fair trade.

2.10 Human resources

To ensure the project's success, Creative Sculpture may need to recruit extra personnel while implementing a new program or business related to sustainable tourism. Depending on the size and complexity of the project, the firm may have different specialized demands, following are some of the human resources that might be needed: Experts in sustainability may be needed to assist the business in creating and putting into practise sustainable tourist practises and strategies.

Personnel in marketing and communications: The workshop may need to engage marketing and communication specialists with experience in sustainable tourism in order to effectively explain the new initiative/business to the target market(s) and stakeholders.

Project managers: The organization may need to recruit project managers with experience in sustainable tourism to ensure that the new initiative or business is implemented successfully. Staff with expertise in sustainable tourism practices may need to be hired or trained by the company, including eco-tour guides, waste management professionals, and energy efficiency experts.

Partnership coordinators: To manage its partnerships with other companies or organizations in the sustainable tourism sector, the company may need to recruit partnership coordinators.

The addition of these extra human resources will enable Creative Sculpture to successfully launch its new project or venture in sustainable tourism.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

To tell its target market(s) and stakeholders about its new initiative/business on sustainable tourism, Creative Sculpture uses a variety of communication and marketing platforms. The business initially created a website with in-depth information about the project, its goals, the services offered, and the contact data. Additionally, it creates social media profiles on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to communicate with stakeholders and potential customers. To inform existing customers and stakeholders about the new project/business, email marketing campaigns are employed. To inform the media about the new venture or company, a press release is written. To increase its visibility and attract new stakeholders and clients, the business participates in local events and collaborates with other businesses, organizations, and influencers in the sustainable tourism industry. To draw in more customers, Creative Sculpture is also considering launching advertising campaigns on relevant websites. Creative Sculpture efficiently reaches its target market(s) and stakeholders by combining a variety of communication and marketing platforms, and it successfully advertises its new sustainable tourism initiative/business to stakeholders.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Tourists often include souvenir shopping and art purchases in their itineraries because “seeing is believing” and because “seeing” is enhanced by the tactile nature of physical objects. When tourists buy the sculptures directly from the company, they learn everything they need to know about them. This is a bonus for the tourism business since it will encourage visitors to spend more time in the area and learn about the local culture and history. The sculptures have drawn foreign visitors and carved out a niche for themselves in the worldwide market. The vast majority of their customer base is comprised of domestic and regional buyers. Businesses catering to the domestic market tend to be based in outlying areas and is experiencing significant growth barriers.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis is a process of identifying key stakeholders in a particular business activity and assessing their interest in the success of the business and the extent to which the interest can influence. The degree of alignment, cohesion and diversity amongst stakeholders is also important; stakeholders that share common characteristics bring benefits of perceived interdependence, strong alignment of values, thus enhancing stakeholder satisfaction, commitment and engagement.

3.2.1 Individual shop

The local shopkeepers have been selling mahabalipuram sculptures for at least two generations. Their main source of income comes from the sale of trinkets and sculptures created locally. According to one of the vendors named Rajkumar, “their incomes were good before lockdown, but now their business has been affected due to COVID.” They claimed that sales were cyclical. Yet the same enterprise provided for their needs and allowed them to live well.

3.2.2 Tour guide

The area’s abundance of tour guides with a variety of language skills made them indispensable to visitors. Foreign visitors increase their income the most in August and September. There are many Indian visitors in April and May. “Without a tour guide, the tourists would not be able to understand the history behind each sculpture and monument,” the guide said.

3.2.3 Local communities

The local communities are made up of people who work as tour guides, artisans who create and sell sculptures, small stores that offer tourist necessities close to popular tourist destinations, and some people who work in hotels and resorts. It has been noted that the majority of residents of this area rely on tourism for living. They are very happy in leading their lives here depending on tourism,” one community said. “The destination is very crowded with domestic and international tourists throughout the year,” they stated.

3.2.4 Tourists

When we talked to the tourists, they said things like, “The surroundings need to be more clean and hygienic and provide a welcoming environment; it will serve as a pull factor that will bring more tourists to these destinations.”

3.2.5 Artisans

The artisans must evolve and grow into natural streams, and their skills must be nurtured, supported and elevated to improve their standard of living. Some of the respondents expressed their views that:

“They have today lost contact with traditional knowledge of sculpture and need to acquire ‘hybrid’ talents. There has been a net loss of people practicing these arts because their community lost interest because the industry offers neither financial or emotional rewards.”

One craftsman’s opinion was that ‘the sector could not develop alongside the rest of the economy because its tools, techniques, insights, market intelligence, could not keep up with the changing world.’ If this trend keeps on, our sculptural traditions and the artists who create them will be largely extinct over the next two decades’.

3.3 Impact for the environment

Due to the workshop’s emphasis on environmentally friendly methods when creating sculptures, Creative Sculptures has a substantial environmental impact. They minimize the impact on ecosystems that would otherwise be harmed by extraction or transportation and lower the carbon footprint associated with transportation by employing indigenous materials. Additionally, they significantly reduce the use of power tools by adopting traditional carving techniques, which lowers their energy usage and environmental effect. Creative Sculptures is demonstrating that sustainable business practices can be applied into any sort of business model by leading by example in the art and tourist industries with their dedication to sustainability.

3.4 Impact for the company

By positioning sustainability first, they set themselves apart from rival businesses and appeal to an expanding population of consumers who care about the environment. They can demonstrate their dedication to conserving cultural practices and helping the neighborhood by using materials that are locally produced and traditional carving techniques.

Adopting sustainable practices has a positive economic impact since they save money by making better use of resources, cutting down on waste, and using less energy. The workshop’s dedication to sustainable tourism can also help the local economy by drawing travelers looking for genuine cultural experiences and locally created products.

Additionally, Creative Sculptures establishes a solid reputation as a company that values both the environment and society by encouraging sustainable business

practices. As a result, the workshop's exposure and market appeal may expand thanks to a rise in client loyalty and word-of-mouth recommendations.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Business development of traditional craft products associated with tourism is a new direction. Traditional craft products become a source of income for corporations, while tourism becomes a consumer market for traditional craft products. Linking the business of traditional products with tourism contributes to preserving traditional cultural values while bringing practical economic benefits to both the traditional craft industry and the tourism industry.

These products, with their values and characteristics, become a unique tourism product, creating an attraction for visitors. Meanwhile, the development of tourism increases revenue and sales of traditional products. In order to effectively operate the business associated with tourism, it is required to meet all relevant requirements and conditions such as production, demand, supporting and related industries, competitive conditions, business strategy, and support from the government, central, and local state management agencies.

Manufacturing, pricing, marketing, and distribution are all part of business development for tourism, which aims to provide the highest quality goods to customers. In the process of production, business establishments are affected by objective environmental factors (politics, economy, culture, society, technology), subjective environmental factors (business strategies), internal resources, and organizational structure and culture. There must also be financial, human resource, technological, and promotional support from state and local governments

CASE STUDY 8

Community Based Eco-tourism: A Case Study on Vana Vihari, Maredumilli, Andhra Pradesh, India

S. Sreenivasa Murthy and D. Sai Venkata Sastry

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Across the globe, it has become increasingly evident that there needs to be a shift in lifestyle to move away from a consumer driven society to one that is environmentally, economically, and socio-culturally sustainable. Sustainable eco-tourism can educate tourists and locals alike about the cultural and natural significance of an area. It has positive implications for the relationships between the tourism business and the local community and has the potential to provide a stable economic flow into local areas.

The government of Andhra Pradesh (AP) has taken several initiatives including partnerships with private sector to promote Eco-tourism that are yielding excellent results. The present case study deals with the community based eco-tourism in AP, while arguing that Eco-tourism if promoted with appropriate levels of local community engagement will benefit those communities and will conserve our invaluable environmental heritage. In the case of general tourism, tourist visits are often marketed and organized by private travel companies and government protected areas and the bulk of the profits go to the private companies and government enterprises. In contrast, CBET is managed and run by the community itself, and the management decisions are made by local people and profits go directly to the community.

‘Vana Vihari’ is an initiative of Government of Andhra Pradesh through its Forest Department, and it is owned by Andhra Pradesh Forest Department and maintained by CBET, Maredumilli Vana Vihari is initiated by the Andhra Pradesh forest department as per the forest policy of both state and union government of India to provide financial benefits and empowerment to the local communities and to promote a responsible tourism to natural areas which would be sustainable, equitable community based endeavor for improving the living standards of the indigenous host communities and to create a stake in conservation of the environment besides offering the possible best to the Nature loving tourists.

Thus, the Community Based Eco-tourism under the name of 'Vana Vihari' is formed to allow the general public to enjoy nature along with a plan to inculcate the essence of conservation of wild resources among general public.

Vana Vihari is the brand name of the CBET at Mareduhilli tourist destination. Basically the CBET Mareduhilli was formed by drawing some of the Vana Surakshana Samiti (VSS) members from local indigenous tribal community of Valamuru, Somireddypalem and Valmeekipeta and they were trained in guiding, basics of hospitality, guest entertainment and maintenance. CBET micro plan is approved by the Divisional Forest Officer, Kakinada and sent to PCCF (Hoff) Andhra Pradesh for sanction of funds.

A 15-member management committee is formed with 50% women representation. The accounts are maintained by the management committee under a joint account opened on the name of the chairman of the management committee and Forest Section Officer concerned who is the Member Secretary of the committee. After attaining the sustainable stage or completion of 5 years successful running, 50% of the revenue realized should be kept with a joint account opened on the name of CBET and Forest department and to be utilized for the development of Eco system and the remaining 50% to be in CBET account and to be utilized as decided by the general body of the CBET.

The Mareduhilli Forests of East Godavari District, which form one of the less disturbed forest tracts of Eastern Ghats, are endowed with rich biodiversity of flora and fauna and are home to important wildlife like the tiger, bison, panther, varieties of deer, birds and butterflies. This forest forms catchments for River "Godavari" and

River "Shabari" It is also home to a number of primitive tribes like Konda Reddy Konda Koyas, Valmikies, Gonds, Nayaka Podus, etc.

The main aim of the case study is to measure the potential of rural tourism in Mareduhilli. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To understand the potential of rural tourism and its impact on local community development.
- To identify the challenges and opportunities in community-based tourism activities.
- To identify the essential elements for development of sustainable and community based rural tourism.

The Mareduhilli Community Conservation and Eco-tourism Area is situated on Mareduhilli-Bhadrachalam Road, nearly four kilometers away from Mareduhilli Village, in the midst of undisturbed Eastern Ghats, which are home to rich flora and fauna. The area has many streams flowing over the undulating rocks in the deep woods

and any visitor can feel the thrilling experience of living in nature and visiting the primitive tribal habitations of Konda Reddy's and knowing their way of life.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: To provide livelihood to the local communities. To develop and promote indigenous art and culture.

Mission: To improve local communities' living standards and to popularize the local product.

1.3 Products/services

Vana Vihari offer attractive eco-products to the tourists. Some of the best products of Vana Vihari in Maredumilli are; *Jungle Star Nature Camp*, *Vana Vihari Eco Tourism*, *Birds Nest Resorts*, *Jungle Bells Nature Camp*, *Bamboo Nest Resort*: Located amidst the verdant Maredumilli forest, Jungle Star Nature Camp is a perfect destination for those who want to experience the beauty of nature up close. The resort offers comfortable cottages, tents, and tree houses, along with a range of adventure activities such as trekking, bird watching, and river rafting. Maredumilli is a perfect destination for those who love nature and adventure. These products offer comfortable accommodations, modern amenities, and a range of activities to make the stay enjoyable. Whether the tourist is looking for an eco-friendly retreat or an adventurous getaway, this destination has something to offer for everyone through 'Vana Vihari'

Medicinal plants conservation area: About 203 plant species, including medicinal and rare plants, have been identified in this area. Tourists can have an insight into coffee cultivation through a visit to the luxuriant coffee estates managed by the Forest Department.

Jalatarangini: The area is rich in springs and rivulets with cascading waterfalls giving a delightful experience to tourists. One such waterfall called "Jalatarangini," which is very close to the campsite, is often the favorite spot of tourists.

Madanikunj: This is a wildlife- viewing place called Madanikunj with tropical plants and bamboo grooves adjacent to the the Pamuleru River.

Pamuleru River: The place is regularly visited by wild animals like tigers, panthers, bison, peacocks, red jungle fowl and other birdlife in addition to varieties of butterflies

1.4 Target market(s)

Marketing can be defined as the process of seeing (human needs), sowing (evolving suitable product / service), showing (presenting to the target customer through

various suitable media and other promotional measures) Selling the product to the customer and ensuring the Satisfaction of the customer. Vana Vihari (the brand name of Community Based Eco-tourism – CBET, Maredumilli, E.G. Dt. Andhra Pradesh State) is well designed and equipped with nature-based service. Their target groups are young people who love nature tourism. They are working on marketing efforts for its growth to improve the local people livelihoods.

1.5 Organization and management

1.5.1 Management structure

The eco-tourism project is managed by the local, indigenous tribal community (Konda Reddy) of Valamuru Somireddy palem and Addaraveedhi Forest Protection Committees, with the active support of the Forest Department. The operations at these centers are totally managed by local community members comprising of tribal community of Konda Reddy's. Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation provides marketing support and training of the tribes in hospitality-related activities like food and beverage service, housekeeping, guide services, etc.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Vanvihari offers accommodation facilities at Jungle star eco camp and is superbly located like an island surrounded by water. About 7 cottages are available on top of a hillock. They are Bison huts, Containers, Prefabricated cottages, Deluxe rooms at hilltop. The major revenue stream is by providing accommodation and eco-sports to the tourists. The major expenses involved are the operation and maintenance of the resort, like electricity expenses, laundry, canteen maintenance, cleaning, wages and salaries to the employees, advertisement expenses, website maintenance.

The Forest Department under the Community Forest Management Program has developed a revenue-sharing mechanism with the local tribal community. Guide service, food and beverage, housekeeping and security are undertaken by the community members. The above activities are packaged in such a way that the total revenue derived is apportioned between the maintenance of infrastructure and services rendered by the community. The amount for the services rendered is shared equally between the 30 tribal families of Valamuru, Somireddypalem and Addaraveedhi villages. The members from the 30 families divide the various activities by turns and manage the Centre, thereby providing a wholesome experience of living with nature to the tourist.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Ecotourism is regarded as travel to fragile, pristine, and usually protected areas by minimizing the detrimental impact on the environment. The ecotourism model helps in:

- educating travelers about ecological footprint of their activities,
- providing funds for conservation,
- enabling economic development and empowerment of local communities

However, the ecotourism model has many challenges. Ecotourism is sometimes considered detrimental to the cultural heritage, pollution and the exploitation of wildlife. The major challenges that the eco-tourism face:

Table 1: Eco-tourism Impacts and Related Challenges for Vana Vihari

Impact types	Positive impact	Negative impact
Environmental	The maximum incentive for natural areas conservation. Conservation with development. Educate locals and tourists about environmental ethics.	Indirect vegetation damage. Disturbance to wildlife Pollution in form of air, waste, and noise. Commercialization of natural resources. New species invasion.
Economic	Foreign exchange means. Proper income distribution in local communities. Infrastructure building in a sustainable manner. Local economy promotion. Creation of job opportunities.	Income leakage. Inflation. Unhealthy economic competition. increases. The economic gap rises among locals.
Socio-cultural	Conservation and promotion of local culture, arts, tradition, music, and other heritages. Awareness about cultural relevance. Cultural exchange Diversification of activities.	Cultural degradation from foreign invasion. Social problems arise. Undesirable behaviour of visitors. Undesired commercialization of religious and cultural assets.

Source: Authors' contribution

2.2 The business/project idea

The focus of this tourism project is to provide sustainable livelihoods and to address the issues of poverty eradication through community mobilization around income and employment generation activities related to tourism. It combines the cultural, craft and ecological dimensions of rural life and holds tremendous potential for income generation and enhancement of the basic quality of life in the rural areas.

This novel concept of tourism is targeted at two distinct segments: firstly, to create interest among the host communities who are an integral part of the society so that they learn to take pride in their own identity and in their environment, culture and ecology; and secondly, to attract visitors who are interested in and fascinated by the nature, history, culture, artistic skills and lives of tribal societies, and who wish to enjoy and appreciate nature in all its forms without abusing, manipulating or destroying it, thereby ensuring its preservation for future generations.

In order to face the challenges Vana Vihari has been implementing some of the initiatives to conduct the business in a smooth and eco-friendly manner:

- Raising local awareness about the value of biological resources, increasing local participation in the benefits of biodiversity conservation (through new sources of jobs and incomes).
- Conducting training programmes to the staff on various topics like guest handling, cleanliness, culture.

2.3 External analysis

Eco-tourism business is one of the most prominent forms of alternative tourism. Its supporters believe that once residents learn that conservation does not imply a loss of economic opportunities, they will feel compelled to safeguard the environment. Ecotourism is defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that protect the environment, promote local people’s well-being, and include interpretation and education. “All the tourism development concepts have the goal of making the travel and tourism sector as a whole implement more environmentally sustainable practices, preserving a destination’s natural and cultural heritage, and helping local communities. Ecotourism contributes to community development by providing a more sustainable alternative source of income for the local population. Its goal is to conserve resources, particularly biological diversity, and to ensure sustainable resource usage, in order to provide travellers with an ecological experience while also conserving the environment and gaining an economic advantage.

These trends help the ‘Vana Vihari’ to promote the involvement of the local community in the preservation of the area’s ecosystem and biodiversity, which in turn provides economic incentives to the local community. This has provided an opportunity to biodiversity conservation; maintaining the well-being of local people; entails responsible action on the part of tourists and the tourism industry; promotes small and medium-sized tourism enterprises; requires the least amount of natural resource consumption possible; emphasizes local participation, ownership, and business

opportunities, particularly for rural people; and, above all, includes the learning experience. Therefore there is a potential for small-scale, cost-effective CBET projects in this company where there is little tourism activity, with some external assistance, and management and training skills. This external environment is a good opportunity for this business to grow is due course of time.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- Ecotourism provides a viable source of income for the local people, and tourism opportunities have led to local people's abundance in their cultivated land in their area and less involvement in environmentally destructive activities because of their full employment in the tourism sector.
- Specialized tourism villages' income flow raised environmental awareness and gave incentives for new rationality in the usage of traditional resources.
- Vanavihari gives livelihood to 68 families and has a larger impact on local people's livelihoods; it also encourages the local people's entrepreneurship activities; it also reduces forest degradation and dependency on forest resources.
- The business gave local people's access to financial capital by providing them with other sources of income.

2.4.2 Weakness

- Lack of proper Regulatory framework for controlling, managing, and funding ecotourism projects.
- No proper checks by government, NGOs and local communities across all regions in preventing any illegal activities.
- The problem of insurgency should be tackled meticulously with minimum harm to locals.
- Lack of trained communities as per the needs of the tourists.
- Poor check on the pollution level due to tourism practices.

2.5 Activities

Social change: The most significant development in the area is a total return of peace. This area was until recently a stronghold of left-wing guerilla extremists operating in Eastern Ghats forest tracts. People used to get scared even to drive through the forest, let alone stay there. Now, with the tribal community taking up the full responsibility of

running the Eco-tourism centre, there is an unbelievable change in the safety and security perspective of the tourists. The tourists have the opportunity to stay in the jungle that was once considered not safe. Jungle Star Eco-camp is now a sought-after destination for birdwatchers, trekkers, butterfly lovers, wildlife enthusiasts and people interested in jungle stays.

Marketing initiatives: The Forest Department directly markets this rural tourism initiative through their state and district hierarchy. APTDC (Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation) has developed extensive marketing initiatives through its Information and Reservation Centres. The destination is also marketed through the APTDC website and several other supporting materials, such as brochures, hand-outs, etc.

Skill development: Identifying and developing skills necessary for Eco-tourism among rural community members is of paramount importance to achieve its sustainability. The local municipalities and other private enterprises such as tour operators, who are interested in community development, can assist to build community skills capacity.

Marketing and promotion: The startup would need to create a marketing and promotional plan that persuasively conveys the special value of its sustainable tourism and innovative products. This could entail setting up a website, utilizing social media, and forming alliances with other travel and tourist businesses.

Creative development: To complement its sustainable tourist services, the startup would need to create a skill set in experimenting with new methods of handling tourists at the destinations. This could entail collaborating with other tourism agencies to build good brand may try to bring in more visibility to the product.

2.6 Stakeholders

Stakeholder identification: Identification of stakeholder's interest in the development of ecotourism business was carried out based on stakeholder characteristics. The identification of stakeholders involved in business development are classified into four groups: local government, private sector, community and researcher (University). Each stakeholder is identified first based on their interest and influence. The stakeholder is as follows: 1) Municipal Corporation, Maredumilli; 2) Local government of Andhra Pradesh; 3) Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation; 5) AP Forest Department 4) Local community; 5) Village head; 6) Researcher (University) and 7) Private sector.

2.6.1 Analysis of the role of stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis using the power and interest grid which classifies stakeholder into managing closely, keep satisfied, keep informed and monitor using a matrix of stakeholder's importance and interest on ecotourism development. Identifying stakeholder importance and interests is done through scoring using Likert scale.

Table 2: Matrix of Stakeholder's Importance and Influence

Importance	High	Subjects	Key Players
	Low	Crowd	Content Setter
		Low	High
		Influence	

Source: Authors' contribution

2.6.2 Identification of stakeholder

Based on their interest in the development of ecotourism business, stakeholders are classified into primary (major) stakeholders, key stakeholders and supporting stakeholders. Primary stakeholder. Primary stakeholders are stakeholders directly affected, either positively or negatively, due to the business and directly interested in the operational activities of the business. The primary stakeholders are the people in the three villages (Valamuru, Somireddypalem and Valmeekipeta) in maredumilli, because the ecotourism activities developed would impact the communities around the tourist destination areas. Based on the observations and interviews at the research location, community participation in the sample village is quite good; they are involved as tourism actors in activities that support tourist activities while in tourist locations. Community involvement in supporting tourist activities such as being a guide (local guide), porter services, transportation services of motorbikes and motorboats, floating lodging with local designs, restaurants, small stalls, and workers at village. The results of the interviews showed that the community is still a business actor. Community involvement is classified as passive and informational participation because the number of people involved is still small. Community participation is not optimal in supporting stakeholders' roles as the main stakeholder because the community is only a business actor and is not involved in the planning process for developmental activities in and around the village.

Key stakeholder: Key stakeholders have the legal authority to make decisions. Key stakeholders are identified based on their authority in making decisions related to the development of the eco-tourism destination. AP Forest Department and AP Tourism

Development Corporation are the key stakeholders in the management of the destination under which Vana Vihari has initiated the eco-tourism project. Government supports ecotourism, especially infrastructure and public facilities such as tourist attractions and promotions. These stakeholders have a role in developing tourism products (attraction natural resources and cultural) and promotions to increase tourist visits. The exiting potential has an educational element on environmental conservation and partnership with stakeholders and involving the community around the area

Supporting stakeholders: Supporting stakeholders are stakeholders who are not directly interest in the activity but do care. These stakeholders can become facilitators in the development process and influence decision making. Supporting stakeholders in this study are academics and the private sector. The role of academics and researchers is related to public education and research activities in the area of Botany, Wildlife conservation, Environmental management, pollution control, tourism supply chains and value chains.

The analysis results in Table 3 showed each stakeholder’s role in ecotourism development while the role of each stakeholder in each quadrant can be seen in Table 4.

Table 3: Stakeholders’ Interest and Influence Matrix

Level of Interest	Low High	High High
	Level of Interest	Municipal Corporation, Maredumilli; Local government of AP AP Tourism Development Corporation AP Forest Department
	Researchers	Village Heads Service providers
	Low Low	Low High
	Level of Influence	

Source: Authors’ contribution

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The Forest Department directly markets this rural tourism initiative through their state and district hierarchy. APTDC has developed extensive marketing initiatives through its Information and Reservation Centers. The destination is also marketed through the APTDC website and several other supporting materials, such as brochures, handouts, etc. The major beneficiaries of the business are the tourists who are interested in visiting eco-tourism destinations.

Table 4: The Role of Stakeholders According to Influence and Interest in Developing Ecotourism Business in Maredumilli

Influence		Interest	The role of stakeholders
Quadrant I	High	High	Natural Resources Conservation Center: Planning, Implementation and evaluation- monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism office: Development of tourist attractions, promotion dan empowerment of local communities. • Local government: policies and program for building facilities and accessibility. • Local community: supporting facilities for tourism activities (accommodation, transportation, culinary, souvenirs)
Quadrant II			
Quadrant III	High	Low	<i>Heads of the village</i> mobilizing the active role of the community
Quadrant IV	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher: scientific information related to research results in the development of ecotourism. • Private sector • Development of infrastructure (hotels, roads, water, power etc)

Source: Authors' contribution

2.8 Partners

Local community: Community members can assist Vana Vihari in narrating the culture, heritage, and the importance of the destination. This would attract tourists and increase their business.

Small vendors: The local people may sell the local products, souvenirs to the tourists.

Tour operators: Tour operators may be beneficial partners for eco-tourism development. They would provide good package tours to the tourists in collaboration with the company. Tour operators play a very important role because the location of the destination is in the forest area where connectivity is a major issue.

Forest department: Forest department extends helping hand to the business because many of the products are within the control of the department and their cooperation is very essential for the success of the eco-tourism business.

2.9 Finances

Vana Vihari is an initiative of Government of Andhra Pradesh through its Forest Department, and it is owned by Andhra Pradesh Forest Department and maintained by CBET, Maredumilli. A 15-member management committee is formed with 50% women representation. The accounts will be maintained by the management committee under a joint account opened on the name of the chairman of the management committee and Forest Section Officer concerned who is the Member Secretary of the committee.

After attaining the sustainable stage or completion of 5 years successful running, 50% of the revenue realized should be kept with a joint account opened on the name of CBET and Forest department and to be utilized for the development of Eco system and the remaining 50% to be in CBET account and to be utilized as decided by the general body of the CBET

2.10 Human resources

The present business expansion requires additional personnel with additional skills in sustainable tourism. Depending on the size and business expansion, the company has different specialized demands. Following are some of the human resources that might be needed:

Personnel in marketing and communications: The company may need to engage marketing and communication specialists with experience in sustainable tourism in order to effectively explain the new initiative/business to the target market(s) and stakeholders on social media and print media.

Project managers: The company may need to recruit project managers to plan the tourist activities and guide them properly to reach their satisfaction levels. Staff with expertise in sustainable tourism practices may need to be hired or trained by the company, including eco-tour guides, waste management professionals, and energy efficiency experts.

Liaison officers: To manage its partnerships with other companies or organizations the company may need to recruit liaison officers to support 'Vana Vihari' in arranging additional tourist services like laundry, cleaning, expert boat riders, tricking trainers, experts with knowledge in medicinal plant identification

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

To tell its target market(s) and stakeholders about its new initiative/business on sustainable tourism, the company has been using different modes of communication and marketing platforms. The business initially created a website with in-depth information about the products, its goals, the services offered, and the contact data. Additionally, it has created social media profiles on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to communicate with stakeholders and potential customers. To inform existing customers and stakeholders about the new project/business, email marketing campaigns are employed. To inform the media about the new venture or company, a press release is written. To increase its visibility and attract new stakeholders and clients, the business participates in local events and collaborates with other businesses, organizations, and influencers in the

sustainable tourism industry. The company is also encouraging the tourists to post their travel experience in the form of travel blogs, tour videos on the eco-tourism products that are offered by the company on their individual social media and # with 'Vana Vihari'.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

The business concept of conducting eco-tourism travel in specific forest region gives a lot of travel satisfaction to the tourists. In general, the tourists may plan their visiting places individually after reaching a particular destination, in case of eco-tourism destinations guidance and plan from the tour operators or destination management organizations is very essential. Therefore 'Vana Vihari' is supporting the travelers with their products.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis is a process of identifying key stakeholders in a particular business activity and assessing their interest in the success of the business and the extent to which the interest can influence.

3.2.1 Government

In the present business operations government has a high role and high influence. Two government organizations, i.e., AP Tourism Development Corporation, AP Forest Department, play a vital role in starting the business. The business has a good environmental protection activity that has been taken up by the government.

3.2.2 Local communities

The local community's awareness and support for conservation efforts is optimistic about the benefits of tourism growth. Ecotourism planning direction is offered with the intention of enhancing the capacity of ecotourism to generate benefits for both the community and the tourism park, and thus contribute to the sustainable development of the region.

3.2.3 Service providers

The service provides like individual shop, tour guides, tour operators are the stakeholders who are highly influenced and depends more on the business. The local shopkeepers have been selling are selling medical herbs, pure honey and the products

that come from the forest. One of the shop keepers believed their incomes are seasonal because the eco-tourism business depends more on monsoon fluctuations.

3.2.4 Tour guides and tour operators

Here, tour guides and tour operators are very much impacted by the business because without good guidance it is not possible for the tourists to plan tricks, boating, visit to botanical plants.

3.2.5 Tourists

The tourists are very much interested in these business activities. They were of the view that they are enjoying the natural resources very much and the service products extended through the business operations is helping them a lot to enjoy the destination and take back more peace and calm memories.

3.3 Impact for the environment

The specialized tourism villages' income flow raised environmental awareness and gave incentives for new rationality in the usage of traditional resources. Tourism revenue is less likely to reverse non-traditional, degrading growth patterns in advanced stages, and tourism income can assist to unite actors to support the protected area endangered by competing for land practice.

3.4 Impact for the company

The preset Eco-tourism business case study of 'Vana Vihari' would help the company to understand their impact on the local communities' livelihoods, service providers level of dependance on their business, their present financial position and the contribution to the socio-economic development of the particular destination.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The CoE would understand the gaps in the present business structure and tries to reduce them in the course of time.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Ecotourism is the tourism industry's fastest-growing segment. It has the potential to boost local economies, encourage cultural exchange, and promote tourism's

long-term sustainability. Nowadays, it is one of the most prominent forms of alternative tourism. Its supporters believe that once residents learn that conservation does not imply a loss of economic opportunities, they will feel compelled to safeguard the environment.

These products, with their values and characteristics, become unique tourism products, creating an attraction for visitors. Meanwhile, the development of tourism increases revenue and sales of traditional products. To effectively operate the business associated with tourism, it is required to meet all relevant requirements and conditions such as production, demand, supporting and related industries, competitive conditions, business strategy, and support from the government, central, and local state management agencies.

Manufacturing, pricing, marketing, and distribution are all part of business development for tourism, which aims to provide the highest quality goods to customers. In the process of production, business establishments are affected by objective environmental factors (politics, economy, culture, society, technology), subjective environmental factors (business strategies), internal resources, and organizational structure and culture. There must also be financial, human resource, technological, and promotional support from state and local governments.

CASE STUDY 9

Tourism on Tribal Culture and Development: A Case Study on ITDA and TSTDC, Medaram Eturunagaram

M. Maschendar Goud and M. Sai Mouli Verma

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

ITDA, Eturunagaram, was formed as the headquarters on February 29, 1975, as Warangal. Later, in 1986, the headquarters were relocated from Warangal to Eturunagaram, where it now resides. The ITDA, Eturunagaram, serves around 5.305 lakh STs. Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) Area includes 13 Mandals out of the District's 51 Mandals, covering an area of 3,122.46 square kilometers. The ITDA was formed to promote the general development of the area's tribes. Koya, Lambada, Yerukala, Nakkala, and Naikpod are the dominant tribes in the region. Each year, the ITDA develops distinct action plans to undertake various sorts of development initiatives for tribes who live in TSP and non-TSP territories.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: Prepare and implement various socioeconomic and developmental programs for the holistic development of tribes in Medaram, such as educational programs, economic support schemes for livelihood, and ensuring remunerative prices from tribal communities via Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC).

- To improve the quality of life for all Tribal Communities by preserving the safeguards guaranteed by the Indian Constitution and executing Welfare and Developmental Schemes.
- To plan and prepare various programmes and Schemes to preserve Tribal Culture and the tribal arts and crafts, documenting the traditions and organization of tribal festivals.

Mission: It is dedicated to the holistic development of Tribes in the state through the formulation of policies and tourism programs for implementing the constitutional safeguards provided to Tribes and Scheduled Areas in the state of Telangana, as well as through various developmental activities of Tribal Welfare funded by the Tribal Special Development Fund.

- To promote destinations and so contribute to economic development.
- To collaborate with TSTDC on tribal development.

1.3 Products/services

Tribal welfare schemes implemented by the ITDA Eturunagaram: ITDA, Eturunagaram formed on February 29, 1975, with its headquarters located in Warangal. Later, in 1986, the headquarters were moved from Warangal to Eturunagaram, where they are now located. About 5.305 lakh STs are served by the ITDA in Eturunagaram. Thirteen Mandals, totaling 3122.46 square kilometers, fall under the Tribal Sub – Plan (TSP) area out of the district's fifty-one Mandals. The goal of the ITDA's establishment was to promote the general wellbeing of the local tribes. The Koya, Lambada, Yerukala, Nakkala, and Naikpod tribes are the principal tribes in the region. The ITDA Eturunagaram is putting the following programs into place for the STs' overall growth as follows:

Kalyana Lakshmi: The Kalyana Lakshmi Scheme (KLS) is a welfare program that offers financial aid to girls who are unmarried and at least 18 years old at the time of marriage and whose parents' annual income is not more than Rs. 2 lakh. The program offered financial aid at Rs. 51,000, which was later increased to Rs. 1 lakh. The program first benefited SC and ST families, but it was eventually expanded to include all low-income families in the state. The scheme gives an assistance of Rs.1,00,116/- and is aimed at preventing child marriages. The beneficiaries and the amount released in the last 5 years is as follows.

Table 1: Kalyana Lakshmi

Year	No of Beneficiaries	Sanctioned Amount (in Rs.)
2014-15	2,482	12.65
2015-16	17,354	88.5
2016-17	13,473	68.71
2017-18	16,326	108.62
2018-19	16,500	146.78
2019-20	21,329.4	171.566
2020-21	24,030.2	200.404
2021-22	26,731	229.242

Source: ITDA

It is clear from the Table 1, there is an increasing trend is observed in getting benefit from the state Government.

High school building projects in remote interior area development (RIAD) areas: The plan aims to give high schools in the RIAD districts infrastructure facilities.

Construction of school complexes: This program's primary goals are to create staff quarters, dormitories for post-matriculating students, and post-matriculation hostels in ashram schools, as well as to upgrade PMRC structures in ITDA districts.

Hostel arrangements for educational institutions: The scheme's primary goal is to construct hostel structures for Post-Matric ST students who are enrolled in degree-granting institutions in the RIAD regions. There will be one male and one female residence for each level of college.

Girls' residential junior colleges: This program was started to build infrastructure for female students attending Residential Junior Colleges (RJC) in RIAD districts.

Buildings for ST G/B Ashram schools in Naxal-affected areas: The goal of this program is to create buildings and give additional accommodation to integrated Hostels, Post Matric Hostels, and Ashram Schools that are now housed in private housing.

Academic infrastructure: Youth Training Centers (YTCs), ATWOs, staff housing for educational institutions, etc. are all part of the plan.

Construction of roads under the NABARD program of the national bank for agriculture and rural development: The program's goal, with financial support from NABARD, is to create road connectivity in TAs.

Buildings are being constructed for integrated residential schools: Infrastructure for Ashram Schools and Residential Schools is being developed with financial support from NABARD, Trench XVIII, and XIX.

Construction of godowns and storage points: Through the Public Distribution System (PDS), this program supplies daily necessities to STs residing in tribal areas as well as food supplies to ST educational institutions. It also provides godowns/storage points.

Medaram Jathara: All infrastructural works are necessary under this program for the conduct of the largest Tribal Jathara 'Sammakka Saralamma Jathara' which is held once every two years at Medaram village in the erstwhile Warangal District.

1.3.1 Education development schemes

Hostels: With a total population of 40763 borders, the Telangana government has 212 hostels, 157 for boys and 55 for girls.

Integrated Welfare Hostel Complexes (IWHC): The IWHC provides housing for 400 students from SC, ST, and BC backgrounds. Buildings and other amenities are appropriately provided for each IWHC.

Tribal Welfare Ashram Schools (TWAS): There are 283 TWASs. Out of the total TWAS, 187 for Boys and 96 for Girls are operating in the tribally dense areas to provide both a school and a dormitory under one roof. 8 Ashram Primary Schools, 33 Ashram Upper Primary Schools, and 242 Ashram High Schools are operating among the 283 TWAS and offering schooling and hostel facilities to 85843 tribal children.

Post-matric hostels: There are 101 hostels in operation to provide ST students with free housing and utilities charges for collegiate study.

Tribal Welfare Primary Schools (TWPS): There are 1513 Tribal Welfare Primary Schools (GVVKs) operating in TAs to provide primary education to 32653 ST children.

Coaching and allied: The tribal youngsters have governed competitive examination tutoring through four Pre-Examination Training Centers (PETCs).²¹ The study circle began operations with a sanctioned strength of 100 students.

Financial Assistance for Students of Telangana (FAST): In order to help ST students finish their education, the FAST offers scholarships to those enrolled in post-secondary or post-matriculation programs. It also offers book loans to ST students enrolled in professional programs.

Pre-matric scholarships: Pre-matric scholarships give gifted ST youngsters the chance to attend reputable private schools and acquire a high-quality education.

Best available schools: Bright ST children are picked by District Selection Committees (DSCs) chaired by Collectors in non-ITDA districts and POs in ITDA districts, and the selected ST children are admitted to the Best Available Schools administered by Reputed Private Management Schools).

Upgrading tribal welfare ashram schools into schools of excellence: In order to prepare students for competitive exams like those for the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), and other residential schools that were approved by MoTA and are also managed by Gurukulam, Tribal Welfare Ashram High Schools (TWAHS) in each ITDA were converted into Schools of Excellence.

Residential schools for tribal girls in RIAD areas: The Scheme aims to offer Tribal girls in RIAD Areas Quality Education. With 620 students each, two colleges are operating under this initiative, one in Utnoor and the other in Eturunagaram.

Upgradation of residential schools into junior colleges of excellence: The program seeks to transform the current Tribal Welfare Residential Schools into Junior Colleges of Excellence with the long-term goal of preparing students to take part in national level competitive tests like the NIT and IIT, among others. With 160 pupils authorized, one is currently operating in the Mananoor, Mahabubnagar District.

Economic Support Schemes (ESS): The Government has issued directives increasing the subsidy to 60% of the Unit Cost with a maximum of Rs. 1 lakh, and all applications must be recorded through the Online Beneficiary Management & Monitoring System (OBMMS) created by the Centre for Good Governance (CGG). OBMMS and e-payment systems are created to ensure transparency in the implementation of beneficiary registration, the direct deposit of funds into beneficiaries' bank accounts through e-payment, fixing accountability on officers/bankers, eliminating middlemen/duplications, and overall monitoring and evaluation.

Conservation cum Development Plan (CCDP): The initiative was implemented beginning on April 1, 2008, as part of the 11th Five Year Plan. The programs' overall goal is to improve the quality of life for PVTGs by adopting a habitat development strategy and managing the socioeconomic development of these communities holistically. Construction of multipurpose buildings, internal road and drain construction, giving corpus funds to Self Help Groups (SHGs) for livelihood interventions, and any other needs felt by the PVTG community that cannot be met by any other government program or plan are the main programs.

Multiple Skill Development (MSD): For the purpose of implementing MSD programs in the SAs, a distinct Sub Mission for STs was established. With the help of training partners from public and commercial training institutions, 24 MSD initiatives have been launched to offer tribal youth who are unemployed employment options.²⁵ Since the founding of the new state, the TRICOR has introduced different TWS.

Skill development: The Tribal Welfare Department is implementing three skill development projects in tribal communities: placement-linked trainings, direct placements, and self-employment trainings. The following is a year-by-year breakdown of progress (Table 2):

Table 2: Skill Development

Year	Trained	Placed	Self-Employment Trainings	Total
2014-15	3,603	2,873	0	3,603
2015-16	2,464	2,136	4,812	7,276
2016-17	3,338	2,317	794	4,132
2017-18	3,207	2,361	1,583	4,290
2018-19	3,150	2,285	689	2,783
2019-20	3,103.5	2,109.1	1,020.3	4,124
2020-21	3,087.2	2,014	835.2	3,922
2021-22	3,070.9	1,918.9	650.1	3,721
Total	25,023.6	18,014	10,383.6	33,851

Source: ITDA

As of 2021–2022, 3071 ST kids have received training; of these, 19 ST young have received placement and 500 ST youth are still completing training. Furthermore, 650 youngsters from ST programs received various trainings focused on self-employment. Table 2 makes it evident that a continuous trend was seen between 2014–15 and 2021–22. Every year, it is demonstrated that everyone who qualifies benefits.

Table 3: Schemes Implemented under ITDA

Scheme	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
Agriculture	38	71	70	69	74	73	79	474 (37.93%)
Animal Husbandry	988	905	904	903	909	908	810	6327 (50.63%)
Minor Irrigation	75	46	45	44	55	54	83	402 (3.22%)
Self-Employment	863	714	713	712	749	748	794	5293 (42.36%)
Total	1964	1736	1732	1728	1787	1783	1766	12496 (100%)

Source: ITDA

The tribal development programmes operated by the ITDA, Eturunagarm in the fiscal years 2014–15 and 2020–21 is described in the Table 3. The data in the table shows that during the financial years, many of the schemes were approved under the animal husbandry sector (50.63%), followed by the agriculture sector (42.36%) and minor irrigation sectors (3.22%).

When sector-specific funding allocations from 2014–15 to 2020–21 are compared, it is seen that programs linked to agriculture have received the largest allocations, while programs associated to minor irrigation, animal husbandry, and self-employment have received the least amount of funding. This research shows that the government has narrowed its focus to just agriculture.

1.4 Target market(s)

Koya: In ITDA Eturunagaram, one of the most prevalent native tribes is the Koya. In Telangana, which includes the current states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, there were 590739 Koya people living there as of the 2011 census. Most of them live in the agency and plains villages in Khammam, Warangal, and a handful in the Adilabad

district. Eturunagarm and Bhadrachalam are where most Koys reside in the Tribal Sub Plan areas.

Lambada: The Lambada tribes are found all over the state of Telangana. Sugalis and Banjaras are other names for them. According to the 2011 Census, their population is 24,07,637 people. The Lambadas are Telangana's largest tribe. Lambadas live in their own exclusive villages called Tandas, usually outside of the main village, tenaciously preserving their cultural and ethnic identity. Men's traditional attire includes dhotis, top garments, and brightly colored turbans. The women, of course, dress in 'Langa' cotton designs, elaborately embroidered with several-fold at the waists.

Yerukala: Yerukalas tribes are found all over Telangana. They call themselves Kurru. Because of women's future telling profession (Erukachepputha), they are called Yerukala. According to the 2011 census, their population is 519337 in Andhra Pradesh including Telangana.

Nakkala: The Nakkala tribe is a nomadic tribe that roams throughout Telangana, where they are itinerant hunters and traders. Since 2002–2003, they have been acknowledged as ST. Typically, they move from one location to another by hunting little animals and birds for food and selling trifling items. They use the scriptless Nakkala basha language, which is close to Lamabada. They also sell synthetic pearls, toys, combs, catapults, mirrors, plastic flowers, needles, and other items. As they are adept at catching animals, some Nakkalas work for the municipality catching dogs, pigs, and monkeys. Some of them work as agricultural laborers as well as in stores. Women are highly influential in economic activity.

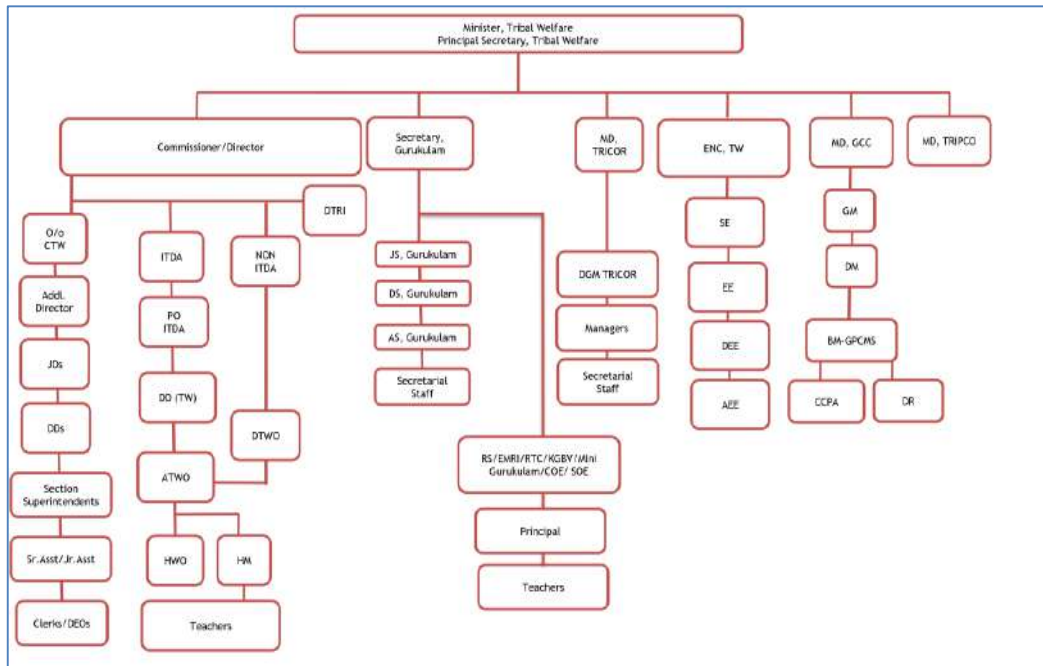
Naikpod: The Naikpods are classified alongside Gonds and Raj Gonds in the list of STs (at serial No. 6) in the SCs and STs Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976, despite the fact that these two groups are distinct and separate. These two groups do not have a marital or commensally bond. Naikpods consider themselves superior to Gonds and refuse to eat cooked food from the latter. Despite the fact that Naikpods have been living in the same habitat as Gonds, they do not embrace their phratry system or clan structure.

1.5 Organization and management

The Tribal Welfare Department's (TWD) organizational structure is an essential component of the Tribal Welfare Management (TWM) process. The next phase in the management process is framing the organizational structure below (Figure 1) the policymaking body to get the objectives realized and the plan accomplished after the policymaking body formulates the general and specific objectives, as well as the

necessary plans and programs to carry out. A comprehensive grasp of an organization's aims and plans permits its structuring, functioning, and performance.

Figure 1: Tribal Welfare Department - Organogram



2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

2.1.1 Cultural tourism at medaram

A combination of history and divinity is found in the Medaram jathara. Nearly one crore people from across the nation come together for the largest tribal celebration in the nation. A small tribal community called Medaram in the Mulugu district, Warangal celebrates this Jathara, also known as Sammakka-Saralamma jathara, once every two years in the months of January and February. In 1996, the government designated this festival as a state festival due to its significant religious significance.

Medaram is an isolated community within the Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary, which is a portion of Dandakaranya, the Deccan's largest remaining forest belt. It's thought that the Medaram jathara draws the greatest number of devotees in the nation,

second only to Kumbha Mela. A bullock cart was the only means of transportation to Medaram until 1998. The state government constructed a katcha road in 1998. The jathara has a lot of infrastructure and amenities now. During the jathara period, TSRTC offers private vehicles in addition to bus services to accommodate visiting public.

Many tribal people travel to Medaram to celebrate the Jatara, in addition to local tribal people and devotees from other states including Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and portions of Jharkhand. Especially, the improvement of the tourism industry in this place has been predicated on environmental conservation and community development particularly with regard to initiatives like Plastic free Jathara, Forest protection, Water protection and Conservation, Public transportation, Public sanitation, etc.

Among other environmental effects, pollution of the air, water, soil, noise, and light in Medaram during Jathara is having a major and irreversible negative influence on the flora and wildlife. At an alarming rate, noise pollution from buses, loudspeakers, cars, and other sources is significantly damaging the environment and eroding Medaram's serene mood. Due to Medaram's increasing popularity as a regular pilgrimage destination, managing and controlling solid waste as well as preventing contamination of the water, air, and soil during and after the jathara should be top objectives for the government.

2.2 The business/project idea

The Telangana Tourism Development Corporation has started running buses between Warangal and Medaram, stopping at scenic spots in the Medaram forests. On weekends, approximately a hundred number of vehicles travel through the Tadwai and Eturunagaram Mandals, the owners of which pay a token of Rs. 50 to the Environment Conservation Fund. In Medaram, there is a woodland (Haritha) Hotel and a guest home that offers lodging, but there are no full-service hotels or restaurants. A few years ago, this could not have served the purpose of overnight tourists, but now TSTDC has arranged so many facilities with the help of ITDAs. Eturunagaram, which is adjacent to Medaram, has various hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality services. There are no qualified and skilled tourist and hospitality professionals in this area. Through the Institute of Public Enterprise, the government developed various skill development and capacity building programs.

2.2.1 Objectives of tourist visits to medaram

The following can be used to determine the goals or purposes of tourist trips to the Medaram:

Table 4: Objective to Visit Medaram

Objectives	Yes	No
To enjoy the forest area	√	
To experience the nature	√	
To visualize tribal's and their socio-cultural and economic conditions	√	
To know the history of Medaram and visit the Temple	√	
To purchase forest and wildlife species		√

Source: Primary Data

The views of visitors on the true purpose of their visit to this Medaram have also been gathered through a survey and are displayed in the Table 4. The findings evident that, in keeping with the perception of a nature-based tourism destination, the majority of tourists have stated support for the reasons behind their trip and have a favorable opinion of Medaram as a cultural center and vacation destination. The Medaram is under the jurisdiction of the ITDA (Integrated Tribal Development Authority), which oversees numerous development programs for the benefit of tribal communities. Cultural tourism is becoming an increasingly significant aspect of the medaram and tribal communities' overall development. cultural tourism has been a successful economic activity in providing them with an essential alternative source of employment.

2.3 External analysis

Issues in development and tourism stakeholder's participation: In order to involve tribal groups in the protection and conservation of biodiversity, the ITDA and TSTDC organized members to form Tourism Development Committees (TDCs) in Medaram. The department recently constructed the Haritha Hotel, which has a restaurant, luxurious rooms, and huts that represent the environment of a tribal society, in an effort to draw tourists. The hotel was now well-known among tourists and for being used for movie shooting sets. An executive from the TSTDC stated, "*We have given employment to young Chenchu tribals to work at Haritha Hotel and different cottages at Medaram*". The arrival of tourists has benefited the people there much, he said. Telangana tourism has chosen to invest Rs 96.67 crore to improve the tribal circuit under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

2.4 Internal analysis

Tourism potential in Medaram, Eturunagaram: Medaram offers the concept of tourism based on ecotourism, cultural tourism, tribal, and local wisdom. where the primary focus of this journey is nature, the environment, and culture. The idea of tribal community development and empowerment (culture based on community development) presents a viable opportunity for the development of cultural tourism activities in Medaram. Temporary kutchas are arranged in such a way that they serve as a form of lodging for tourists, and are one of the unique characteristics of the forest areas of the river bank arrangements. These attractions offer a variety of activities that touch on the natural activities of tribal areas. This location serves as an open-air educational tourist hub, and history and tourism experts with a focus on rural subtleties have unique qualities.

Table 5: Tourism Potential in Medaram, Eturunagaram, Internal Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Koyas are impacted significantly in terms of their social, cultural, and economic lives by the Godavari and Sabari rivers and have a steady supply of water for irrigation and offer a supply of fish and other aquatic resources, as well as a way to carry goods and services 2. Prosperity in Agriculture, cultivate wide range of crops, including various millets, ragi, bajra, and jowar and involving traditional handicrafts like ceramics, mats, and baskets 3. Friendly and helpful people traditional huts showing a strong cultural side, quiet environment, without any noise, especially rich cultural heritage, vibrant festivals and rituals, and traditional music and dance 4. One of the natural tourism locations that will grow in popularity is Medaram. Natural tourism vacation packages include activities like planting and pounding rice, corn, collecting fish, and field plowing. Additionally, foreign travelers began to draw attention 5. Local expertise is still preserved. a distinct kind of singing and dancing called Permakok, or Koya dance. During festivals and other special events, this dance is performed. They will attract the tourist 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no direct transit from Eturunagaram to Medaram; instead, must drive a rented car or a motorcycle around 25 kilometers down the village road. Since it's a hilly terrain, there are no communication plans. 2. Insufficiently skilled and trained laborers in the community, coupled with a lack of local government backing for the administration of tourism sites to foster sustainable tourism 3. Since local government and the people do not trust one another, tourism administration has not been centralized and is still administered locally. The management of tourism is weak. 4. The underutilized potential of nature means that there are still a few popular tourist destinations, giving visitors a limited selection and necessitating the development of a more engaging program. 5. Absence of infrastructure supporting tourism (e.g., sewage and roads). Sports and recreation facilities lacking in necessary equipment 6. The lack of artistic dance that would have made Medaram a popular tourist destination, like the welcome dance

Source: Authors' contribution

2.5 Activities

The following measures are offered to increase rural tourism in Medaram by utilizing available priority.

Strategies for competition: Increase growth in the tourism industry related to nature and agriculture due to the relative benefits of growing rural tourism. use and planning of private sector assistance for district village tourist sector investments. To compete with other recreational locations, identify and capitalize on the area's relative tourism advantages, such as homestays, souvenir shops, and attractions.

Techniques for diversification: To satisfy the expectations of tourists, the government should concentrate on developing a variety of solutions to meet some of Medaram's criteria.

- i. Increasing the number of tourists by creating a comfortable atmosphere as well as diversifying tourism facilities and services to fulfill tourists' needs
- ii. promoting local rich culture, traditional dances, and the surrounding environment with advertising initiatives to further promote cultural and natural tourism and holding seminars in order to increase the allure of travel.
- iii. figuring out the ideal visitor density for this location in order to safeguard the environment and stop environmental deterioration and vulnerability.

Overview techniques: The revised strategies place a strong emphasis on Medaram's internal flaws as well as external chances to fix those flaws.

- i. Government should Improve the environmental infrastructure and facilities, in addition to investments from the public and private sectors;
- ii. Develop the tribals skills so they can be employed as skilled workers in administering Medaram as a tourism attraction, which can lead to funding opportunities from the local government and raising living standards.
- iii. Establish specific regulations to ensure the best possible use of the region's cultural assets and tourism offerings (such as homestays, souvenirs, and tour packages), while preventing pollution and damage to these resources.

Defensive strategies: In order to create a sustainable tourism industry, encourage tribals to get involved in the variety of tourist-related tools and amenities, and make local government assistance in the administration of tourist attractions. Educate the tribals on interactions with tourists in the area and provide training to local communities for visitors;

2.6 Stakeholders

The cultural tourism refers to the practice of tourists consuming a broad variety of cultural expressions, such as art, folklore, heritage, and it is understood as a

sociocultural interaction between individuals that is encouraged, regulated, and mediated by a variety of different players, such as legislators, planners, researchers, marketers, travel agencies. So it is necessary to briefly identify two main categorize of specialized and general where both types tend to avoid commercial ventures located within their area of interest.

The general cultural tourist: They will have a habit of visiting different geographic sites. General cultural tourists may eventually become specialized cultural tourists who concentrate on one or a small number of specific geographic locations or cultural entities as their knowledge of other cultures grows.

The specialized cultural tourist: They visits a city, region, or nation on a regular basis to gain a wide understanding of the culture there, or travels to several cities, regions, or nations to find examples of, say, a particular style of art, history, festival, or museum.

The list of various cultural tourists is, however, fairly general, and McKercher and Du Gros' (Figure 2) more in-depth typology of cultural tourists classifies tourists according to the breadth of their experiences as well as the significance of culture as a motivator. Because they choose a place primarily for the purposes of cultural values, the first three sorts of cultural tourists—the deliberate, the sightseeing, and the serendipitous—can plausibly be regarded as the major cultural tourists. The other two categories of cultural tourists, incidental and casual, fall under the general category of tourists, while these three can be considered specialized in comparison to general and specialized tourists.

Figure 2: Cultural Tourists Classification

Experience Sought	Deep	Unforeseen Cultural Tourist		Purposeful Cultural Tourist	
	Shallow	Incidental Cultural Tourist	Casual Cultural Tourist	Sightseeing Cultural Tourist	
		Low			High

Source: Author's on McKercher and Du Cros

The purposeful cultural tourist: The main reason a visitor travels to a place is for cultural tourism, and they get an in-depth cultural experience. “The conceptual approach,” which examines the behaviors, encounters, and interpretations of cultural tourists in interaction with various locations and cultures, aims to define cultural tourism in a more qualitative manner.

The sightseeing cultural tourist: While it is the main reason for traveling, cultural tourism offers a shallower experience. These sites and monuments approach primarily characterizes culture as a product and focuses on describing the kinds of attractions visited by cultural tourists.

The serendipitous (unexpected) cultural tourist: Traveler who does not want to visit for cultural purposes but, upon engagement, gains profound experience in cultural tourism.

The casual cultural tourist: Traveling for cultural tourism is weak, and the experience that results in is superficial.

The incidental cultural tourist: The tourist engages in certain activities and gets a superficial experience, but they do not travel for cultural reasons.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

In general, a cultural tourism destination includes a number of components (characteristics) that attract travelers to visit the place, and these components also meet tourists' desires once they arrive. These primary components of a cultural tourism destination like Medaram might be classified as "must sees or must dos," among other things. The distribution, characteristics, and quality of these components influence a traveler's decision to visit a certain destination.

Cultural attractions: The cultural attractions at Medaram are always the driving force behind a traveler's decision to visit that location. These include natural, man-made, and cultural resources that can be found in the local territory, such as natural and man-made parks, cultural and historical locales, and attractions popular in a local tribal community, such as local culture, folk dances, folk and tribal traditions, and rich heritage.

Amenities, both public and private: Various Infrastructure facilities, lodging, roadside services and children facilities, public and private service operators, and culinary services are among the different amenities (public and private) that facilitate passengers' stay at Medaram.

Accessibility: There are a variety of accessible services and facilities available for tourists to go to Medaram. These services and facilities include train, road, and cruise ships, which assist and support travelers in simply reaching their chosen destination.

Purpose of place and image: Medaram is rich cultural hub, quality image and specific traits play an essential and unique function. A variety of resources, including marketing, branding, travel media, and e-marketing, can be used to promote Medaram. The variety of Medaram Features provide support and assistance in the development of rich culture, including its originality, forest sights, river bank scenes, environmental

quality, safety facilities and services, and the harmony of the local community in general.

Human resources: Human resources are an important component of tourist destinations. Because tourism is an employment-generating business, relationships and connections with local communities play a vital part in destination design and management. People involved in tourism and destination building are well-versed and knowledgeable with the rewards and responsibilities associated with the expansion of the tourism company. These qualities of a cultural tourist destination are significant parts of destination management techniques and should be managed accordingly.

Given these conditions, a cultural tourism destination's interpretive planning and management process should incorporate a number of fundamental features and components, such as:

- i. The heritage planners' and cultural tourism organizers' justification for offering educational facilities and services.
- ii. Broad knowledge and comprehension of viewers and available resources concerning certain evaluation processes and techniques.
- iii. choice of media outlets.
- iv. Procedures for the methods of implementation and assessment.

2.8 Partners

The optimal visitor experience must be the primary emphasis of interpretive planning and administration for cultural tourism destinations, and all visitor services must be allocated carefully. Therefore, the interpretative planning process should include the amenities and services offered at a destination, including shopping, dining, lodging information, transportation, and other tourist-related services. It should also evaluate the main features of the sites that visitors are visiting.

In order to give visitors a high-quality experience with the services and amenities offered at a specific cultural tourism destination, a destination management organization (DMO) plays a crucial role in supporting and executing the activities of tourism planners. Destination management and interpretive planning are collaborative processes that engage various stakeholders such as:

- i. National and local government,
- ii. Local authorities, cultural planners,
- iii. Private operators,
- iv. Volunteer organizations, and
- v. Local communities.

The planning and management of cultural tourism destinations involves a wide range of processes and procedures that are centered on providing visitors with a high-quality experience while also reviving the local economy through the provision of essential services, happenings, and events, as well as sustainable and responsible use of local resources.

2.9 Finances

The Government enters the Medaram Sammakka Saralamma shrine. The only source of funding is the amount that devotees give; the government will also contribute approximately Rs. 100 crores, which is used to pay for the festivities and other essential preparations. It is roughly a century old. Numerous thousands of local and international enthusiasts gather together. Someone distributes prasadam. It is customary to utilize liquor. In conjunction with this, a three-day fair is organized, drawing attendees from both nearby and far-off locations. Businessmen travel from Warangal and other nearby states and districts. Food items, glass and copper utensils, fabric, and torchlights are available for purchase. Visitors are entertained by sports, seesaws, circus acts, magic, lotteries, gambling, and plays.

2.10 Human resources

In order to successfully organize the Medaram festival and preserve the rich cultural heritage, the government had to hire more staff members for planning and preparations. Approximately a thousand employees, including private and local tribal groups, are active in the ITDA and TSTDC, along with other government officials. The Government may make particular demands for human resources that TSTDC and ITDA may need, depending on the circumstances. It might be necessary for sustainability experts to work with the local company to develop and implement sustainable tourism policies and practices. To properly communicate the new initiative/business to the target market(s) and stakeholders, ITDA/TSTDC may need to bring in marketing and communication specialists with experience in sustainable tourism. It can be necessary for the business to hire or train tour guides, waste management specialists, and energy efficiency experts, among other staff members with knowledge of sustainable tourism techniques.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

The future growth of a location is planned through strategic marketing. Cultural institutions are considered to be “touristic enterprises” in this aspect as well. In actuality, cultural tourism institutions such as ITDA, TSTDC collections, theaters, televisions, and

other social media networks charge tourists or visitors for services or goods. A marketing that is successful continuously assesses its advantages and disadvantages. The primary methods that we might employ in order to finish the situation analysis are:

Destination analysis: A thorough evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of cultural organization or the destination is known as a destination analysis. It is best conducted using input from a range of sources both inside and outside the destination.

Competitive analysis: Planning and research for the marketing of cultural tourism also need to include a competitive analysis. It is best to separate the competition analysis along target market lines since most competitors differ from one another.

Interpretive planning, which involves concepts, media channels, viewers, and analysis procedures, is a marketing and management process that identifies and crafts a memorable visitor experience at a cultural tourism location. A cultural tourism destination's management and tourism strategy must include planning for visitor experiences. A wide range of techniques known as "interpretive planning and management" help people make the connection between significant events and circumstances and their own memorable experiences. At the same time, local economies benefit financially, local resources are used responsibly, and standards for tourist facilities are maintained. Given these conditions, the interpretive planning and management process for a cultural tourism destination should incorporate a number of fundamental characteristics and elements, such as:

- i. The heritage planners' and cultural tourism organizers' goal of providing educational facilities and services.
- ii. A general awareness of the resources and viewers regarding a certain range of evaluation techniques and procedures.
- iii. Media channel selection.
- iv. Procedures for the methods to implementation and assessment

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

The ways that cultural heritage tourism is influencing changes in moral behavior, creative expression, traditional rites, family dynamics, individual behavior, and community organization are known as its social and cultural implications. Stated differently, these are the consequences that the direct and indirect relationships that locals have with tourists have on them. By focusing on specific markets, marketing

techniques pertaining to product creation, advertising, positioning and branding, and consumer loyalty can be improved.

Creating novel travel products: It is quite simple for travel agencies and destination marketing organizations (DMOs) to create a new product that will meet the demands and desires of a target market. Taking this into consideration, Medaram handicrafts, trial products, paintings, baskets, mats, and pottery painting could create new items or packaging. The preferences and needs of the intended market might be taken into consideration when developing more inventive concepts.

Create a suitable brand: Target marketing assists DMOs and the tourism industry in creating relevant and competitive brands. Large and diverse brands do not connect with consumers; nevertheless, if a particular market is targeted, the slogans will have a deeper and more personal impact on the intended audience. With Medaram's cultural tourism in mind, travel agencies can create catchphrases and brand names centered around the tribal art of Medaram that will appeal to the target market immediately and effortlessly.

Improve your marketing efforts: Selecting a suitable communication channel between marketers and the intended audience is facilitated by target marketing when it comes to product advertisement. Given the internet marketing, social media in particular, allows us to readily view cultural heritage and art enthusiast pages or groups. With those who enjoy cultural heritage—artists, art educators, historians, students, etc.—public relations can be successfully created.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis is a process of identifying key stakeholders in a particular business activity and assessing their interest in the success of the business and the extent to which the interest can influence.

The degree of alignment, cohesion and diversity amongst stakeholders is also important; stakeholders that share common characteristics bring benefits of perceived interdependence, strong alignment of values, thus enhancing stakeholder satisfaction, commitment and engagement.

General petty shops: The Koyas were mostly shifting cultivators in the past. However, they have adapted to permanent farming these days. Their primary crops are tobacco leaves, mandia (millet), maize, and paddy. Every family visits their individual field huts in their crop fields during harvest season. The Koyas turn to various methods of food gathering because the agricultural harvests are insufficient for a family to subsist for the entire year. These methods include gathering fruits and roots from the jungle and cultivating minor crops like suan, maize, and pulses. They will sell the agricultural

products to tourist during festival season. According to one of the vendors named Medaranna, “He is depending on agricultural products as his livelihood source now cultural tourism at Medaram increased his revenue increased. He is expecting some financial assistance to become an entrepreneur”.

Villagers: These groups include tour guides, priests, and cultural tourism activists who make and market tribal products found in forests, small businesses that provide basic tourist needs near well-known tourist attractions, and some employees of the recently built TSTDC haritha hotels and riverbanks. It has been observed that the bulk of people who live in this region depend on cultural tourism and agricultural products. They depend on tribal goods to offer tourists, but they are content living here,” Ms Medaramma, leader in the community stated. “Medaram is very crowded with dieties, local and domestic tourist during the festival season throughout the year, and sometimes international tourists also found,” they said.

Travelers: Throughout the year, there was a significant growth in the number of tourists. They have made it quite evident that the amenities have increased since their last visit. Since they have told others about Medaram’s cultural tourism, they are also pleased, which is one of the factors contributing to the rise in visitor numbers.

Government representatives: Because the indigenous people are untrained, government employees serve as tour guides here. However, Mr. Bhimudu Sammakka said, “ITDA now offers educational and skill development programs to tribal people to become tour guides for promoting their culture.” He continued, “The Haritha hotel was built by TSTDC, and some local tribal people work there as cooks, weighers, and receptionists”.

3.3 Impact for the environment

Protecting wildlife habitats of the most significant species, raising environmental awareness, safeguarding the environment and natural resources, improving tribal appearance and accessibility to outside traffic, and highlighting and improving tribal appearance, tribal culture, Improvement of public facilities and services, and Increasing awareness of the environment are the most central factors for having a positive environmental impact. Increasing noise levels, crowded communities, pollution, waste accumulation, devastation of natural resources, and inappropriate community (tribe) growth are some of the most significant indicators of adverse environmental effects.

3.4 Impact for the company

For encouraging cultural tourism, the ITDA and Telangana State Tourism Development Corporation have been implementing various development plans and initiatives for the benefit of the tribes and their culture to promote cultural tourism. An extensive description of all the several strategies being employed in this situation. Since the establishment of the State, the Telangana State Government has placed a high priority on the welfare of the indigenous people and has been implementing welfare initiatives through the ITDAs. By prioritizing sustainability, they differentiate themselves from competitors and draw in an increasing number of environmentally friendly consumers. Using materials, products found from the forest and traditional handmade crafts, baskets, mats, and pottery they may show their commitment to sustaining cultural customs and improving the community. Since the handicrafts are made at homes of the Koyas' families, they create a spiritual link to the community. More labor possibilities, higher resident and tribe income, enhanced material welfare, higher living standards, more sales of local agricultural goods, outside investment, and improved public amenities and services are the most important factors for a positive economic impact.

Furthermore, by promoting environmentally and socially conscious business methods, handmade products solidify their position as a part of Medaram's cultural history.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

This case study demonstrates that, despite the fact that tourism has benefited social, economic, and environmental development and that only one tribe has found success in the travel industry, tribal indigenous peoples have positive attitudes about the growth of cultural tourism. The researchers advise all tribes to reconsider and look at their tourist potential. How can the tribes use their resources to enhance each other's offerings for the growth of tourism? The tribes have a lot to offer the tourism industry, but in order to sustain the long-term growth of tribal tourism, they still need the support of the government and tribal leadership to reintegrate.

To achieve success as a tourism destination, local government must mobilize the natural, financial, and social capital of a place in support of a shared vision, aims, and objectives of the local community. An integrated development program is necessary for this. In order to enable policy makers to create a policy that satisfies stakeholders' demands and addresses their concerns, local communities want to be involved in the

creation of tourism policies. In order to make sure their requirements are met, they also wish to participate in choices about tourism development.

Overall, based on the information provided, we can conclude that for tourism to be sustainable and contribute positively to the growth of the examined area, local participation must be improved. Rural tourist initiatives, however, rely significantly on a healthy environment. Providing a distinctive experience by organizing tourism programs in tribal areas, such as natural tourism tour packages that include activities like making traditional handicrafts like baskets, mats, and pottery, planting and pounding rice and corn, fishing, and plowing the fields (known to visitors from other countries as “surfing mud”).

CASE STUDY 10

A Case Study on Cruise Tourism: A Case of Punnami Tourism

Ch Lakshmi Kumar and N. Sree Saily Siva Pujitha

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Punnami Tourism is a pioneer in providing tourism and travel services to highly popular tourist destinations in and around Rajahmundry. Started in the year 2004, They have been providing services to Papikondalu and Bhadrachalam by River Cruises. Their office is located Near Gowthami jeevakarunya sangam, Godavari Bund Road, Rajahmundry. They excel in providing good service to tourists.

Andhra Pradesh has created waves in Indian Tourism Industry with its Arts & Crafts, Beaches, Cuisine, Festivals, Kuchipudi Dance, Fairs & Festivals, Pilgrimage, Wildlife and numerous attractions lying scattered throughout the state. A visit to Andhra Pradesh, that has almost everything a tourist wishes for a memorable vacation.

Looking at the need of tourist and provide best facility to visitor, Punnami Tourism has added an array of services to its operational task. 'Punnami Tourism' not only provides transportation and operates tours but to show commendable performance, it provides facility of Accommodation, Catering, Leisure Cruises & Pleasure Boating, Water Sports, Sound & Light Shows, Eco-Tourism, Adventure Tourism.

'Punnami Tourism' conducts Packaged Tour from 8 centres of Andhra Pradesh. It covers tour circuits which includes major pilgrim centres, nature spots, leisure places, hills & valleys in Andhra Pradesh with purpose of giving memorable experience to their tourist.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: To become the best-known Cruise Travel Organisation in the Andhra Pradesh zone during the next ten years. To emerge as a 'Green tourism business' in the near future.

Mission: Punnami Tourism is going to present the tourist world a new travel experience. The agency is offering various tour circuits which includes major nature spots, leisure places, hills and valleys to take part in organized nature trips.

1.3 Products/services

The cruise journey on river Godavari from Rajahmundry to Papikondalu trip to Sriramagiri or Kunavaram is one of the best tourist attraction in Andhra Pradesh state of India. The journey covers approximately 100 kms of travel by launch (diesel motor cruise). The total duration is nearly 12 hours from Rajahmundry to Sri Ramagiri. Another half an hour journey is required if travellers are willing to travel up to Kunavaram by the same launch. The journey is through various temples and hill stations and very scenic for the beautiful greenery surrounding the river Godavari. Some important places which can be seen in this river journey are, Pattiseema, Maha Nandiswara temple, Polavaram Project area, Gandhi poshamma (Pochamma) temple, Papi kondalu (papi hills), Shiva temple, Perantala Palli, Sri Rama temple at Sri Ramagiri.

1.4 Target market(s)

The major target group for this business are:

1. Students
2. Families
3. Working officials
4. International tourists
5. National tourists

1.5 Organization and management

Although 'Punnami Tourism' is a small business unit it is structured as 'Top-Down' business unit. This business structure will offer the business important advantages due to the fact that being organized helps them to stay sustainable for a longer period of time and their work will be more effective in the end. The structure "Top-Down" involves less flexibility for the employees because decisions will be made by the head of the company.

The company includes five departments which will be led by each of the establishers. The departments will be Head of border, Sale, Finance, Marketing, and Organisation and Service.

The last department, Organisation and Service will stay in regular contact with the Sub-departments like Front Office Managers, Boat Managers, Tour Managers, Supervisors, Technicians, Guides, Cooks and Helpers who work hard to fulfill the clients' travel dreams and expectations.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

The objective of the company is to make it sustainable by itself. In the first year our expectations need to cover all expenses to satisfy customer needs. During the first year they were able to do 2 to 3 trips. Every year the number of clients rises by approximately 10 because of the effective marketing and the clients like our services so they come back to us again.

It is expected that the costs will systematically grow, this is because related to the increase in trips. The major costs that are associated with the business are Amortization, Total interest and financial costs, costs of trip, rent for office space, administrative expenses, promotional expenses, salary.

The company's major revenue depends on the number of trips they make. Now the company is able to own 15 boats and each boat makes 3 trips a day. Each boat would accommodate around 50 passengers. The price per trip is Rs 1,500 per person. They earn Rs 75,000 per trip and on two trips they make 1,50,000 per day. If the weather conditions are not favorable the trips may be limited to one or none. During rainy seasons the business is almost nil. The company needs to meet the fixed costs.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

The boat operator receives more visitors at certain times of the year, while there are times they received very few or totally without any tourist at all.

Competition among the tour operators is inevitable as they are offering similar services and targeting the same group of customers. Interviews with the owner/manager of boat affirmed the intense and unhealthy competitions among boat operators, in which they compete by slashing price of identical tour package. Manager stated: "In the past we used to charge Rs 1,500 per head for a full package, but the price was lowered to Rs 750 and sometimes even as low during off season. The other tour operators began lowering prices and we got no choice but to follow, but we still manage to make earnings when the price is so low, by reducing the cost by shortening the tour duration and taking a shorter route. Sometimes when the group is small, we only send one boatman out. He will navigate the boat and explain to the tourist concurrently. We cannot afford to hire an additional tourist guide." In addition to these challenges, we face some other challenges like lack of qualified manpower; (ii) inadequate infrastructures; (iii) variable numbers of seasonal visitors; and (iv) competition among the boat operators.

2.2 The business/project idea

The new initiative of the cruise tourism business is mainly concerned with the participation of local communities at the implementation level of the business i.e., boat drivers, cooks, cleaning personnel moreover, monitoring social impacts during the process of tourism is essential to reduce negative impacts and enhance positive aspects. This business is easily accessible to all communities; in particular, exposed, and underprivileged communities are the participants as responsible tourism objects to create an “inclusive social experience”. Most of the service providers in cruise tourism have been working for many years without professional experience. Therefore, the present business has been organizing various training programme in the operational activities of cruise tourism in collaboration with different tourism training institutions.

2.3 External analysis

Sustainable tourism is an industry which attempts to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate new employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems. (It’s responsible tourism that is both ecologically and culturally sensitive). It’s important to have education; training programs to improve and manage heritage and natural resources.

The company “Punnami Tourism” has been innovating services that will change the mind of their customers. It wants to make people aware of environmental problems such as pollution.

It offers relaxing moments with walking, cycling, bird watching, organized walking, climbing, mountain biking, swimming, tennis, and wellness. The customers will stay in the best sustainable homestays. The company wants to provide quality employment to its community residents and a link between local business and tourism. It’s important for the company to help people in need.

The company wants to attract big and small companies all over the state who want to support the environment and organize boat meetings and relax after the meeting. It will have a very active program for the age group of 20 to 40 years old people. For an older public there will be more relaxing activities than for the younger ones, such as wellness or an ecological trip on a sailing boat.

“Punnami Tourism” wants to change the world’s way of thinking. It’s the first business that links working, the environment and wellness.

Not known by the company, because at the moment there are no direct competitors. Travel agencies are not competitors for the present company because it a travel on water where very limited companies will get permission from the government.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- When the agency will get popular it can expand their trips to other popular places.
- Possibility to practice cultural and sports activities.
- New business which incorporate work, wellness and nature all in one.
- Employee's motivation to be able to guarantee environmental protection.

2.4.2 Weakness

- Lack of proper regulatory framework for controlling, managing, cruise.
- No proper checks by government, NGOs and local communities across all regions in preventing any illegal activities.
- The problem of insurgency should be tackled meticulously with minimum harm to locals.
- Lack of trained communities as per the needs of the tourists.
- Poor check on the pollution level due to tourism practices.

2.5 Activities

Marketing initiatives: Defined as branding Punnami Tourism, as well as identifying and delivering promotional, marketing and 'outreach' programs towards fulfilling Punnami Tourism's objectives, the following represent a number of viable tourism marketing initiatives to pursue for the successful business development.

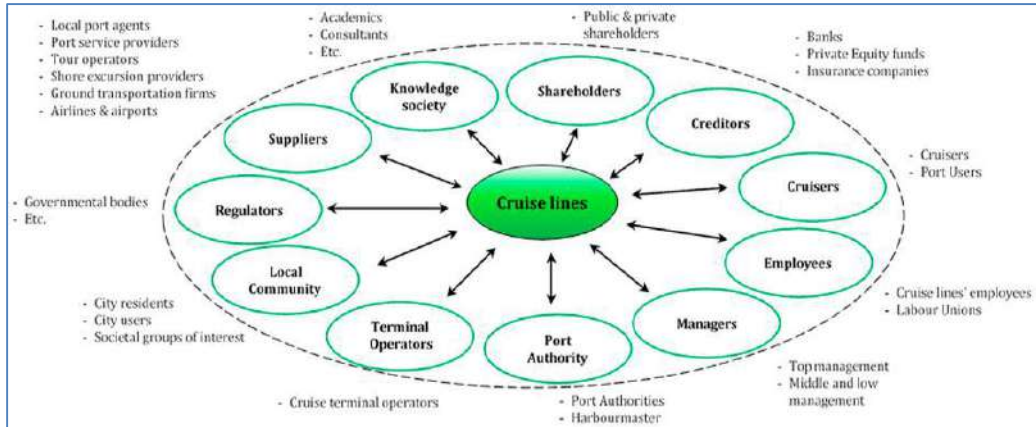
Website development: The content of the web pages must be well written, and experts need to be engaged for this work. They must post the relevant information at the designated places on the website and post an attractive virtual tourism on the package. More importantly, the link must be maneuvered to be Google selected within the top 50 hits when web surfers hit key words, including, but not limited to outdoor adventures, cruise travel, boat house. These key words can be developed with the webmaster.

Events: Enhancement of its arts, culture and history, beyond entertainment should be the goal. These are excellent foundations to build upon. New events should be planned to coincide with major Island events on special occasions like local festivals, special days like Women's Day, Environmental Day, Yoga Day to give a feel to the travellers about their engagement with in the events.

2.6 Stakeholders

An analysis of the importance of each stakeholder group in cruise business could therefore advance knowledge on the stakeholder orientation of cruise company and prioritize strategies for the satisfaction of the different stakeholder interests.

Figure 1: Stakeholder Classification



Stakeholder identification: Identification of stakeholder's interest in the development of ecotourism business was carried out based on stakeholder characteristics. The identification of stakeholders involved in business development is broadly classified as 1. Suppliers 2. Regulators 3. Local Community, 4. Managers 5. Employees 6. Creditors 8. Knowledge society.

Suppliers: Local Port agents, Port Service Providers, Tour operators, shore excursion providers, ground transportation firms, airlines, and airports.

Regulators: Government bodies.

Local community: City residents, city users, societal groups of interest, environmental activities.

Managers: Top management, middle and low management.

Employees: Cruise line employees and labor.

Creditors: Banks, non-banking financial institutions, Insurance Companies.

Knowledge Society: Academicians, Consultants.

Analysis of the role of stakeholders: Stakeholder analysis using the power and interest grid which classifies stakeholder into managing closely, keep satisfied, keep informed and monitor using a matrix of stakeholder's importance and interest on ecotourism development. Identifying stakeholder importance and interests is done through scoring using Likert scale. (Table 1)

Identification of stakeholder: Based on their interest in the development of ecotourism business, stakeholders are classified into primary(major) stakeholders, key stakeholders and supporting stakeholders.

Primary stakeholder: Primary stakeholders are stakeholders directly affected, either positively or negatively, due to the business and directly interested in the operational activities of the business.

Table 1: Matrix of Stakeholder's Importance and Influence

Importance	High	Subjects	Key Players
	Low	Crowd	Content Setter
	Low		High
	Influence		

Source: Authors' contribution

Table 2: Stakeholders' Interest and Influence Matrix

Importance	Low High	High High
	Employees Local Business Operators	Government bodies Banks Insurance Companies Environments Activists
	Knowledge Society	Local Community Suppliers
	Low Low	Low High
	Level of Influence	

Source: Authors' contribution

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The major target market/beneficiaries of cruise tourism company 'Punnami Travels' are the tourists who are interested in experiencing river trips and enjoy the nature. The company mainly target the tourists coming from different parts of India and also foreign tourists in particular.

2.8 Partners

Local community: Community members can assist 'Punnami Tourism' by guiding the tourists to the cruise products and help the business in marketing their good services to the tourists.

Local food suppliers: These people will help the company by serving good local food on the cruise that would attract the tourists.

Local artists: Local artists who perform local dance, songs and narrate the local culture and heritage in the form of folk dance, songs are the good partners in the cruise business. These people's performance in the boat would help the business to grow.

2.9 Finances

The Punnami travels offers wide variety of packages for the tourists. The major revenue stream for the business is by operating various cruise services to different places along with accommodation. The costs involved are payments to the employees of the

company, operation and maintenance expenses, advertisement expenses, promotional expenses. The detailed capital investment is: The capital invested in the company is 3 crores. The capital consisted of the contributions of each of the joint owners. There are six joint owners, two of them invested 1crore each. Four of them invested INR 50,000 each. The They have gone for a loan of INR 98 lakhs.

2.10 Human resources

The present business expansion requires additional personnel with additional skills in sustainable tourism.

Depending on the size and business expansion, the company has different specialized demands. Following are some of the human resources that might be needed:

Personnel in marketing and communications: The company may need to engage marketing and communication specialists with experience in sustainable tourism in order to effectively explain the new initiative/business to the target market(s) and stakeholders on social media and print media.

Project managers: The company may need to recruit project managers to plan the tourist activities and guide them properly to reach their satisfaction levels. Staff with expertise in sustainable tourism practices may need to be hired or trained by the company, including eco-tour guides, waste management professionals, and energy efficiency experts boat operators, environmental experts.

Liaison officers: To manage its partnerships with other companies or organizations the company may need to recruit liaison officers to support 'Punnami Tourism' in arranging additional tourist services like laundry, cleaning, expert boat riders, tricking trainers.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

To tell its target market(s) and stakeholders about its new initiative/business on sustainable tourism, the company has been using different modes of communication and marketing platforms. The business initially created a website with in-depth information about the products, its goals, the services offered, and the contact data. Additionally, it has created social media profiles on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to communicate with stakeholders and potential customers. To inform existing customers and stakeholders about the new project/business, email marketing campaigns are employed. To inform the media about the new venture or company, a press release is written. To increase its visibility and attract new stakeholders and clients, the business participates in local events and collaborates with other businesses, organizations, and influencers in the sustainable tourism industry. The company is also encouraging the tourists to post their

travel experience in the form of travel blogs, tour videos on the eco-tourism products that are offered by the company on their individual social media and # with 'Punnami Tourism'.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Cruise tourism has a greater impact for the tourists. They would explore the natural beauty of the destination and get the opportunity to associate with the local people, culture, food. The tourists would understand the socio-economic conditions of the place in detail while travelling with the tour operating agents.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Stakeholder analysis is a process of identifying key stakeholders in a particular business activity and assessing their interest in the success of the business and the extent to which the interest can influence.

Government: The government would benefit by way of getting revenue from tourism and income in the form of taxes from boat operators.

Local communities: The local communities are very much impacted by socio-economic dimensions. When cruise tourism is developed in a particular area the marginal sections of the population living in that region try to get employment in business. This would impact their socio-economic wellbeing.

Service providers: The service provides like individual shop, tour guides, tour operators are the stakeholders who are highly influenced and depends more on the business. The local shopkeepers have been selling various products that are available in and around the destination.

3.3 Impact for the environment

Noise is an undermined pollutant that significantly influences marine environment due to increase of traffic and the fact that noise has amplifying effect in water. Sources of marine noise pollution are mainly ship engines that create short- and long-term disruptions of eco system functioning. Apart from noise pollution the cruise business impact the environment through air and water pollution also.

3.4 Impact for the company

The present business case study of 'Punnami Tourism' would help the company to understand their impact on the local communities' livelihoods, service providers level

of dependance on their business, their present financial position and the contribution to the socio-economic development of the particular destination.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The CoE would understand the gaps in the present business structure and tries to reduce them in the course of time.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Cruise tourism in the tourism industry creates an attraction for visitors. To effectively operate the business associated with tourism, it is required to meet all relevant requirements and conditions such as demand, supporting and related industries, competitive conditions, business strategy, and support from the government, central, and local state management agencies. The present operational activities of the cruise business are successful as they are marketing directly with the tourists and with their soft skills influencing the tourists to go for cruise trips at the destination.

Pricing, marketing, and distribution are all part of business development for tourism, which aims to provide the highest quality goods to customers. The business follows a flexible pricing strategy due to more competitors in the sector. In order to improve the business further they need the 5 R's (relevance, recognition, receptivity, responsiveness and relations). 'Punnami Tourism' has the services that their customers need to relax and work. Recognition is about being different and unique for the customers, therefore the 'Punnami Travel Agency' is doing a sustainable tourism travel. Because of this, it can become closer and offer them good conditions in the hotels and a lot of activities.

But for the third R is Receptivity that means that 'Punnami Tourism' has to know where their clients are, and how they can communicate with them. For this agency the best way to do it is in magazines, through direct mailings, a movie on "Youtube" and also blog on "My space" because the business wants to take care of their clients with special attention. With Responsiveness, the other critical success factors, the agency got to make some commercial contacts with the customers, to tell the customers about the prices in a most convincing manner.

Relationships between the customers and the company need to be maintained by sending e-mails to them, giving them some news, answered their questions, invite them for events or fairs is the best way to get a good and lasting relationship between the customers and the company.

CASE STUDY 11

Net Zero Sustainable Tourism: A Case Study of Vinyasa Ashram

*Sameeksha Ahuja, Ark Dutta, Rahul Basandani,
Ashlesha Sethi, Souvik De and Himanshu Chauhan*

1.0 Case Context

Art and tourism have long been intertwined. From ancient cave paintings to modern art museums, people have always been drawn to art, and tourism has often been a way to experience it. Walking on a similar path, Mr. Sankalp Sharma, owner of Vinyasa Earth, has been working towards these initiatives to promote Eco-tourism that are yielding excellent results.

“I’ve always loved to dance, but I think my first real choreography was when I was four years old. I heard a song and my body just started moving. I didn’t think about it, I just danced.” – Mr. Sankalp Sharma. He had committed to set a harmonious equilibrium between ecological responsibility and economic sustainability.

This predicament encapsulates the intricate interplay between environmental stewardship and financial prosperity within the context of the dance ashram’s functioning. Achieving sustainability and net-zero emissions while ensuring the profitability of the Vinyasa dance ashram poses a significant challenge. The question revolves around the viability of implementing these environmentally conscious practices within the framework of the ashram’s business model.

1.1 Background

Vinyasa Earth, an eco-friendly dance ashram, is situated in Maheshwas village, approximately 30km away from Jaipur, enveloped by agricultural expanses and a petite woodland. It stands as an entirely sustainable space, crafted from organic elements such as clay, lime, and bamboo. The premise has six earthen cottages, each crowned with living roofs, showcasing distinctive themes and inspirations. Complementing these cottages are an amphitheatre, a reception enclave, and an office space, all meticulously fashioned from mud and lime.

“So, the meaning of vinyasa is the flow. Okay, and I am a dancer basically and I believe the movement never stops. It keeps flowing. It’s like, it’s like seeing a snake walking. Sorry, crawling. So, if you have ever seen a snake crawling, you can see that there is no point when the movement stops in it. Yeah, it’s always in a flow. So, with that belief. I named vinyasa” – Mr. Sankalp Sharma

Mr. Sankalp Sharma, the founding member of Vinyasa Earth, embarked on his journey in Bombay, dedicating the initial two and a half years to intensive training under the guidance of Terence Lewis. During this time, he concurrently pursued admission to the renowned Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dancing in New York City, a venerable institution known as the birthplace of contemporary dance, with Martha Graham herself acclaimed as its pioneer. His enrolment in this esteemed establishment lasted for a year. Subsequently, Mr. Sharma extended his dance education in Paris, immersing himself at the Capezio Centre for an additional one and a half years. Throughout this period, he diligently engaged in diverse dance forms and styles, diligently augmenting his movement lexicon and cultivating a multifaceted perspective on dance, enriched by the varying pedagogies and artistic approaches he encountered.

The project began during a period of significant travel for Mr. Sankalp Sharma, instilling in him the ambition of building a dedicated area catered to the demands of dancers. As the design and offers of this space evolved, it became clear that they had the ability to inspire a broader audience to embrace a sustainable existence or to immerse themselves in the realms of movement and art. This realization shaped the current situation.

Vinyasa Earth offered six eco-friendly cottages within their facility with living roofs and each cottage has own inspiration and theme. Each had its own distinctive image as well.

- a) **Shunya:** The room is adorned with a captivating array of art forms, each representing an open embrace of life's diverse expressions (see **Figure 1**). However, its most exceptional attribute lies in its recognition of the individual, encompassing all their distinct forms and states of existence.
- b) **Chandrama:** Just like its name suggests, "Chandrama" lets the moonlight in through a round window in the ceiling. This room is big and has a seat by the window where people can sit and have a nice cup of chai.
- c) **Prithvi:** As the most spacious room, "Prithvi" symbolizes Mother Earth – the solid foundation that allows people to move through life with joy. A unique aspect of "Prithvi" was its stone walls, created using the skill of stonemasonry. Amidst scorching summers, this cottage can become the best companion, ensuring a refreshingly cool respite.
- d) **Vayu:** In Vayu, one can experience a soothing sensation of being elevated above the ground, akin to the gentle touch of the wind on the soul.
- e) **Jal:** In the room called "Jal," people are embraced by a watery ambiance, as its design resembles waves. The standout feature is a seat that looks like a water droplet, urging anyone to sit and feel cozily held. Notably, the walls of "Jal" are

made using the art of stone masonry. It's a top choice during hot summers, as it remains refreshingly cool.

- f) **Agni:** Agni offers a lively atmosphere, with a spacious sofa area and a distinctive bathtub feature. Its rooftop, covered by a leafy tree, provides an ideal place to relax throughout the day

Utilizing recycled plastic and glass, Vinyasa has fashioned eco-friendly seating spaces. The entirety of the environment is constructed as an expression of affection and appreciation towards the natural world. The current effort is hosting people from all over the world, including numerous countries, towns, and states.

Their visits are driven by either the appeal of experience living within creative structures or the pursuit of the establishment's sustainable lifestyle. Here are some of activities one can experience in Vinyasa.

1. **Nature walks:** Vinyasa Earth unfolds the captivating experience of Nature Walks, inviting participants to immerse themselves in the serene beauty of Maheshwas village. This engaging activity serves as a gateway to reconnecting with the natural world while enjoying the tranquil surroundings (see **Figure 2**). Nature Walks at Vinyasa Earth harmonize with the center's ethos, promoting a deeper understanding of the environment and fostering a sense of gratitude for the Earth's gifts.
2. **Yoga/Meditation:** Vinyasa Earth extends its commitment to holistic well-being by offering rejuvenating yoga and meditation activities within its serene enclave. Guided by experienced instructors, guests at Vinyasa Earth have the opportunity to engage in yoga and meditation sessions that promote physical, mental, and emotional balance. Whether within the earthen cottages or in the midst of the natural landscape, these activities foster a profound connection to oneself and the surrounding environment, aligning perfectly with Vinyasa Earth's ethos of harmony with nature and art.
3. **Sculpting:** Within the nurturing ambiance of Vinyasa Earth, sculpting emerges as a captivating activity that embodies the essence of creativity and connection with nature. This activity allows participants to explore their artistic potential while being inspired by the natural surroundings. Under the guidance of skilled artisans, individuals can Mold and shape various materials into unique forms of expression. Through sculpting, guests can immerse themselves in the therapeutic process of creation, forging a deeper bond with the elements that define Vinyasa Earth's essence.
4. **Harvesting and growing your own food:** Individuals can learn the art of cultivating and nurturing their own food sources, fostering a deeper appreciation for the natural world. The process not only imparts valuable skills but also highlights the vital

connection between humans and their environment. Participants can explore the rhythm of nature firsthand, from planting seeds to reaping the rewards. By embracing this activity, guests align with Vinyasa Earth's dedication to self-sufficiency and environmental harmony, while savouring the satisfaction of partaking in a truly organic and meaningful experience.

- 5. Movement therapy:** This offering encourages participants to explore the profound connection between body and mind. Led by the founding members of Vinyasa, individuals engage in purposeful movements that alleviate stress, improve mobility, and enhance self-awareness. Movement Therapy fosters holistic living and reflects the center's dedication to nurturing both the individual and the surrounding natural world.

Figure 1: Website Advertisement, Types of Cottages

The advertisement is titled "COTTAGES" in large, dark, sans-serif font on a light green background. Below the title are two photographs of the cottages, each with a text box on the right side. The top photograph shows the interior of a "Shunya" cottage, featuring a thatched roof, a bed with a mosquito net, and a wall with white art. The bottom photograph shows the interior of a "Chandrama" cottage, featuring a thatched roof, a bed with a mosquito net, and a circular skylight in the ceiling.

COTTAGES

Shunya
I am nothing but the canvas of everything.

This room is beautifully painted with various forms of art representing a space that is open to receive the diversity of everything.

It's special feature is – 'You'. In all your forms and states of being.

Chandrama
Connect to the moon and she will show you how to celebrate all the phases of life.

Like the name suggests, Chandrama is graced by the presence of the moon and its rays through a circular sky light. Its A spacious room with a seating at the window to sit and enjoy a cup of chai.



Prithvi

I am nothing but the canvas of everything.

Being our most spacious room, Prithvi represents Mother Earth – The ground that gives us the space to dance our way through life. Special feature - Art of Stone masonry which has been used on the walls of Prithvi. She's probably you're best friend during the summers as its one of our coolest cottages.

Vayu

I set the state of flow

The wind in your soul, Vayu has the unique combination of feeling the ground at a height that invites a breezing calm.



Agni

I colour you pink through the fiery light of my passion and creative force.

Agni has a vibrant quality to it that spreads wide with a sofa area and the unique feature of a bathtub. It's green roof under the shade of a tree, is the perfect spot to spend all day.



Source: <https://www.vinyasa.earth>

Figure 2: Experiential Stay at Vinyasa

Nature Walks
To connect with nature beyond walls/boundaries

Yoga/Meditation
To find balance

Sculpting
To connect with the creative self

Harvesting & Growing Your Own Food
To make you grounded

Movement Therapy
To find connection with others & oneself

Source: <https://www.vinyasa.earth>

CASE STUDY 12

Empowering Local Artisans through Sustainable Tourism: A Case Study on Kachchh

*Nurvi Bhand, Anushka Vijaywargiya, Anushtha Seiwani,
Muskan Khazanachi, Spandana Gupta and Diljeetkaur Makhija*

1.0 Case Context

India's Gujarat state is home to Kachchh, which stands out as a hidden gem and a realm of enchantment amid its seemingly desolate landscapes. Its history unfolds like a complex tapestry, with threads from various cultures and artistic movements that each bear the distinctive imprint of their creators. This vibrant mosaic of cultural heritage serves as evidence of Kachchh's significant function as a historical crossroads, facilitating trade and cultural exchange that extended from the Indus Valley to the Middle East.

Looking back through the ages, Kachchh's history reveals a development characterised by voluminous tradition and vivacious creativity. What was once a poor area gradually developed into a haven for crafts, where metalwork, weaving, pottery, and embroidery went beyond simple artistic pursuits. Instead, they evolved into complex mirrors that not only reflected the cultural identity of the area but also the complex web of social connections and economic support. Kachchh found its identity as a distinctive travel destination in this fusing of art and heritage, its allure extending beyond picturesque landscapes to embrace the stories and traditions that gave life to its artisanal endeavours.

The idea of sustainable tourism grew in Kachchh along with its burgeoning heritage. Because of the region's historical significance and its inhabitants' extraordinary craftsmanship, visitors could expect an unforgettable vacation. As local artisans were skillfully woven into the fabric of this project, what had initially been a vision soon became a path of empowerment. This integration not only had the potential to improve their economic situation but also provided a way to protect the cultural legacy that was Kachchh's very soul.

Kachchh underwent infrastructure improvements during the British era, including the building of railroads and telecommunications networks that facilitated better connectivity. These modifications aided in the region's integration into the larger colonial economy. In Kachchh, new governance structures were also introduced by the establishment of British administrative systems.

The promotion and export of these crafts as a result of the British interest helped Kachchh's economy grow. While the British presence in Kachchh brought about changes, the region was able to maintain a large portion of its cultural identity and independence. The local sultans acknowledged British dominance while still holding onto their positions as Maharao of Kachchh. This fine line between custom and colonial rule exemplifies Kachchh's capacity to change with the times without sacrificing its heritage. Kachchh's story was entwined with the advancement of tourism and economic development as time moved on. Travellers from all over the world were gradually drawn in by the allure of its rich cultural heritage and the artistic marvels it fostered. People who desired an immersive experience that connected them with the essence of humanity's creative spirit were captivated by the region's history because it was like a living storybook that offered more than just sightseeing opportunities.

Kachchh's economy underwent a change at the same time. The formerly sleepy area is now on the verge of growth, propelled by both its exquisite handicrafts and the resurgent energy of sustainable tourism. A tapestry in and of itself, the fusion of art, heritage, and economic progress was woven with the tenacity and aspirations of not only the inhabitants of Kachchh but also of the dreamy souls, the wanderers, the history buffs, and the art enthusiasts.

The story of Kachchh's past spans several centuries and includes the dynasties whose reigns have had a lasting impact on the region's identity. The ruins of old forts, the intricate carvings on temples, and the elaborately designed havelis are all still standing witnesses to the past. Travellers embark on a journey that connects them to the pulses of bygone eras as they explore these historical sites.

However, it is best to experience the spirit of Kachchh culture during its vivacious festivals and fairs. The Kutch Rann Utsav is a festival that immerses guests in the hues of local cuisine, art, craft, music, and dance. Travellers can see the numerous traditions that have withstood the test of time thanks to this immersive experience. The Kutch Rann Utsav is more than just a celebration; it's an investigation into the soul of Kachchh. Travellers become a part of a story that connects the past and the present as they fully immerse themselves in the festivities. It is a tale of enduring customs and a celebration of the artistic and cultural heritage that characterises Kachchh.

The festival draws attention to Kachchh's incredible artistic heritage. Traditional arts and crafts are displayed, showcasing the talent and creativity of the area's craftspeople. Examples include embroidery, weaving, pottery, and jewellery. Visitors can watch the artisans at work and gain understanding of the time-consuming procedures that result in these masterpieces.

However, the winds of change are strong. The region has experienced a wave of globalisation along with the relentless rise of mass production and changing consumer preferences. The artisanal legacy that had flourished for generations has been cast in a melancholy shadow as the demand for painstakingly handcrafted goods has started to decline.

The intricate tapestry of Kachchh's craft customs was in danger of unravelling. The demand for handmade goods is impacted by globalisation, mass production, and changing consumer preferences. Younger generations were drawn to different career paths, putting traditional crafts at risk of extinction. Natural catastrophes and the area's isolation made it difficult for artisans to access markets, endangering their way of life.

Kachchh continued on its path towards environmentally friendly tourism. The artisans, the unsung heroes of the area's cultural history, were at the centre of this project. They possessed the gamechanging solution needed to revive their trades and preserve their legacy. The labor-intensive revitalization process reflected the craftsmanship they were renowned for and required a symphony of initiatives from regional groups, governmental agencies, and organisations. Striking a balance between economic expansion, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability was the challenging but not less complex goal.

In the midst of this complicated setting, some profound questions surfaced. How could the artisans of Kachchh, holders of historical significance and inventiveness, be given the ability to control their own fates? How could the preservation of their cultural identity be achieved while incorporating their antiquated skills into the fabric of sustainable tourism? Was it possible for local governments, organisations, and communities to work together to pave a way where the strands of tradition not only survived, but flourished in the face of change?

The lack of adequate infrastructure slowed down progress. Inadequate transportation systems, unstable power sources, and limited access to modern technology made it difficult for the artisans to produce and sell their goods in an efficient manner. Their ability to expand their operations and serve bigger markets was constrained by the lack of adequate facilities.

Despite their extraordinary talents, many artisans had trouble accessing the market. Their magnificent creations were unable to reach a wider audience because there were no reliable distribution channels or platforms. This limited the exposure of Kachchh's rich cultural heritage to the outside world and hindered their ability to grow economically.

Even though they were experts in their fields, the artisans frequently lacked the marketing knowledge needed to promote their creations. Their inventions might not get

the attention they deserved due to a lack of marketing expertise and resources. It became crucially important for them to bridge the gap between their creative ability and efficient promotion.

The artisans were forced to walk a fine line between maintaining the integrity of their traditional craft and accommodating the changing needs of contemporary customers. It took creative thinking to modify their creations to fit modern tastes while still maintaining the integrity of their heritage.

The fluctuations in tourism brought their own set of difficulties. The artisans frequently struggled with seasonal variations in tourist numbers, which resulted in erratic demand for their goods. They found it challenging to sustain a steady income and their way of life throughout the year due to this volatility. Maintaining value and quality in a cutthroat market was a constant battle. Price wars and competition from mass-produced goods posed a threat to the artisanal quality and distinctive value of their works. It was constantly difficult to strike a balance between their work's true worth and affordability.

Financial challenges were a part of the expansion and modernization process. It was difficult for artisans to invest in improving their methods of production, tools, and techniques due to limited financial access. Their capacity to innovate and adjust to shifting market dynamics was thus constrained.

Stakeholders must come together in a shared vision to promote sustainable tourism that honours the region's cultural essence. Local governments, businesses, and other organisations realised how important it was to maintain Kachchh's distinctive identity while promoting economic development. This harmony must open the door for an all-encompassing strategy that covers various aspects of tourism development.

For instance, the Rann Festival is extremely important to Kachchh because it has a significant influence on many aspects of the region's identity, development, and well-being and acts as a major catalyst for regional economic growth. Tourism causes an increase in spending on lodging, travel, and regional goods and services. This increase in economic activity helps a number of other industries that are only loosely related to tourism, including hospitality, transportation, and handicrafts. The festival's earnings support the local economy by fostering job opportunities and boosting commercial activity.

To ensure the festival's sustainability and its beneficial effects on the area, a number of challenges that come with this growth must be faced head-on. Addressing these issues is not only necessary but also crucial for the preservation of the festival's authenticity and the welfare of the local community as the festival continues to draw tourists from all over the world.

The Rann Festival's spike in visitors strains Kachchh's sensitive desert ecosystem. Environmental damage is being caused by rising energy use, waste production, and foot traffic. If this effect isn't stopped, it might ruin the very scenery that attracts tourists. It is crucial to find ways to reduce the festival's ecological impact in order to preserve the area's biodiversity and natural beauty for future generations.

The Rann Festival's success is attributed to the way it honours the vibrant cultural heritage of Kachchh. However, there is a chance of commercialization and cultural dilution as the festival grows in popularity. It can be difficult and requires careful thought to strike a balance between the demand for contemporary conveniences and entertainment and the maintenance of genuine traditions. Finding this balance guarantees that the festival will continue to be a true reflection of the local identity.

The region's infrastructure is put under strain by the festival's spike in visitors. Services like lodging, travel, waste removal, and others struggle to keep up with the increase in demand. Infrastructure that is overworked impacts not only the experience of visitors but also the lives of locals. Building resilient infrastructure that serves both visitors and locals is crucial for the festival's long-term viability.

While the Rann Festival may boost the local economy, it also has the potential to widen existing economic gaps. Unequal wealth distribution can result from the uneven distribution of profits, a lack of local business participation, and the exploitation of artisans. For fostering a sense of ownership and pride, it is essential to make sure that the economic gains are inclusive and benefit the entire community.

Due to the Rann Festival's popularity being concentrated over a brief period of time, economic growth tends to be seasonal. Such reliance may expose the area to risk during the off-seasons, leading to changes in income and employment prospects. This difficulty can be reduced by diversifying the festival's offerings or encouraging sustainable travel outside of the busy season.

A joint effort from the government and the community is essential in the challenging process of making Kachchh a leader in sustainable tourism. The involvement of the government assumes a multifaceted role that helps to define sustainable tourism in the area. It makes us pause and think about how the development of comprehensive policies that incorporate the essence of Kachchh's cultural heritage might affect the development of its artisans and their crafts. Can improved infrastructure act as a catalyst for a seamless fusion of artisanal productivity and improved visitor experiences when it is woven with effective transportation and dependable energy sources? Think about the potential for capacity-building programmes to transform industries by equipping artisans with flexible knowledge to ride the ebb and flow of consumer preferences while upholding longstanding customs. What if the government

created bridges that would enable the works of these artisans to cross borders and engage a global audience? Would promoting environmental protections, woven into waste management and eco-aware practises, guarantee that the allure of Kachchh's natural beauty endures? Could government and local community initiatives to preserve intangible cultural heritage give visitors' experiences a sense of authenticity that endures through time?

Additionally, local communities act as the stewards of Kachchh's cultural essence and have the power to direct tourism initiatives in accordance with their ingrained traditions and values. Citizens have the power to give visitors' interactions a profound sense of authenticity through a personal exchange of stories, customs, and experiences, turning fleeting interactions into deep connections.

The symphony of sustainable tourism is profoundly influenced by an individual's commitment to environmental stewardship. Conscious waste management, resource conservation, and respectful coexistence with the environment all contribute to an intangible fabric that preserves the region's allure.

However, it is the direct support of local artisans that gives life to the preservation of time-honored crafts and ensures the survival of those who engage in them. By making decisions that are repeated throughout the annals of tradition, citizens unwittingly serve as patrons of both economic prosperity and cultural heritage.

Increasing public awareness of the delicate balance that must exist between economic progress, cultural preservation, and environmental equilibrium is an essential advocacy strategy that people can quietly adopt. They cast a net of comprehension over the significance of sustainable tourism through a subtle cascade of social media posts, neighbourhood discussions, and educational initiatives.

The silent act of volunteering has a powerful impact on programmes that promote civic harmony and heritage preservation. Participation in heritage tours, practical workshops, and exciting festivals weaves together the stories of visitors and locals, fostering an environment where authenticity can flourish. The government of Kachchh and its people work together to create an environment where sustainable tourism is woven in with the fabric of history, development, and nature. This seamless blending creates a story that spans generations, enhancing both the lives of those present and those yet to come.

As we progress, a fundamental truth becomes clear: the success of Kachchh's sustainable tourism depends on the interaction between public participation and political power. But what if these roles don't live up to their subliminal promises? What if the hands of governance fail to touch the foundation of encouraging laws and artisan

empowerment? In such a case, the intricate threads that make up Kachchh's rich cultural tapestry run the risk of fading and being lost to the ravages of time. The aspirations of artisans may be shadowed by infrastructure stagnation and unrealized potential, preventing them from embracing a world that is rapidly changing. A silent landscape could disintegrate amidst all of this, unnoticed and unfelt.

And on the front of the people, what if the neighbourhood does not support its artisans, choosing convenience over the preservation of genuine craftsmanship? The intricate tapestry of Kachchh's cultural heritage might fall apart if responsible behaviour doesn't prevail. The area's natural beauty could deteriorate under the weight of unrestricted consumption in the absence of a shared commitment to environmental stewardship. Events like the Rann Festival might lose some of their significance if there are no citizens acting as cultural keepers.

What might happen to Kachchh's potential as a sustainable tourism destination if the government and its people are not in harmony? Economic inequality might increase, and commercialization might smear the region's authenticity. Without thorough planning, seasonal dependence could lead to economic instability, and efforts to promote sustainable tourism risk remaining dispersed.

These ambiguities serve as a reminder of the delicate balance needed for Kachchh to be a successful example of sustainable tourism. They make us think about the effects of our choices—or lack thereof—on the future of the area. The tale of Kachchh's sustainable tourism does, in fact, invite us to reflect on how individual choices and governmental actions can determine a future—a future that either flourishes as a harmonious fusion of culture, heritage, and economic growth or disintegrates under the weight of neglect and shortsightedness.

Kachchh is appealing due to its diverse cultural heritage and lovely landscapes in addition to the fact that it embodies sustainable tourism. Our understanding of the intricate connections that exist between culture, nature, and the economy is compelled by the past of this civilization, which is woven together with threads from earlier civilizations. The strong winds of modernity, however, emphasise the need for practises that preserve the fundamental core of this historical crossroads.

How can local governments, communities, and organisations work together to make sure that Kachchh's artisanal traditions not only survive but flourish in the changing context of sustainable tourism?

What ground-breaking strategies can be implemented to lessen the ecological impact of events like the Rann Festival while ensuring the biodiversity and natural beauty of Kachchh over the long term?

How can the festival experience be varied outside of the busiest times, encouraging eco-friendly travel habits and avoiding becoming overly dependent on certain seasons?

What strategies could be employed to balance the growing demands of contemporary travellers with the integrity of traditional craft in the interest of sustainable tourism?

What can other regions learn from Kachchh's efforts to promote sustainable tourism, empower artisans, and protect cultural heritage?

CASE STUDY 13

GMVN's (Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam) Holistic Approach to Sustainable Tourism

*Prakash Paul, Rajdeep Bandyopadhyay, Bhavya Sharma,
Rumela Tapadar, Sharnav Kundu and Mayank Bhatia*

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Nestled in the enchanting Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, India, unfolds the story of Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN), a state-owned tourism entity. Founded in 1976, GMVN embarked on a mission to not merely foster tourism but to intricately weave a tapestry of indispensable services for visitors. Over the years, GMVN has assumed a cardinal role in sculpting and sustaining the essential infrastructure that cradles tourism's flourishing in this captivating enclave of India. It meticulously erected a web of lodgings — hotels, guesthouses, and tourist abodes strategically placed in the Garhwal region's tourist hotspots. This extensive array caters to a spectrum of wanderers, accommodating the frugal backpacker, the familial traveller, and the opulence-seeking sojourner. GMVN further extends its benevolence through transportation services, orchestrating journeys through the Garhwal expanse with organised tours, comprehensive transportation packages, and secure, dependable travel options for sightseeing and adventurous escapades.

Beyond the realms of accommodation and transit, GMVN emerges as a torchbearer for adventure tourism in the Garhwal expanse. From trekking to mountaineering, river rafting to camping, it weaves a tapestry of exhilarating escapades, ensuring adventure aficionados find solace in well-orchestrated and secure exploits amidst the scenic Himalayan canvas. GMVN assumes a sacred responsibility in facilitating pilgrimages to the hallowed precincts of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, and Gangotri. With a seamless blend of accommodations, transportation, and guided tours, it crafts an unblemished pilgrimage experience for the devout. The organisation's commitment extends beyond hospitality — it embraces the stewardship of the pristine natural splendour of the Garhwal region. As an advocate for responsible and sustainable tourism practices, GMVN endeavours to educate both tourists and indigenous communities on the imperative facets of environmental conservation, waste management, and eco-friendly tourism.

To keep up with the development of technology, GMVN has forayed into online booking services (Exhibit 1), unfurling a tapestry of convenience for travellers to script their journeys effortlessly. This user-friendly feature allows travellers to secure accommodations, transportation, and adventurous exploits with ease, be it from the comfort of their abode or on the move. GMVN's indomitable spirit has not only paved the pathways to accessibility in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand but has also elevated the realm of enjoyment for globetrotters from diverse corners of the world. Its steadfast dedication to delivering superlative services and championing the opulent cultural and natural legacy has etched it as an indispensable linchpin in Uttarakhand's resplendent tourism tapestry.

1.2 Vision and Mission

As provided in their own website, GMVN's vision statement is as follows: Tourism is considered an engine of development and a catalyst to economic prosperity of a state. Tourism not only refreshes the mind, but it also ushers happiness, relaxation, enjoyment and offers a new experience etc. to the tourists. It results in all round growth by means of an economic multiplier effect that percolates to various stake-holders and other sectors such as airlines, railways, surface cruises, hotels etc. The Vision of Uttarakhand tourism is to promote steady and sustained growth phase of the travel and tourism sector in Uttarakhand making the destinations more accessible, more attractive with many facilities and amenities for the tourists worldwide. To maintain its current position as the most sought-after tourism destination for an authentic, luxurious, and personalized feel and experience of Uttarakhand for travellers from all regions." Tourism is a major phenomenon in the modern society that has emerged as a successful economic activity carrying immense global importance. There is hardly any other field of activity, which has so many people involved directly or indirectly. Tourism finds a niche for itself as an effective instrument in terms of generating employment, earning revenue and foreign exchange, enhance environment, preserving culture and tradition thereby resulting in overall development. Tourism is regarded as one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries and Uttarakhand Tourism has grown by leaps and bounds over last few years and is also gearing up to achieve significant progress in the field due to a many encouraging factors. Uttarakhand has vast geographical area combined with great historical and cultural heritage, which are excellent conditions for more growth in this sector. The vision of Uttarakhand tourism is to serve as a guiding force that offers a clear vision and direction for optimizing the tourism potential of this state in a sustainable manner.

GMVN's Mission Statement is as follows: According to Government of India estimates, every one crore that is invested in Tourism creates 475 jobs compared to 126 jobs from manufacturing sector, which proves the potential of this sector.

1.3 Products/Services

1.3.1 Accommodation

- GMVN operates over 90 hotels, guesthouses, and tourist bungalows across the Garhwal region, catering to diverse budgets and preferences.
- These accommodations range from budget-friendly guest houses to luxurious hotels offering panoramic views.

1.3.2 Transportation

- GMVN offers organized tours, comprehensive transportation packages, and secure travel options for sightseeing and adventurous escapades.
- This includes bus and train travel arrangements, as well as taxi services for exploring the region.

1.3.3 Adventure tourism

- GMVN arranges trekking, mountaineering, river rafting, camping, and various other adventure pursuits amidst the Garhwal Himalayas.
- These activities are conducted by experienced guides and professionals, ensuring safety and enjoyment for participants.

1.3.4 Pilgrimage facilitation

- GMVN provides seamless services for pilgrims visiting the holy sites of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, and Gangotri.
- This includes accommodation, transportation, and guided tours, ensuring a smooth and fulfilling pilgrimage experience.

1.3.5 Locally crafted products

- GMVN promotes and sells locally crafted products through its "Hilan" outlets, supporting local communities and their traditional crafts.
- These offerings comprise textiles, souvenirs, food items, and various distinctive handicrafts.

1.3.6 Environmental initiatives

- GMVN implements various environmental initiatives to minimize its ecological footprint, such as solar power, water conservation measures, recycling programs, and reforestation projects.
- These initiatives showcase GMVN's commitment to sustainable tourism practices.

1.3.7 Community engagement

- GMVN collaborates with local communities, engaging them in decision-making processes and promoting their cultural heritage.
- This includes sourcing local products and services, providing employment opportunities, and offering training programs.

1.3.8 Educational programs

- GMVN raises awareness about sustainable tourism practices among tourists and local communities through its website, pamphlets, and promotional materials.
- These programs educate visitors about responsible tourism behaviour and encourage them to minimize their environmental impact.

It's crucial to emphasize that this enumeration is not all-encompassing, and GMVN might extend supplementary products and services contingent on location and season. To fully appreciate their full breadth of offerings, one would be best served by an in-depth exploration of their official online presence or a personal inquiry directed to the source.

1.4 Target market

Broadly, GMVN caters to tourists visiting the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand. However, it further segments its target market into different categories:

1.4.1 By budget

- **Frugal Backpackers:** GMVN offers budget-friendly accommodation options like guesthouses and dormitories, making it accessible to budget-conscious travellers.
- **Family Travelers:** GMVN provides family-friendly accommodations with multiple rooms and amenities like playgrounds and children's activities, catering to families with children.
- **Opulence-Seeking Sojourners:** GMVN also operates luxurious hotels offering panoramic views and premium amenities, targeting tourists seeking a more indulgent experience.

1.4.2 By interests

- **Adventure Seekers:** GMVN organizes various adventure activities like trekking, mountaineering, and river rafting, attracting thrill-seeking tourists.
- **Pilgrims:** GMVN facilitates pilgrimages to the holy sites of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, and Gangotri, targeting religious tourists.
- **Nature Enthusiasts:** GMVN offers eco-friendly tourism options like camping and nature walks, attracting tourists seeking to connect with the natural beauty of the region.
- **Culturally Inclined Tourists:** GMVN promotes local crafts and cultural heritage through its Hilan outlets and community engagement initiatives, targeting tourists interested in experiencing the local culture.

1.4.3 Geographically

- **Domestic Tourists:** GMVN primarily caters to domestic tourists from within India, promoting tourism within the country.
- **International Tourists:** Though not explicitly mentioned, the passage hints at GMVN's efforts to attract international tourists through its website and online booking services.

Therefore, GMVN's target market is diverse, encompassing various segments based on budget, interests, and geographic location. The passage suggests that GMVN aims to cater to a broad spectrum of tourists visiting the Garhwal region, offering them diverse products and services tailored to their specific needs and preferences.

1.5 Organization and management

- **Board of directors:** Oversees the organization's overall direction and strategy, appoints key personnel, and ensures compliance with regulations.
- **Managing director:** Leads the organization's day-to-day operations, implements strategic plans, and oversees various departments.
- **Functional departments**
 - *Accommodation:* Responsible for managing hotels, guesthouses, and tourist bungalows across the Garhwal region.
 - *Transportation:* Oversees transportation services, including tours, package deals, and taxi services.
 - *Adventure Tourism:* Excels at coordinating and directing a diverse array of pursuits, including hiking expeditions at high altitudes, river expeditions

involving inflatable rafts, and various other daring undertakings meant to stir the soul.

- *Pilgrimage Facilitation*: Coordinates pilgrimages to Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, and Gangotri.
- *Marketing & Sales*: Promotes GMVN's services, manages online booking platforms, and attracts tourists.
- *Finance & Accounting*: Handles financial matters, budgeting, and financial reporting.
- *Human Resources*: Recruits, trains, and manages GMVN's workforce.
- *Sustainability & Community Engagement*: Embeds sustainable methods, collaborates with local communities, and advocates for their products and services.

Regional offices: Manage operations and services in specific regions within the Garhwal Himalayas.

Field staff: Provides services directly to tourists, including hotel staff, guides, transportation personnel, and administrative staff.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

1.6.1 Cost structure

- **Accommodation:** Encompasses expenses linked to the upkeep and functioning of hotels, guesthouses, and tourist bungalows, covering aspects like staff salaries, utilities, maintenance, and property taxes.
- **Transportation:** Costs of vehicles, fuel, maintenance, driver salaries, and tour guides.
- **Adventure Tourism:** Costs of equipment, permits, guides, training, and safety measures.
- **Pilgrimage Facilitation:** Costs of transportation, accommodation, guides, and administrative support.
- **Marketing & Sales:** Costs of marketing campaigns, advertising, online booking platforms, and sales personnel.
- **Human Resources:** Costs of employee salaries, benefits, training, and recruitment.
- **Sustainability & Community Engagement:** Costs of environmental initiatives, community projects, and promoting local products.
- **Administrative Expenses:** Encompass the expenditures associated with office space, equipment, IT infrastructure, and administrative staff.

1.6.2 Revenue streams

- **Accommodation:** Revenue generated from room bookings, restaurants, and other services offered in hotels and guesthouses.
- **Transportation:** Revenue from tour packages, ticket sales, and taxi services.
- **Adventure Tourism:** Revenue from activity fees, equipment rentals, and guiding services.
- **Pilgrimage Facilitation:** Revenue from package deals, accommodation bookings, and transportation services.
- **Hilan Outlets:** Revenue from the sale of locally crafted products and souvenirs.
- **Other Services:** Revenue from renting out conference rooms, organizing events, and offering other services like spa treatments and cultural programs.
- **Government Grants and Subsidies:** GMVN might receive financial support from the government for specific initiatives or infrastructure development.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Navigating the sustainable tourism challenge

Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN) grapples with the intricate task of reshaping conventional tourism practices into a sustainable and environmentally conscientious model. Situated in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, India, where the fragile Himalayan ecosystem faces potential harm from escalating tourist footfall, GMVN endeavors to pioneer a transformative shift by aligning its tourism initiatives with sustainable development goals.

2.2 The pioneering business/project idea

GMVN's inventive initiative revolves around implementing a comprehensive approach to sustainable tourism. The company has embarked on a range of environmental initiatives aimed at curtailing its ecological footprint. These include the adoption of solar power, water conservation measures, recycling endeavors, and reforestation initiatives. By integrating eco-friendly materials, instituting innovative sewage treatment, and imposing environmental levies on plastic bottles, GMVN aspires to establish a sustainable tourism model that not only mitigates adverse impacts but actively contributes to environmental preservation. GMVN actively involves local communities in this endeavor, fostering collaboration that serves as a protective barrier for the region's biodiversity, cultural heritage, and historical legacy. Through the incorporation of locally sourced produce into menus and the promotion of locally crafted products, GMVN contributes significantly to the economic growth of these communities.

2.3 External landscape analysis

In examining relevant meso and macro trends influencing GMVN's sustainable tourism initiative, the global shift towards sustainable practices and heightened awareness of environmental concerns takes center stage. The global push for sustainable tourism, as mirrored in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provides GMVN with a strategic opportunity to position itself as an industry leader.

Macro trends such as growing climate change awareness, an increasing penchant for eco-conscious travel, and a surge in demand for responsible tourism positively shape GMVN's efforts. The emphasis on sustainable tourism certification schemes and strategies for local development aligns seamlessly with the prevailing industry trends. However, challenges emanate from potential threats such as natural calamities, seasonal fluctuations, and tourists displaying indifference towards environmental impact.

GMVN's commitment to aligning with UN SDGs and UNWTO principles positions the company to capitalize on these trends and developments as opportunities rather than obstacles. The emphasis on environmental sustainability, socio-cultural authenticity, and economic viability resonates with the broader global narrative of responsible tourism. In summation, GMVN's pioneering approach to sustainable tourism in the face of environmental challenges underscores the company's dedication to reshaping conventional tourism models. By aligning with global trends and leveraging opportunities arising from the escalating demand for sustainable practices, GMVN's initiative serves as a model for the tourism industry, showcasing how a state-owned entity can spearhead positive change while fostering economic growth and community well-being.

2.4 Internal landscape analysis

2.4.1 Strengths of GMVN

- GMVN's commitment to environmental sustainability is demonstrated through its proactive initiatives, such as the adoption of solar power, water conservation measures and reforestation efforts.
- By promoting community involvement and utilizing local resources, economies can flourish while also supporting cultural and economic sustainability. This principle is known as Community Engagement and Economic Empowerment.
- GMVN has demonstrated their adaptability and commitment to public welfare through successfully navigating difficult challenges like road blockages and repurposing facilities for COVID centers. Their resilience is a commendable trait that helped them overcome obstacles with ease.

- The integration of technology is evident in GMVN's online booking services, which demonstrate a modern approach and offer convenient options for travelers.
- GMVN exhibits a dedication to sustainable tourism by aligning its values with the guidelines set forth by UNWTO and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, demonstrating an alignment with global sustainability objectives.

2.4.2 Weaknesses of GMVN

- To enhance its readiness for natural disasters, GMVN requires further investments in disaster-resistant architecture.
- To prevent economic setbacks during low tourist seasons, it is vital to develop and advertise off-season attractions that appeal to visitors throughout the year.
- Enhanced endeavors are required to provide tourist education on responsible actions that can reduce their ecological impact.
- GMVN's efficiency is subject to government policies and support, necessitating continual conformity with evolving regulations.
- To stay ahead in the constantly changing tourism industry, GMVN needs to be innovative and competitive as it faces tough competition.

2.5 Stakeholders of GMVN

Table 1: Stakeholder of GMVN

Stakeholder Group	Interest/Involvement
Tourists	Primary clients; interested in GMVN's services, impacting success.
Local Communities	Affected by GMVN's operations; economic, environmental, and cultural impact.
Employees	Directly impacted by GMVN's policies, work environment, and commitment to social equity.
Government of Uttarakhand	Oversees GMVN as a state-owned entity; interest in tourism, sustainability, and local economy.
Environmental Organizations	Stakeholders interested in GMVN's initiatives for environmental conservation and sustainability.
Tourism Industry Partners	Collaboration with local businesses, travel agencies, and adventure sports providers.
International Tourists	Stakeholders benefiting from GMVN's services and contributing to global reputation.
UN and UNWTO	Stakeholders due to GMVN's alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and UNWTO principles.
Investors/Shareholders	Financial stakeholders with an interest in GMVN's performance and profitability.
Media and Public Opinion	Stakeholders influencing GMVN's reputation; positive coverage and public support are crucial.

Source: Authors' contribution

2.6 Target market

GMVN caters to a diverse audience exploring the Garhwal region in Uttarakhand, tailoring its offerings based on budget, interests, and location.

2.6.1 By budget

- **Affordable options:** Frugal backpackers can choose GMVN's guesthouses and dormitories, providing budget-friendly accommodations.
- **Family-friendly:** Families with children can enjoy multiple-room accommodations with amenities like playgrounds, making GMVN an ideal choice for family vacations.
- **Luxury experiences:** GMVN's hotels offer premium amenities, catering specifically to opulence-seeking sojourners, providing top-of-the-line luxury experiences.

2.6.2 By interests

- **Adventure seekers:** Trekking, mountaineering, and river rafting options are available for thrill-seeking adventure enthusiasts.
- **Pilgrims:** GMVN facilitates spiritual journeys to sacred sites like Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, and Gangotri for pilgrims.
- **Nature enthusiasts:** Camping trips and scenic nature walks cater to those who appreciate eco-friendly options and natural beauty.
- **Cultural explorers:** GMVN offers cultural experiences through Hilan outlets, community engagement initiatives, and immersion in local traditions.

2.7 Partners

Government collaborations: Collaboration with the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB) played a crucial role in aligning GMVN's initiatives with state policies and sustainable development goals. These partnerships ensured a seamless integration of GMVN's efforts into broader tourism strategies.

Corporate and organizational partnerships: Working closely with gas agencies like Indane and Bharat, GMVN actively implemented eco-friendly practices in their accommodations. The Ministry of Corporate Affairs provided support by emphasizing ethical business practices.

Financial collaborations: HDFC Bank significantly contributed as GMVN's banking partner, supporting sustainable banking practices and aligning financial transactions with the objectives of sustainable tourism.

Industry collaborations: The collaboration with MakeMyTrip empowered GMVN to extend the reach of responsible travel practices to a wider audience by promoting sustainable travel packages and eco-tourism initiatives.

Local community engagement: GMVN's partnership with skill development programs like "Kaushal Vikas" aimed at fostering sustainable economic growth by providing skills to uplift local communities.

2.8 Finances

GMVN financed its sustainable tourism initiative through various channels:

Government funding: Grants or subsidies from government bodies supporting sustainable tourism development were allocated for infrastructure upgrades, community empowerment, and sustainability projects.

Corporate partnerships and sponsorships: GMVN sought sponsorships or formed partnerships with corporations aligned with sustainable practices, receiving financial support or in-kind contributions for specific projects.

Internally generated funds: Revenue generated from GMVN's tourism operations was reinvested into sustainability-focused projects, utilizing profits from accommodations, adventure tourism, and other services.

2.9 Human resources

GMVN enlisted specialized human resources for implementing sustainable tourism:

Environmental experts: Specialists in environmental sustainability were engaged to plan and implement eco-friendly practices across GMVN properties.

Community coordinators: Personnel adept in community engagement facilitated collaborations with local communities to ensure their active involvement and empowerment.

Technology professionals: IT experts and developers played a vital role in creating and maintaining GMVN's online booking platform and other technological solutions.

Tourism professionals: Specialists in sustainable tourism practices were employed to design eco-conscious travel experiences and promote responsible tourism.

2.10 Marketing and communication activities

GMVN utilized various communication channels to engage target markets and stakeholders:

Website and online platforms: GMVN's official website served as a central source for information on sustainable tourism initiatives, offering details about eco-friendly services, community collaborations, and environmental practices.

Social media: Utilizing platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, GMVN showcased sustainable tourism experiences, shared stories of community collaborations, and spread awareness about responsible travel practices.

Collaborative campaigns: Partnerships with NGOs and government bodies led to joint awareness campaigns, workshops, and events focusing on sustainability and responsible tourism.

Press releases and publications: GMVN leveraged traditional media channels by issuing press releases, articles in newspapers, and publications to reach a wider audience, highlighting its sustainable tourism efforts.

Direct communication: GMVN directly engaged stakeholders through email newsletters, pamphlets distributed at tourist sites, and information centers, educating visitors about sustainable practices and initiatives.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target markets

GMVN's sustainable tourism initiatives have substantial implications for the diverse customer base, encompassing adventure seekers, pilgrims, and nature enthusiasts. The implementation of eco-friendly practices, online booking services, and a comprehensive array of sustainable tourism offerings significantly elevates the overall experience for these customers.

- **Enhanced customer experience**

- The introduction of a seamless online booking system empowers customers to plan and customize their journeys effortlessly. This user-friendly feature not only adds convenience but also aligns with contemporary travel trends, catering to tech-savvy and time-conscious tourists.
- Sustainable and eco-friendly adventures, including trekking, mountaineering, and river rafting, provide customers with the thrill of exploration while ensuring minimal ecological impact. GMVN's commitment to responsible tourism practices resonates with a growing segment of travellers seeking meaningful and sustainable experiences.

- **Diverse accommodation options**

- GMVN's extensive network of lodgings, comprising hotels, guesthouses, and tourist abodes, caters to a broad spectrum of customers. Whether it's budget-conscious backpackers, families seeking comfort, or luxury travellers, GMVN provides accommodations that suit various preferences and budgets.
- Collaborating with indigenous communities, GMVN facilitates local cultural experiences, allowing customers to engage with the rich heritage of the Garhwal region. This adds a cultural dimension to their journeys, fostering a deeper connection with the destinations they visit.

3.2 Impact for the environment

GMVN's environmental endeavours exert a direct and affirmative influence on the delicate ecosystems prevalent in the Garhwal region, fostering the preservation of biodiversity, curtailing waste generation, and ameliorating the processes associated with environmental deterioration.

- **Adoption of solar power and water conservation**

The seamless harmonization of solar panels and water conservation measures with Sustainable Development Goals number seven, which ensures access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, and number six, striving to ensure availability and sustainable management of water as well as sanitation for all, commenced with the assimilation of these sustainable practices. The reduced reliance on fossil fuels and judicious use of water resources showcases GMVN's commitment to minimizing its ecological footprint.

- **Waste management and recycling**

- GMVN's recycling endeavours, waste reduction advocacy, and innovative sewage treatment contribute to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). By minimizing waste and implementing eco-friendly disposal methods, GMVN mitigates pollution levels and promotes sustainable urban development.

- **Reforestation and environmental levies**

- GMVN's active engagement in reforestation initiatives aligns with SDG 15 (Life on Land), enhancing air quality and mitigating pollution. The institution of environmental levies on plastic bottles in Badrinath serves as a deterrent to single-use plastics, contributing to SDG 14 (Life Below Water) by reducing plastic pollution in water bodies.

3.3 Impact for the company

GMVN's commitment to sustainable tourism not only enhances its brand image but also contributes to long-term business viability and resilience.

- **Brand image and differentiation**

- GMVN's alignment with UN SDGs and UNWTO principles positions it as a responsible and ethical player in the tourism industry. This enhances its brand image, attracting environmentally conscious travellers and fostering loyalty among existing customers.
- The integration of innovative solutions, such as environmental levies on plastic bottles, showcases GMVN's forward-thinking approach, setting it apart from competitors and signalling a commitment to addressing contemporary environmental challenges.

- **Business viability and resilience**

- By embracing sustainable practices, GMVN future-proofs its operations against evolving consumer preferences and regulatory requirements. The integration of environmentally conscious materials, sources of renewable energy, and strategies for minimizing waste not only conforms to prevailing environmental benchmarks but also serves to alleviate potential risks linked to non-compliance with environmental regulations.
- GMVN's ability to navigate challenges, such as natural calamities and the COVID-19 pandemic, by repurposing facilities and prioritizing safety demonstrates adaptability and resilience. This positions GMVN as a reliable and trustworthy partner in the tourism industry.

3.4 Impact for the center of excellence (CoE)

GMVN's sustainable tourism initiatives contribute to the Center of Excellence's goals by serving as a practical and scalable model for integrating sustainability into tourism practices.

- **Demonstration of sustainable practices**

- GMVN's initiatives provide tangible examples of how sustainable tourism can be implemented at scale. These examples serve as valuable case studies for the CoE, offering insights into the practical challenges and solutions associated with sustainable tourism implementation.

- The incorporation of environmental awareness sessions and collaboration with local communities sets a precedent for community engagement and education, aligning with the CoE's mission to promote responsible and community-centric tourism practices.
- **Advocacy for sustainable tourism**
 - GMVN's alignment with UN SDGs and UNWTO principles serves as a powerful advocacy tool for the CoE. It demonstrates the feasibility and benefits of aligning tourism practices with global sustainability goals, encouraging other stakeholders to follow suit.
 - The impact of GMVN's initiatives on local economies and ecosystems showcases the potential for sustainable tourism to be a catalyst for positive social and environmental change. This, consequently, lends substantial backing to the CoE's overarching objective of advocating sustainable tourism as a propellant for comprehensive and impartial development.

Hence, the steadfast dedication of the organization to harmonizing with worldwide sustainability objectives not only establishes it as a frontrunner in the industry but also positions it as a pivotal contributor to the overarching aspirations of ecological preservation and socio-economic advancement.

4.0 Conclusion

Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam stands as a crucial player in Uttarakhand's tourism tapestry, contributing significantly to the region's allure. Originating modestly, GMVN has grown into a versatile entity, offering a range of services that go beyond conventional tourism norms. Its dedication to sustainability, community involvement, and technological advancements distinguishes it in an industry characterized by diversity and dynamic challenges.

GMVN's strengths are evident in its varied product lineup, designed to cater to a broad spectrum of tourists with diverse budgets and interests. The organization's focus on sustainable tourism practices, online booking facilities, and collaboration with local communities contributes to environmental preservation and community progress. The strategic inclusion of adventure tourism, pilgrimage support, and promotion of locally crafted items enriches the overall visitor experience.

The vision and mission of GMVN align with the overarching goals of Uttarakhand tourism, emphasizing consistent growth, accessibility, and the creation of an authentic and luxurious travel experience. The segmentation of the target market based

on budget, interests, and geography underscores the organization's adaptability to the varied needs of tourists, whether domestic or potentially international.

Despite GMVN's commendable strengths, it grapples with challenges inherent in the tourism sector, such as infrastructure upkeep, environmental conservation, competition, and crisis management. Maintaining the delicate equilibrium between tourism development and cultural preservation necessitates nuanced strategies to ensure the sustained prosperity of the region. To capitalize on emerging opportunities, GMVN must bolster its online presence, conduct comprehensive market research, and forge collaborative partnerships. Incorporating advanced technologies, continual staff training, and periodic environmental assessments are vital for staying competitive and attuned to evolving industry trends.

GMVN's journey reflects its resilience and adaptability in navigating the intricacies of the tourism sector. With a commitment to sustainability, a diverse product offering, and a vision for responsible growth, GMVN is positioned to continue shaping the tourism narrative in the Garhwal region. Through embracing innovation, forming strategic alliances, and fostering cultural preservation, GMVN can not only meet evolving tourist needs but also contribute significantly to the comprehensive development of Uttarakhand's tourism industry.

References

Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://gmvnonline.com>

Uttarakhand Tourism Department (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://uttarakhandtourism.gov.in>

Gupta, R., & Kumar, R. (2018). Sustainable tourism in the Himalayas: A study of Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam. *International Journal of Sustainable Tourism Planning & Management*, 9(8), 923-938. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345326837_Sustainable_Tourism_Development_in_the_Himalaya_Constraints_and_Pr ospects

Khadar, D. M., & Rai, S. (2020). Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam: A role model for sustainable tourism in India. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 28(8-9), 1206-1224. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09669589309450696>

Responsible Travel & Tourism Consortium. (n.d.). Case study: Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN) - Promoting responsible tourism in the Himalayas. Retrieved from <https://gmvnonline.com/about-gmvm>: <https://gmvnonline.com/about-gmvm>

Negi, D. S., & Kumar, U. (2022). Sustainable tourism in Uttarakhand: Practices and challenges. *International Journal of Innovation and Economic Development*, 13(7), 857-872. Retrieved from <https://ignited.in/I/a/293122>

The Economic Times. (2023, July 05). Uttarakhand tourism: Embracing sustainability. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/topic/ecotourism>

Singh, D. K., & Kumar, U. (2012). Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN): A case study in sustainable tourism management. *ICFAI Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Management*, 3(1), 49-70.

Kumar, R., & Negi, D. S. (2023). Ecotourism in the Himalayas: A comparative analysis of GMVN and private sector initiatives. *Journal of Mountain Research*, 14(1), 1-12. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260981957_ECOTOURISM

International Mountain Society. (2020). Sustainable tourism in Uttarakhand: Recommendations for policy and practice. *Mountain Research and Development*, 40(3), 1-10. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337704229_Nine_types_of_recommendations_guidelines_and_policies_an_exploratory_test_of_a_proposed_taxonomy_of_physical_activity_promotion_documents

Joshi, A., & Sharma, S. (2021). Building sustainable tourism partnerships: A case study of Uttarakhand tourism development board and Garhwal mandal vikas nigam. *International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 12(2), 319-334.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – Sustainable Tourism: United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals#goal8>

UNWTO-UNDP Tourism and Poverty Alleviation Program: World Tourism Organization & United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.). UNWTO and UNDP join forces to tackle poverty through tourism. Retrieved from <https://www.unwto.org/unwto-and-undp-join-forces-to-tackle-poverty-through-tourism>

CASE STUDY 14

Virtual Tourism - Scope and Opportunities: A Case on Adoption of Virtual Tourism in India

*Chahat Sisodia, Hardik Sathe, Nikhil Sharma,
Divya Gautam, Nirja Raghani and Punit Saurabh*

ABSTRACT

Virtual tourism is emerging as a transformative approach with significant potential to address sustainability challenges within the tourism industry. This abstract provides an exploration of the interplay between virtual tourism and sustainability, focusing on the myriad ways virtual experiences can effectively mitigate the environmental impact of travel and foster sustainable practices.

The conventional tourism sector has long faced scrutiny due to its association with a range of sustainability concerns, including heightened carbon emissions, resource depletion, and disturbance of delicate ecosystems. Virtual tourism, driven by immersive digital platforms such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), offers a compelling avenue to mitigate these issues by allowing individuals to explore destinations without the need for physical travel. This intrinsic reduction in transportation significantly lowers carbon emissions, thus directly contributing to the goal of minimizing the tourism sector's environmental footprint.

The scope of virtual tourism is vast and multifaceted, offering a promising array of possibilities that extend beyond the realm of traditional travel. With the rapid advancement of digital technologies, the potential applications of virtual tourism have expanded to encompass diverse dimensions. From an environmental standpoint, virtual tourism holds the potential to significantly reduce the carbon footprint of travel by enabling individuals to explore destinations without physical transportation. Moreover, virtual tourism opens doors to remote and inaccessible locations, allowing users to engage with cultural and natural heritage that might otherwise be threatened by the strains of mass tourism. Virtual tourism also has the potential to play a vital role in cultural preservation by raising awareness about endangered traditions and historical landmarks. It can also serve as a tool for education, allowing students and learners to experience historical events and cultural contexts firsthand, thereby enhancing their global perspectives.

To summarize, this abstract underscores the transformative potential of virtual tourism as a sustainable alternative to traditional travel. By significantly reducing the

ecological footprint of tourism and facilitating eco-cultural awareness, virtual tourism holds promise in driving a more responsible and inclusive global travel paradigm.

Keywords: Virtual tourism, Smart Tourism, Environment, Virtual Reality Pros and Cons, Sustainability, Review.

1.0 Introduction

As we know many industries are using innovation for several years to get the hold of the market. Some of the industry like IT, Retail, Automobile, etc. where they already brought innovation & concept to create impact and to understand the customer persona with the help of AI & ML Existing & new technology is been introduced or redeveloped like Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), Mixed Reality (MR), 360 Degree Panoramas & Extended Reality (XR) which help the industry to grow & take all the things in the next level virtually. All the big conferences, meetings, Seminar may take virtually which will make things easier and more available at the doorstep. The Tourism sector has already evolved years back but it's getting more advance & are working & redeveloping their virtual tourism into another height which will help others to have an experience of the virtual world with AI from anyplace. During this Pandemic everyone has been lock down & feeling anxious when all these will end & they can rush out with friends & family. But tourism sector makes this thing possible virtually.

2.0 Conceptual Background

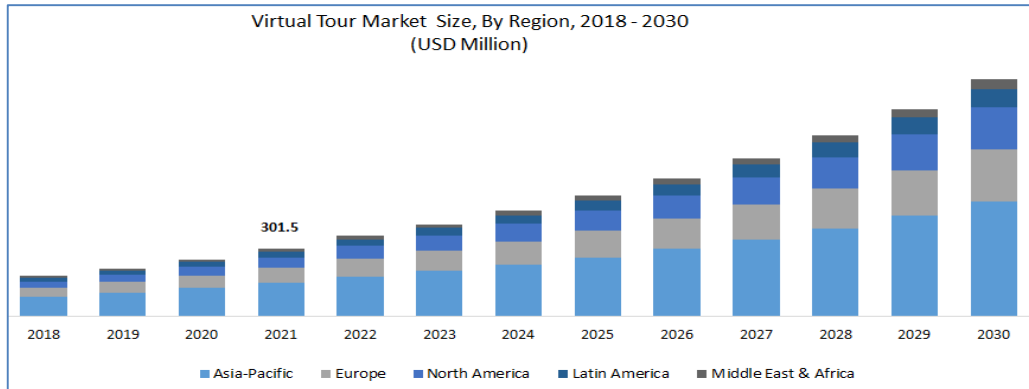
Tourism reflects a bunch of desires and unknown explorations to destinations that are nothing short of a heaven. It is a subject of pleasure and one's involvement and coping skills with the transforming, modern world. It is of utmost significance, both locally as well as globally, allowing a smooth amalgamation of cultures, values and history.

Though there is no one common structure of tourism, as it ranges from beaches to mountains to monuments to plain grasslands and much more, it has a common tendency to generate billions of revenues globally, becoming a significant contributor to a nation's GDP.

Tourism also aids in diversifying the local economy, generates employment opportunities, paves a way for infrastructural development, finally giving a thrust to the economy. Today, virtual reality is deeply fabricated with tourism, allowing an

immersive, imagery and illusional experience and telepresence for the users. The following data represents the global scope and trend of Virtual Tourism.

Figure 1: Virtual Tour Market Size, by Region 2018-2030 (USD Million)



Source: Polaris Market Research Analysis

Global Virtual Tour Market Size, Share & Growth Analysis Report, 2022-2030. Thus, it becomes quite significant to acknowledge the shift in the tourism industry, which is highlighted in the study.

3.0 Literature Review

The virtual tourism research domain shows a progression over the years. From the time span of 2000 to 2021, 1652 documents and 93 journals have been recorded, with over 85000 references. The top 3 journals consist of Annals of Tourism Research, Current Issues in Tourism and The Asia-Pacific Journal of TOURISM Research. The latest decade has shown the highest number of publications. The rise in the number of articles published shows the growing popularity as well as the unfragmented nature of this domain. Virtual tourism is rising, and the Covid widespread in 2020 has provided the boost required for virtual tourism to soar high. Advances like VR make an immersion where visitors lose the sense between genuine and virtual universes. VR could be a recreation of the genuine world, or in some cases an imaginary world. Within the touristic context, the mimicked genuine world is of more significance. Particularly the experience of visualization is exceptionally vital in tourism, where majority of encounters depend on visual stimulation and thrill.

For a long time, VR within the tourism industry has been utilized as a try and buy option with travel offices, aircrafts, hotels, and tourism sheets misusing VR innovation to advance their goals to the potential clients. Travelers therefore, instead of screening through multiple options, would rather prefer to experience things for themselves. Travelers frequently complain that the pictures appeared within the site don't take after the genuine room that's advertised to them.

4.0 Discussion

An innovative way to experience locations and cultures without having to physically be there is through virtual tourism. Using AR and VR technology, it enables people to virtually visit and explore destinations. With interactive aspects, these technologies provide realistic worlds that replicate real-world experiences. This offers a special chance to provide more people with affordable, practical, and sustainable travel experiences.

4.1 Boosting virtual tourism

The emphasis is on two main tactics to promote the uptake of virtual tourism:

- **Promotion of Lesser-Known Locations:** Due to a lack of exposure, many amazing locations are still unknown. These undiscovered jewels may be highlighted by utilising AR and VR.
- **Virtual tourists can be introduced to compelling experiences that were previously disregarded by building comprehensive AR/VR reconstructions of these lesser-known sites.**
- **Using Cutting-Edge Technology:** The quality of virtual tourist experiences may be greatly improved by utilising cutting-edge technologies such as Google Earth models and Unreal Engine.
- **Unreal Engine.** While the Unreal Engine provides interactive visualisations with excellent visual quality, Google Earth models give precise geographic data. The use of Google APIs enables quick development and guarantees the rapid production of immersive environments.

4.2 Making it feasible

- **Making virtual tourism viable entails a number of crucial stages, including:**
- **Data collection:** Using satellite images and mapping tools, collect precise geographic and architectural information about the desired location.

- AR/VR modelling: Make accurate 3D models of the location, including its landmarks, structures, and natural elements, using AR and VR technologies.
- Interactive components: Include interactive components that improve the experience, such as guided tours, background knowledge, and regional noises.
- Testing and Improvement: Strict testing guarantees the virtual environment's immersion, accuracy, and bug-free operation.

Integrating Google APIs in Virtual Tourism: Enhancing the Virtual Experience:

- The use of Google APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) is crucial for improving the functionality, usability, and accessibility of the virtual experience in the field of virtual tourism.
 - This section explains the different uses for Google APIs in virtual tourism as well as the advantages they offer.
- 1. Google Earth API for accurate geolocation:** The Google Earth API gives programmers the opportunity to integrate live, interactive Google Earth maps right into their applications. This API is essential for building precise and thorough geographic representations of places in the context of virtual tourism. Virtual tourism systems may provide users with a smooth experience of navigating and discovering places as if they were using Google Earth itself by integrating the Google Earth API. This connection makes sure that users can grasp and visualise the location's layout, which improves their comprehension and engagement in general.
 - 2. Google Maps APIs for realistic navigation:** Dynamic maps and navigational features may be created using Google Maps APIs, including the JavaScript API and Directions API. These APIs can be used in the context of virtual tourism to provide consumers narrated virtual tours of locations. Users may virtually travel around streets, landmarks, and sites of interest to have a better understanding of the layout and surroundings of the area. Virtual tourism systems may mimic the sensation of being on a genuine tour, complete with turn-by-turn directions and interactive exploration, by incorporating real-time navigation elements.
 - 3. Google Street View API for immersive visuals:** The Google Street View API empowers developers to embed panoramic Street View images directly into applications. This API is a game-changer for virtual tourism, allowing users to experience a destination from street level. By integrating the Street View API, virtual tourism platforms can offer users the opportunity to virtually "walk" through streets, squares, and iconic locations. This level of immersion brings an authentic touch to the virtual experience, enabling users to soak in the atmosphere and vibe of the destination.

- 4. Google Places API for localized information:** Access to extensive information on locations, including companies, landmarks, and areas of interest, is made possible through the Google Places API. This API may be used in virtual tourism to give consumers contextually pertinent information about the places they are experiencing. Users may find out more about the location by accessing historical information, amusing tales, and other specifics. The Places API integration makes sure that consumers are engrossed not just aesthetically but also cognitively during their virtual trips.

Examples of companies in this domain:

- Groove Jones
- Zco Corporation
- Cubix
- VARS
- Giga Works
- VizioFly
- The Amsterdam VR Company
- World Travel VR
- Infinito VFX
- Immersion VR UK
- Ascape VR
- 3D Walkabout

4.3 Benefits and target audience

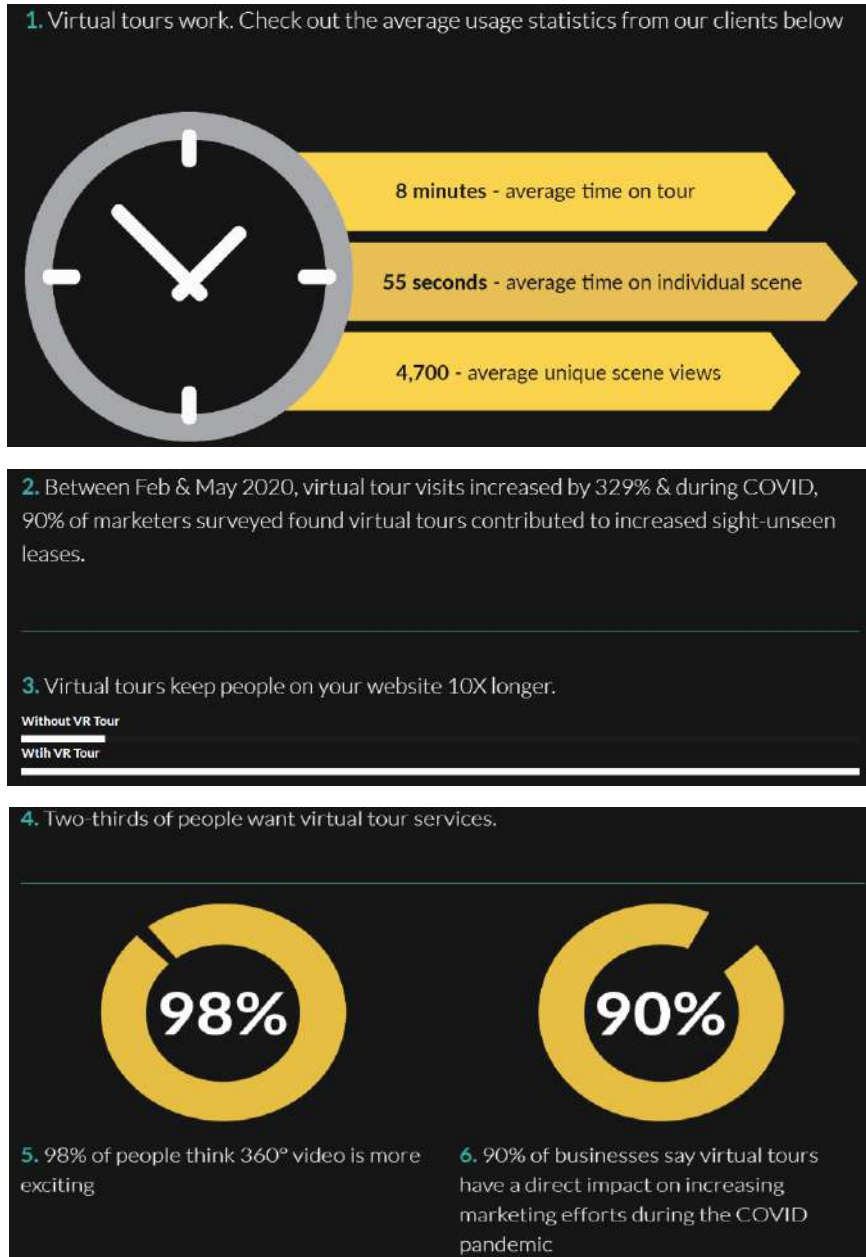
Virtual travel offers tremendous promise to a wide spectrum of people:

- **Physically Disabled People:** Virtual travel removes obstacles that can make it difficult for people with impairments to visit locations.
- **Locations That Are Remote or Inaccessible:** Thanks to virtual travel, people may virtually go to locations that are ordinarily inaccessible because of geography, politics, or the environment.
- **Curious Travellers:** Virtual tourism gives the possibility to visit a greater variety of locations without time or financial restrictions, even for people who can physically travel.

5.0 Data Analysis

The following is the statistical data from the survey conducted by, <https://virtualtourcompany.co.uk/virtual-tour-statistics-you-should-know/>.

Figure 2: Virtual Tourism Statistics



7. Virtual tours have been proven to increase booking reservations for hotels and restaurants by as much as 16% to 67%



8. 50% of adult users on the internet rely on virtual tours in their research and decision-making process.

9. Virtual tours increase a business listing's interest by two-fold.

10. According to research carried out by Social Bakers, organic 360-degree photos generated 45% more interactions than conventional photos.

Source: <https://virtualtourcompany.co.uk/virtual-tour-statistics-you-should-know/>

5.0 Benefits and Drawbacks of Virtual Tourism

5.1 Benefits

1. **Accessibility:** Virtual tourism will allow people with physical limitations to explore destinations they might not be able to visit in person. The consumer base can be ever expanding as the technology evolves.
2. **Cost-effective:** Virtual tourism will prove to be twice as cheap as compared to traditional travel. It is generally more affordable, as it eliminates expenses like transportation cost, accommodation, and food expenses.
3. **Convenience:** Users can virtually travel right from the comfort of their couches, eliminating the need for extensive planning, packing and unpacking. It also paves way for switching the destination, if not found to be worthy.
4. **Environmental impact:** Virtual tourism is the need of the hour to reduce carbon footprints across the globe. It reduces the waste associated with traditional travel, making it an eco- friendly alternative.
5. **Safety:** Virtual tourism eliminates the risks associated with travel, such as accidents, thefts, disease outbreaks, or political instability in certain restricted regions. If one

wishes to discover the tourist spots of an alien enemy country, virtual tourism is the safest option.

6. **Cultural preservation:** This is an important advantage of Virtual tourism. It can aid in preserving cultural heritage by promoting awareness and reducing physical wear and tear and waste on historical sites. Also, certain historical ruins can be showed in their actual form through technology, making people aware of their local as well as foreign culture.
7. **Educational value:** Virtual tourism can provide a completely immersive learning experience by visuals of historical, scientific and cultural information about well known as well as abstruse destinations.
8. **Time-efficient:** Virtual tourism allows users to explore multiple destinations within a short time span without the need for lengthy travel periods as it cuts down the travelling time as well as the logistics. Thus, virtual tourism matches with the time constrained lifestyle of the working class.
9. **Customization:** Virtual tours can be customized as per individual preferences. Although it may cost more, it allows customers to focus on specific popular attractions of a destination.
10. **Exploration of extreme environments:** Virtual tourism enables users to experience the thrill of extreme or dangerous environments that might be inaccessible or unsafe in reality.

5.2 Drawbacks

1. **Lack of physical experience:** Virtual tourism, though appealing initially, cannot completely replicate the sensory experiences of actually being in a place or feeling the climate, tasting local cuisine, or interacting with locals. It just focuses on the tourist spot.
2. **Isolation:** People travel to step out of their everyday isolation and virtual tourism abstains from giving that space. Spending too much time in closed, compact environments could lead to social isolation and reduced human interaction, affecting one's physical and mental health.
3. **Loss of revenue for travel industry:** The travel industry, until they completely accept the new technology, has a danger of loss of revenue due to structural unemployment. The rise of virtual tourism will impact the travel industry by reducing demand for traditional travel services, until their customers also accept new technology.
4. **Inauthenticity:** Virtual tourism might present a distorted or sanitized version of reality, omitting the challenges, actual scenario and complexities of actual

destinations. Also, one has to be vigilant while payment as this is a service-based transaction.

5. **Dependence on technology:** Technical glitches and errors, internet connectivity issues, and the need for expensive equipment can hinder smooth access to virtual tourism. A robust infrastructure has to be priorly setup for its success.
6. **Job displacement:** The shift to virtual tourism could lead to major job losses in sectors like hospitality, tourism, and transportation. It will also impose survival threats to the unorganized sector of a particular destination, completely dependent on tourism.
7. **Privacy concerns:** Virtual tourism platforms, if not monitored by a centralized authority, could potentially gather, store and misuse personal data, raising privacy concerns for users. Thus, new rules and regulations regarding the same should be introduced beforehand.
8. **Cultural misrepresentation:** Virtual tourism might showcase content that could inadvertently misrepresent or stereotype cultures, leading to misunderstandings or perpetuating biases and creating cultural conflicts, especially in religious tourism.
9. **Health impacts:** Extensive use of virtual reality (VR) technology will lead to physical and mental discomfort, eye strain, migraine, motion sickness for users.
10. **Over dependence:** Relying heavily on virtual tourism experiences might discourage people from engaging in real-world exploration and discovery, thereby negating the basic aim of travelling.

6.0 Sustainability and Virtual Tourism

Following are some real-life scenarios where virtual tourism has significantly contributed towards sustainability.

1. **Google Earth VR:** Google Earth VR allows users to virtually explore destinations worldwide. It provides users with a sense of presence in a location and offers 3D views of natural landmarks like the Grand Canyon or cultural sites like the Taj Mahal. This tool can reduce the need for physical travel to these places.
2. **Machu Picchu 360:** Machu Picchu, a UNESCO World Heritage site, faces environmental challenges due to the influx of tourists. To mitigate this, a virtual tour called Machu Picchu 360 offers an immersive AR experience, allowing people to explore the site virtually and learn about its history and conservation efforts.
3. **VR Museum Tours:** Many museums now offer virtual tours, allowing art and history enthusiasts to explore their collections online. The Louvre in Paris, for instance, offers virtual tours of its exhibits, reducing the need for in-person visits and the associated environmental impact.

4. Virtual Diving Expeditions: Organizations like The Ocean Agency use VR to take users on virtual diving expeditions to coral reefs worldwide. These experiences raise awareness about the importance of marine conservation and reduce the impact of physical diving tourism on coral reefs.

These examples demonstrate how virtual tourism can contribute to sustainability by reducing the carbon footprint of travel, preserving fragile ecosystems, promoting sustainable practices, and increasing accessibility to tourism experiences. However, it's essential to strike a balance between virtual tourism and real-world experiences to ensure that local economies dependent on tourism continue to thrive.

7.0 Findings and Conclusion

The estimated Virtual Tourism Market Size in 2023 is US\$12.3 Billion and its projected Market Valuation by 2033 is US\$ 26 Billion. Virtual tourism determines the potential of current tourism industry and highlights the relevance of integrated applications to give a complete picture of on- ground strategies and context-based theory. Today, sustainable tourism needs tourist engagement in creating a favorable atmosphere for all. The tourism community should come together to adopt and promote sustainable tourism and detect loopholes to adopt continuous improvements and innovations.

The above study reviews the present positions of virtual tourism as a potential weapon for the yet to come huge transformation in the industry, inclined towards a smooth blend of technology and sustainability. It gives a crystal-clear view of stakeholders for delivering sustainable, virtual reality- based tourism services. Lastly, it provides an initial point for scholars and research experts to curate more holistic studies on the issue.

References

Author links open overlay panel Sanjeev Verma a, a, b, & Abstract Humanizing the tourism experience with virtual and augmented reality has gained traction. (2022, June 6). *Past, present, and future of Virtual Tourism-A Literature Review*. International Journal of Information Management Data Insights. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2667096822000283>

Global Virtual Tour Market Size, Share & Growth Analysis Report, 2022-2030. (n.d.). Polaris. <https://www.polarismarketresearch.com/industry-analysis/virtual-tour-market>

Todaro, J. (2023, October 10). *Virtual tour statistics you should know*. Virtual Tour Company. <https://virtualtourcompany.co.uk/virtual-tour-statistics-you-should-know/>

What are the Advantages and Disadvantages of Virtual Tours? (n.d.). <https://www.cloudpano.com/blog/what-are-the-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-virtual-tours>

CASE STUDY 15

Sustainable Tourism – Over Tourism a Case Study on Nainital

*Digesh Shah, Jainam Mehta, Anubhav Jain, Rahul Pandey,
Shashwat Khandelwal and Parag Rijwani*

1.0 Case Context

In light of growing worries about the adverse effects of tourism, the idea of “Sustainable Tourism” has developed as an important one. The term “over-tourism” describes what happens when a location has an influx of visitors that causes negative effects, such as a deterioration of the local environment, the escalation of social tensions, and a decrease in the overall quality of the vacation. The importance of sustainable tourism practices is growing as tourist hotspots all over the world try to address the problems caused by an influx of visitors.

The case revolves around sustainable tourism from the perspective of overcrowding. It explores the problems caused by over-tourism and the ways in which sustainable tourism practices might help solve them. The case study focuses on one location, “Nainital”, where one can see a miniature version of the world’s problem with too many visitors at once. Nainital has long been known for its stunning scenery, rich history, and thriving villages. Recent years, however, have seen a meteoric rise in the number of visitors, putting a severe strain on the area’s already vulnerable ecosystems, cultural landmarks, and local infrastructure.

1.1 The concept of sustainable tourism

The concept of sustainable tourism has garnered considerable interest in recent times, primarily driven by mounting apprehensions surrounding the adverse consequences of tourism on the environment, local communities, and cultural heritage (Hall, 2011). The importance of achieving a harmonious equilibrium between economic advancement, environmental preservation, and socio-cultural welfare in tourism has been underscored by scholars (Dredge & Jenkins, 2007). The primary objective of sustainable tourism is to mitigate the adverse consequences associated with tourism activities, while concurrently optimizing the advantages for local communities and safeguarding the integrity of natural and cultural assets (UNWTO, 2015). The adoption of sustainable ecotourism practices is of utmost importance, as it entails finding a harmonious equilibrium between the preservation of delicate ecosystems and cultural resources, while simultaneously fostering socio-economic advantages for indigenous communities

(Oladeji et al., 2021). Over-tourism is causing social, economic, and environmental issues in India and internationally. Despite efforts to stop unlawful development near waterways and safeguard tourist areas, destinations remain overcrowded. Venice, Amsterdam, and Barcelona charge day-trippers and limit hotel construction to reduce over-tourism. Bhutan pioneered responsible tourism by increasing tourist fees. India's domestic tourist boom has also impacted fragile ecosystems and local populations.

1.2 Understanding over tourism

The issue of over-tourism has become a significant concern in numerous well-liked tourist destinations across the globe, as highlighted by Gössling et al. (2018). The term “over-tourism” is used to describe a scenario in which the volume of tourists surpasses the capacity of a particular destination. This phenomenon leads to various negative consequences, including environmental deterioration, overcrowding, overburdened infrastructure, and conflicts between tourists and local residents (UNEP, 2019). According to Lew et al. (2016), the phenomenon of over-tourism has the potential to negatively impact the quality of the visitor experience and diminish the unique identity and authenticity of a destination. The focus of this report is on the importance of addressing tourists' changing perceptions of crowding and adopting sustainable practices in order to achieve a more balanced and resilient tourism future. The article by Gupta, Cahyanto, Sajnani, and Shah (2021) examines the shift in tourists' perceptions of crowding following the COVID-19 pandemic and explores its implications for sustainable tourism and over-tourism. According to a report by Lonel (2019), ecotourism has become an important strategy within the tourism industry. It aims to tackle the issues surrounding the detrimental effects of mass tourism on both the environment and local communities. According to the comprehensive literature review conducted by Capocchi et al. in 2019, it is highlighted that over-tourism is not a singular phenomenon but rather a complex series of interconnected events. This emerging trend is deemed significant and calls for in-depth analysis.

In his work, Goodwin provides a comprehensive analysis of the concept of over-tourism. He defines it as a situation where either the local community or tourists themselves perceive a destination to be excessively crowded, leading to a fundamental change in its original character and a decrease in its authenticity, particularly from the perspective of tourists. This, in turn, generates feelings of frustration and dissatisfaction, primarily among the residents of the destination. In addition, it was noted by Goodwin that the issue of over-tourism was specifically discussed during the World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) Ministers' Summit at the World Travel Market in 2017. The phenomenon of over-tourism has been attributed to a convergence of factors, commonly

referred to as the “perfect storm,” which has led to an overwhelming influx of visitors in certain destinations. The forces that have been present for a considerable period of time have recently gained significant momentum, leading to a critical juncture where the issue has extended its reach beyond urban areas to numerous other locations. According to Dodds and Butler (2019), the tourism sector has facilitated easier access for travelers to visit popular destinations.

2.0 Purpose and Objectives of the Case Study

The purpose of this case study is to analyze the effects of excessive tourism in Nainital, with reference to the recent calamity at Joshimath. The case study’s objectives include:

- Assessing the main indicators of over-tourism in Nainital, including tourist numbers, infrastructure capacity, refuse generation, and environmental impacts.
- Evaluating the existent sustainability measures in Nainital and assessing their efficacy in mitigating the effects of over-tourism.
- Effectively manage tourism in Nainital, with a focus on preventing similar catastrophes and ensuring the long-term health of the destination, by proposing practical and sustainable solutions.
- Advocating for responsible tourism practices among visitors, local businesses, and authorities in order to achieve a balance between tourism development and environmental protection.

3.0 About Nainital

Nainital is a well-known hill station in the Indian state of Uttarakhand. At 29.38°N 79.45°E and at an average height of 2,084 metres (6,837 ft) above sea level, the town of Nainital has a total area of 11.73 km² (4.53 sq mi). Most people live between 1,940 and 2,100 m up on the high slopes in the vicinity. With a height of 2,619 m (8,593 ft), the Naina Peak is the highest point in the area. (Figure 1)

The town is situated in the Kumaon foothills of the outer Himalayas at a distance of 345 kilometres from New Delhi, the capital of India, and 285 kilometres from Dehradun, the state capital. and is renowned for its picturesque landscapes, tranquil lakes, and agreeable climate. The region’s natural grandeur and agreeable climate have made it a popular destination for travelers seeking relief from the plains’ sweltering summer heat. The population has increased from 38630 in 2001 to 41377 in 2011 and is projected to reach 55000 in 2023 according to the NPP/ Municipal Board. The

dominating geological formation of Nainital's surrounds is the Krol group of rocks, which consists of slates, marls, sandstones, limestones, and dolomites.

According to studies from 2016, the Nainital landslide, which dispersed debris across 50% of the township's land area, was caused by high rainfall in the region. The investigation found that the earth in certain locations is sinking up to 20 centimeters every year. Several factors, including deforestation, overgrazing, and an increase in visitor numbers, are to blame for the decline.

Additionally, the Krol Formation, which surrounds Nainital, can be further divided into two parts: Lower Krol (Krol-A, locally known as Manora slate composed of purple slate, and Krol-B, locally known as Hanumangarhi slate composed of greyish to greenish slates) and Upper Krol (Krol-C composed of dolomitic limestone and silty sandstone, Krol-D composed of thickly bedded dolomitic limestone, and Krol-E composed of rhythmite and dolomitic limestone). These geological formations add to the region's distinct scenery and geological diversity. (Figure 2)

Major tourist destinations located in Nainital include Naini Lake, Naina Devi Temple, Eco Cave Gardens, Tiffin Top (Dorothy's Seat), Snow View Point, Mall Road, Governor's House (Raj Bhavan), Pangot and Kilbury Bird Sanctuary, Bhimtal and Sattal. (Figure 3)

3.1 Instances of excessive tourism in Nainital

The rapid increase in tourist footfall has manifested various issues in Nainital. The worst thing is that all the tourism-related activities are placing too much pressure on the Naini Lake's natural body of water, which is the hill's heart and soul. The city facilities like solid waste system, energy grid, water supply is under threat due to over tourism. According to a primary study done by pioneeredge.in in the month of May on a Sunday, 1515 tourists went to the zoo and 1491 went to the cave garden. Also, on the Nainital-Kaladhungi highway, 996 people visited the wooded waterfall. In addition, 856 people rode the cable car but just 378 people visited the botanical garden which adds up to a staggering 5236 tourists in total in single day.

Analyzing tourist arrivals yearly in Nainital reveals compelling patterns. Over the years, both domestic and foreign tourist numbers have figured varying trends. In the year 2000, Nainital hosted 250,947 Indian tourists and 7,589 foreign visitors. As the years progressed, there was a steady growth in Indian tourists, reaching 924,341 in 2019. On the other hand, foreign tourist numbers demonstrated fluctuation, with a peak of 9,565 in 2019. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 caused a substantial decline. While domestic tourism displayed relatively consistent growth, foreign tourist numbers showed greater volatility. (Table 1)

RITES conducted a research study in 2021 that provided critical insights on the traffic and urban growth dynamics in Nainital. The research focused on Mall Road, a vital region in Nainital. According to RITES research, the volume of motor traffic on Mall Road in 2021 was estimated to be 26,000 cars. Simultaneously, considering the increased tourist arrivals, Mall Road's estimated foot traffic for the same year was 35,360 individuals. The report also highlighted the demand for parking during the peak tourist season in 2021. During this time, it was predicted that the demand for parking space would exceed 1,925 vehicles, highlighting the challenges of managing vehicular traffic in a popular tourist destination like Nainital.

Notably, Nainital faces unique urban development issues due to its ecologically sensitive zones. A significant portion of Nainital Nagar Palika Parishad, spanning 11.73 square kilometres, has been declared as 'Prohibited Areas.' These areas have been labelled unsafe for any construction activities due to their ecological significance and sensitivity. This declaration of 'Prohibited Areas' significantly decreases the amount of land accessible for physical urban growth in the safe category. These findings are compatible with Nainital's Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), which underlines the necessity of balancing urban development and environmental preservation in this picturesque hill region.

With a staggering count of 778 homestays, Nainital finds itself grappling with the consequences of burgeoning local accommodation options. While homestays can provide a personalized and intimate experience for tourists, the rapid increase in their numbers has begun to take a toll on the local community. The influx of tourists seeking these alternative accommodations places heightened pressure on the town's resources, infrastructure, and delicate social fabric. This surge in homestays, coupled with traditional lodging options, contributes to the phenomenon of over-tourism, straining Nainital's ecological balance and challenging the town's ability to sustainably manage the needs of both residents and visitors.

3.2 Nainital and Joshimath

According to Dr Bahadur Singh Kotlia, Professor of Geology at Kumaun University, Nainital and Joshimath are highly susceptible to seismic activity, reactivation of fault lines, and an immense surge in population and development activities. "The foundation of these cities is very poor, making them vulnerable," Kotlia informed *India Today* in his interview. The risk for towns like Nainital has increased due to heavy tourism and major construction. Half of the area of Nainital township is covered with debris generated by landslides.

Dr Shresth Tayal, Senior Fellow at TERI's Centre for Himalayan Ecology, stated in one of the interviews that the natural topography of the Himalayan Belt in regions such as Joshimath is sedimentary in nature, making it softer and weaker than other rocks. "The natural terrain, continuous deforestation on a large scale, rapid and unplanned urbanization, and heavy construction activities are exacerbating the crisis."

Joshimath was constructed on the rubble of a landslide induced by an earthquake and is located in a tremor-prone zone. The soil there has been weakened by the periodic landslides that occur there.

3.3 The tragic case of Joshimath

Joshimath, also known as Jyotirmath, is a town and municipal board in Chamoli District, Uttarakhand, India. It is a gateway to various Himalayan Mountain climbing adventures, hiking paths, and pilgrim centres such as Badrinath, and is located at a height of 6,150 feet (1,875 m). The population surged from 16,709 to 21,700 residents, showcasing a significant growth rate between 2011 and 2021 (Table 2). This upward trend in population underscores the challenges associated with managing urbanization and infrastructure development in the region, necessitating careful planning and sustainable approaches to accommodate the expanding community.

The horrific event in Joshimath has aroused widespread concern about the Himalayas' ability to maintain tourism in the foreseeable future. Cracks began to appear in the buildings and highways of Joshimath, a town in the Indian state of Uttarakhand, in January 2023. Land subsidence, often known as the sinking of the ground through time, is what caused the fissures to appear. According to Pushkar Singh Dhama, chief minister of Uttarakhand state, the subsidence had damaged around 25% of the town's land. Joshimath, with a population of 21700, contains around 4500 structures distributed throughout 2.5 square kilometres (0.96 square miles). More than 800 structures have developed cracks, and the hazardous ones have been demolished.

Prof. Kotlia believes that the reactivation of the Main Central Thrust (MCT2), a geological fault in the Himalayas where the Indian Plate has pushed under the Eurasian Plate, is the primary cause of the abrupt subsidence near Joshimath. According to the professor, the MCT-2 zone has reactivated and is causing ground sinking in Joshimath. However, he claims that no geologist can anticipate when this reactivation will occur. Furthermore, it is thought that the sinking was caused by a combination of factors, the most important of which are over-construction, deforestation, and groundwater extraction. As the dirt continued to sink, a growing number of structures and streets were affected. By February 2023, the situation in Joshimath had

deteriorated to the point where thousands of people had to be evacuated. Joshimath has been declared as a “sinking zone” by the government, which has also ordered that all construction operations in the region be halted.

3.4 Key factors that contributed to the Joshimath tragedy

A complex interplay of elements that cumulatively increase Joshimath’s susceptibility is the root cause of the catastrophe that is currently taking place. Both domestic and international travellers visiting the area have increased noticeably over time. According to the statistics, which spans the years 2000 to 2021, Joshimath saw an increase in the number of tourists from both India and other countries. The significant increase in visitors is a sign of a tourism boom that could put a strain on the area’s ability to respond to catastrophes by placing a tremendous amount of pressure on local infrastructure and resources. Understanding these demographic patterns is essential for determining the burden crises place on the region’s infrastructure and resources.

The cornerstone of the dilemma is the rise in impromptu construction, which is compounded by the quickening of population expansion, the obstruction of natural water flow, and the unrelenting pursuit of hydroelectric power projects. The Himalayan region’s innate propensity for subsidence and landslides is made worse by the existence of recurring streams and worn rocks with poor cohesive qualities. Critical infrastructure projects like the Tapovan-Vishnugad hydro project by NTPC, the Char Dham road project, and the Helang bypass carried out by the Border Road Organisation (BRO) continue despite numerous expert warnings, aggravating the region’s sensitivity.

The situation has become even worse due to the devastating effects of earlier disasters like the glacier lake burst in 2021 and the 2013 floods. The increased frequency of heavy rainfall events has altered streambeds, causing slope instability to increase. The flood of current hydropower and road projects is threatening the delicate ecosystem of Joshimath. Resources in the town are being strained by the unrelenting construction of unplanned projects like hotels and multi-story buildings, and the problems are made worse by shoddy drainage systems. Families were forced to evacuate due to the convergence of these aggravating elements, which also reduced tourism activity - previously a key economic engine.

A report in the *New Indian Express* stated that the National Institute of Hydrology team discovered that Joshimath’s land submergence “gradually increased on the night of January 2 2023. Scientists and administrative personnel are still baffled by the murky water leaking from the steep terrain behind the JP company’s residential

complex. Up until January 27th, the earth had been leaking roughly 2,21,40 thousand litres of water. Like a sizable lake's worth of water, this quantity.

3.5 Problem occurred due to over-tourism in Nainital

The charm of Nainital, symbolized by serene lakes and stunning panoramas, has drawn a sizable number of tourists. But after every rainfall, the unsettling sight of trash floating on the lake's surface detracts from the picturesque views. Garbage is transported along drainage systems that join to the lake, resulting in pollution of the body of water. This expanding environmental issue seriously endangers the aquatic ecosystem in addition to degrading the scenic surroundings. (Figure 4)

The dangers of over-tourism have jeopardized Nainital's charm as we can see in the (Table 1), the number of tourists has been increasing; the only decrease we can see is in years from 2008-10; and 2020 & 2021, due to global recession and COVID-19 respectively. As more visitors have arrived, the municipality has struggled to contain the pollution that comes with them.

The renowned lake in Nainital needs better upkeep. It is severely contaminated because silt and debris removal dredging is so infrequent. Additionally, because there aren't many facilities to properly dispose of dredging debris, trash keeps returning to the ocean, perpetuating the polluting cycle. Consequences of an unplanned tourism boom further exacerbate the problem. Without proper planning, the tourism industry's quick rise has resulted in encroachments on ecologically sensitive areas, endangering the already precarious balance of the area.

The natural environment has suffered significantly, marked by issues like water pollution, deforestation, and soil erosion due to excessive tourist activities. Due to the traffic congestion, local mobility has been impeded, making municipal transportation more difficult. Hastily constructed hotels that are being falsely encouraged by the increase in tourists are ruining the area's natural attractiveness. The current infrastructure is unable to handle the rise in tourists, which causes problems including squalor, inadequate trash removal, and a lack of parking spots. Unfortunately, as tourism has grown, so has criminal activity, which has profited from the inflow of tourists. The cultural legacy of Nainital has been impacted by the ongoing replacement of local businesses by establishments catering to tourists' tastes.

4.0 Impacts of Over-tourism on Nainital

The repercussions of excessive tourism in this picturesque hill station encompass environmental degradation (Figure 5), exemplified by pollution of the once-pristine lake,

deforestation, and deteriorating air quality. Air pollution and mobility limits are a result of traffic congestion brought on by the increase in tourists. Nainital has experienced water shortages as a result of the strain placed on the city's water resources, especially during the busiest travel times. The environment has been impacted by inadequate trash handling facilities. The increase in tourists has also been linked to an increase in crime, particularly theft and drug-related charges. The Govt. of Uttarakhand's Master Plan encourages infrastructure development, eco-friendly tourism promotion, and the enforcement of environmental protection and crime reduction regulations in order to address these issues. Addressing these concerns is crucial for the preservation of Nainital's natural beauty and the long-term viability of the local tourism industry.

Additionally, the situation at Nainital serves as a metaphor for the broader problem of over-tourism. A vivid reminder is the restriction on visitors to Tiffin Top (Figure 6), a popular location with expansive vistas of Himalayan peaks. This choice was necessary due to the development of cracks, which is why the Nainital district magistrate first requested a high-level expert assessment before reevaluating the tourist ban. Due to Nainital's landslide vulnerability (Figure 7), which was exacerbated by an increase in population from 7589 in 1881 to over 55000 in the present, a large number of structures, including 150 hotels and resorts, have been built, most of which are situated on unstable slopes. The effects of unrestricted tourism are made clear by this along with the earlier closure of the Mallital Band Stand due to cracks.

Furthermore, one of the most important problems is the state of the aquatic ecology in Nainital. The number of fish species in the region has decreased with time, from 26 in 1987 to 18 in 2018. This decline raises concerns about the health of the aquatic environment and the need for conservation activities. Another, significant challenge confronting Nainital is waste management. The city creates 100 tonnes of garbage per day. Effective waste management is becoming increasingly difficult, particularly in a sensitive natural context like Nainital. The town's traffic density has more than doubled, from 20,000 vehicles in 2006 to 40,000 vehicles in 2018. This increase in automotive traffic has an impact on the environment as well as issues for urban planning and infrastructure development.

Air pollution has increased by 20% since 2006. Water scarcity has also become a significant concern in Nainital. Waste management efforts have been conducted, with 75 tonnes being recycled and 25 tonnes being disposed of in landfills.

Concerns are growing as a result of the lower Mall-Road in Nainital sinking significantly, covering about 25 meters with the road sinking by up to 10 centimeters. This incident eloquently illustrates the damage the constant flood of tourists is doing on the town's infrastructure. The necessity for prudent and sustainable tourism management

practices is made more urgent by the degradation of the region's structural integrity. This confluence of related incidents highlights the pressing need to achieve a balance between tourism-driven economic growth and the preservation of Nainital's ecological and structural health, to prevent it is similarity like the tragic case of Joshimath.

5.0 Sustainable Tourism Strategies Implemented in Nainital, Uttarakhand

Sustainable tourism focuses on limiting negative impacts on the environment, culture, and society while increasing the advantages for the destination and its communities. The following sustainable tourism ideas and activities are crucial to addressing over-tourism in Nainital:

Visitor management plans: Outside automobiles were barred admission and a new taxi stand was established outside the town to relieve the traffic congestion inside the town. In order to better restrict the number of tourists that come to the area during the busiest seasons of the year, the local authorities have established these measures. This includes encouraging people to go to other areas and participate in diverse activities, encouraging visitors to remain for longer periods of time, and placing daily admittance limitations for popular attractions.

Waste management and infrastructure upgradation: The horse stand has been allowed to be established near the lake and trotting around the lake is permissible, the report claims that horse poo in abundance enters and reaches the lake. The tourists who enjoy boating around the lake toss felt-over food and polythene bags in the lake. Ban on plastic in all throughout Uttarakhand has also played a tremendous impact in decreasing plastic waste. Nainital has modernized its waste management systems in order to sustainably handle the increased amount of garbage generated by tourists and has also enhanced its waste management systems. In addition, investments have been made in the upgrading of roads, public facilities, and other transit choices in order to accommodate the rising number of tourists in a manner that is environmentally responsible.

Community engagement initiatives: A movement named the "MISSION BUTTERFLY" was established appealing for action from the local community of Nainital. It is an integrated solid waste management program (ISWM) promoting the whole-of-life (cradle to grave) management of solid material wastes with strategies for recycling and minimisation and is owned and managed by the community notionally divided into clusters (Swacchtha Samiti) of about one thousand persons (say 250 families). Initiatives for Community Engagement Local communities take an active role in the planning and development of tourism. In order for them to directly gain from

tourism, communities have been encouraged to engage in homestay programmes, cultural and artistic tourism, and environmentally friendly practises.

Educational programs: The tourists were searched to see whether they were carrying any plastic or polythene with them and requested to part with it before entering the town. It is intended that slowly they would become responsible tourists and while visiting the area again, they would not bring any plastic with them. The local Nainital communities have created awareness initiatives targeting both visitors and residents, focussing on sustainable practises, eco-tourism, and the safeguarding of natural and cultural heritage. These activities attempt to educate people about the importance of maintaining natural and cultural assets.

Infrastructure development and upgradation: Working on the Nainital City Development Plan created by the government of Uttarakhand for sustainable and efficient development of the city. Investing in sustainable infrastructure, waste management systems, and transportation choices helps relieve the burden on existing resources and increases the entire visitor experience.

6.0 Best Practices and Recommendations for Sustainable Tourism Strategies

To alleviate the strain on Nainital’s most-visited areas, it is crucial to disperse tourists geographically. Developing alternative tourist circuits, emphasizing ecotourism, nature exploration, and rural experiences, can divert visitors away from overcrowded areas. Furthermore, offering guided tours through these alternative circuits can encourage tourists to explore lesser-visited places, thereby reducing congestion in popular spots. Tour packages and itineraries should be designed in such a way that they promote a diversity of experiences in order to encourage visitors to explore various aspects of the location. Collaborate with the neighborhood communities in order to provide real cultural experiences that highlight the local traditions, rituals, and practices.

Implementing timed access to prime locations to prevent overcrowding during peak hours is a practical approach. For instance, restricting automobile traffic in the evenings can ease traffic. Additionally, considering prohibiting certain activities that contribute to overpopulation, such as horse rides around the lake, can be an effective measure. Using visual cues, such as ‘Houseful’ signs, to inform visitors about areas that are at capacity can encourage them to explore less crowded regions or adjust their plans accordingly.

Establishing parking facilities in nearby towns like Haldwani or Kathgodam and providing affordable transportation options, such as taxis or buses, to and from Nainital can significantly alleviate traffic within the town. Collaborating with hotels, guest

houses, and homestays to inform guests about the parking situation in Nainital is also crucial. Publicizing the parking challenges through various media channels can help tourists plan their trips accordingly. Furthermore, promoting rail travel and increasing train services connecting Nainital to major cities like Agra, Lucknow, and Delhi can reduce the number of private vehicles entering the town.

Pricing strategies can be leveraged to manage the quality and quantity of visitors. Thoughtful adjustments in pricing can be used to regulate visitor numbers. While increasing the cost of visiting Nainital may deter some tourists, it can also help maintain a certain level of exclusivity. Encouraging hotels and businesses to focus on quality rather than catering solely to budget travelers can help preserve Nainital's unique appeal and attract a more discerning clientele.

Regular assessments of carrying capacity are crucial for sustainable management. Evaluating the capacities of significant attractions, accommodations, transportation networks, waste management systems, and water resources is necessary to make informed decisions on visitor limits. Using the data obtained from assessments to set visitor quotas for popular attractions, implement entrance permits, or establish reservation systems during peak seasons can help maintain a balanced and sustainable tourism ecosystem in Nainital.

To guarantee that sustainable practices are followed, it is necessary to strictly enforce and monitor legislation pertaining to the management of waste, construction, and environmental protection. In the case that sustainability principles or codes of behavior are broken, fines and other consequences should be imposed. To guarantee that rules are being effectively enforced, it is important to work together with local authorities and law enforcement.

In order to create knowledge about responsible tourism practices and the vulnerability of the destination, educational initiatives should be launched addressing visitors, local communities, and stakeholders in the tourism sector. Give people knowledge on how to behave in a more sustainable way, how to reduce waste, how to show respect for local traditions, and how to preserve natural resources. Visitors may be informed about sustainable tourism best practices via the use of informative signs, printed materials, and digital mediums.

Businesses and communities who embrace and put into practice sustainable tourism practices should be recognized and rewarded, and this may be done via certification programmes or eco-labels. Establish incentive programmes, grants, or financing options for sustainable tourism projects, such as environmentally friendly accommodations, waste management efforts, and community-based tourist businesses.

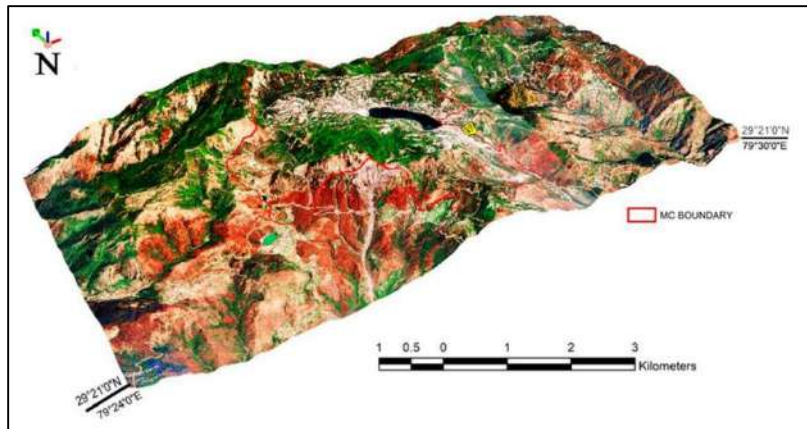
6.1 The road ahead

As Nainital strives to strike a balance between preserving its natural and cultural heritage and accommodating the growing demand for tourism, one pressing question arises: Can Nainital, and destinations like it, find a sustainable path forward those benefits both the local community and the environment while offering an enriching experience for tourists? The answer to this question will shape the future of Nainital and the broader tourism industry, ultimately determining whether these destinations can thrive without compromising their essence and longevity.

7.0 Key Lessons Learned from the Case Study

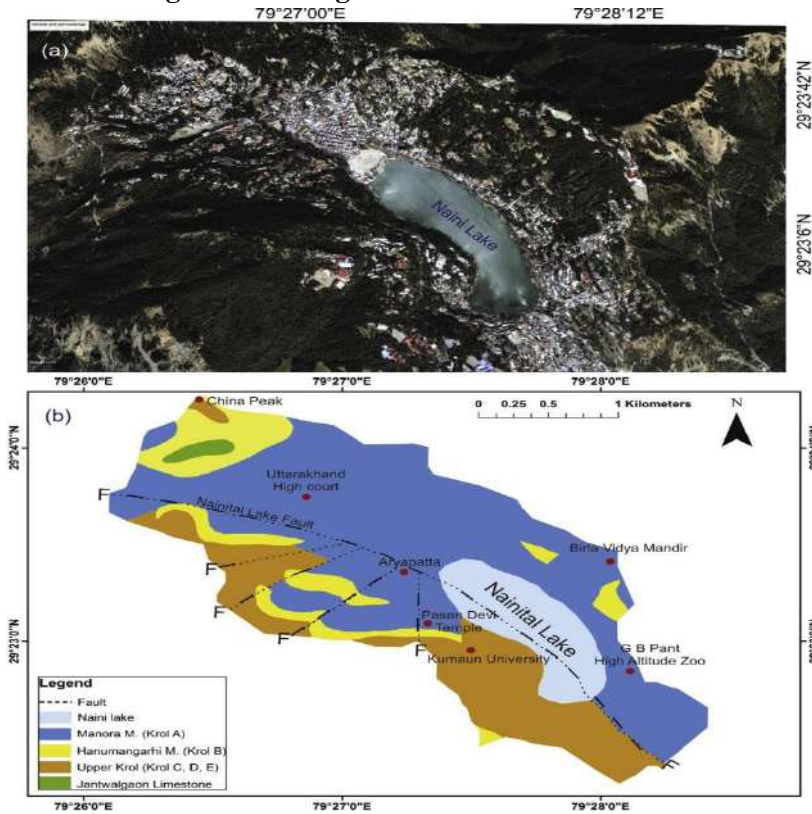
- **Importance of carrying capacity assessments:** Carrying capacity studies are very necessary for comprehending the boundaries of a location and establishing the appropriate degree of sustainable tourism. They give insights that are driven by data, which assist in influencing decision-making and contribute to the prevention of over-tourism.
- **Visitor management for seasonal variation:** Implementing visitor management strategies that promote travel during off-peak seasons and spread tourist flow may assist in alleviating congestion during peak periods and distribute economic advantages more equally throughout the year. These plans can also help redistribute economic benefits more widely throughout the year.
- **Community engagement and empowerment:** Residents are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility when their communities are involved in the development of tourism and when economic possibilities are made available via programmes that promote sustainable tourism. Communities that are actively involved are more likely to support and engage in tourist practices that are environmentally responsible.
- **Educational awareness campaigns:** There is a great need for awareness efforts that encourage responsible tourism behavior, and these campaigns should target both visitors and locals. Visitors might be encouraged to behave more thoughtfully by providing them with information about the destination's vulnerability and the significance of sustainable practices.
- **Balancing tourism promotion and management:** Although boosting tourism is necessary for economic expansion, it should be done in conjunction with efficient management measures to prevent the destination from being overrun with an excessive number of visitors.

Figure 1: Bird Eye View of Nainital



Source: ResearchGate

Figure 2: Geological Formations of Nainital



Source: sciencedirect

Figure 3: Key Tourism Attractions at Nainital

- **Naini Lake:** Naini Lake is the focal point of Nainital and the city’s most popular attraction. It is a freshwater lagoon in the shape of an apple, surrounded on three sides by hills. Visitors can enjoy boat excursions and appreciate the lake and its reflections for their scenic beauty.
- **Naina Devi Temple:** The Naina Devi Temple, dedicated to the goddess Naina Devi, has religious significance for both locals and visitors. It is located at the northern extremity of Naini Lake and provides sweeping views of the city.
- **Eco Cave Gardens:** This popular tourist attraction features a series of interconnected caverns with educational displays about the region’s ecosystem and fauna.
- **Tiffin Top (Dorothy’s Seat):** Located at a higher altitude, Tiffin Top offers panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and the city of Nainital. This location is popular for picnics and brief hikes.
- **Snow View Point:** Snow View Point is accessible via cable car or hiking and offers breathtaking views of the Himalayan peaks, including Nanda Devi and Trisul.
- **Mall Road:** Mall Road is a bustling thoroughfare bordered with restaurants, stores, and lodgings. It is an ideal location for purchasing, strolling, and sampling regional delicacies.
- **Governor’s House (Raj Bhavan):** his magnificent edifice from the colonial era is the official residence of the Governor of Uttarakhand. It features stunning architecture and well-kept gardens. The gardens are open to visitors during specified hours.
- **Pangot and Kilbury Bird Sanctuary:** These nearby bird sanctuaries are a paradise for birdwatchers, as they offer the chance to observe an abundance of avian species in their natural environment.
- **Bhimtal and Sattal:** These neighboring lakes, located a short distance from Nainital, offer a tranquil environment for relaxation and boating and are calmer alternatives.
- **Hiking and Trekking:** Nainital is an excellent base for a number of mountaineering and trekking pathways, including the Nainital-China Peak trek and the Nainital-Betalghat trek.

Source: Uttarakhand tourism official website

Table 1: Number of Tourist Visited Nainital and Joshimath

	Nainital		Joshimath (Govindghat, Ghanghariya)	
	India (Nainital)	Foreigner (Nainital)	India (Joshimath)	Foreigner (Joshimath)
Year 2000	250947	7589	406228	1143
Year 2001	356941	5793	214581	1060
Year 2002	412440	4224	337303	515
Year 2003	420016	4537	672970	684
Year 2004	478133	6277	452874	922
Year 2005	510959	6789	934242	1410
Year 2006	554527	7533	1047687	1214
Year 2007	580079	9437	1201174	832
Year 2008	80105	448	1279659	1411
Year 2009	88506	573	1350280	2219
Year 2010	83211	398	1609216	2076
Year 2011	834405	9410	1626275	2172
Year 2012	898077	8254	1444900	1271
Year 2013	737130	7088	418882	559
Year 2014	750501	7622	173013	426
Year 2015	808903	6902	220301	191
Year 2016	866164	7231	186191	155
Year 2017	910323	8329	236798	346
Year 2018	924316	9341	435537	516
Year 2019	924341	9565	488638	882
Year 2020	212981	2768	193760	69
Year 2021	167369	12	325626	633

Source: Census Data 2011-2021.

Table 2: Estimated Population of Nainital and Joshimath

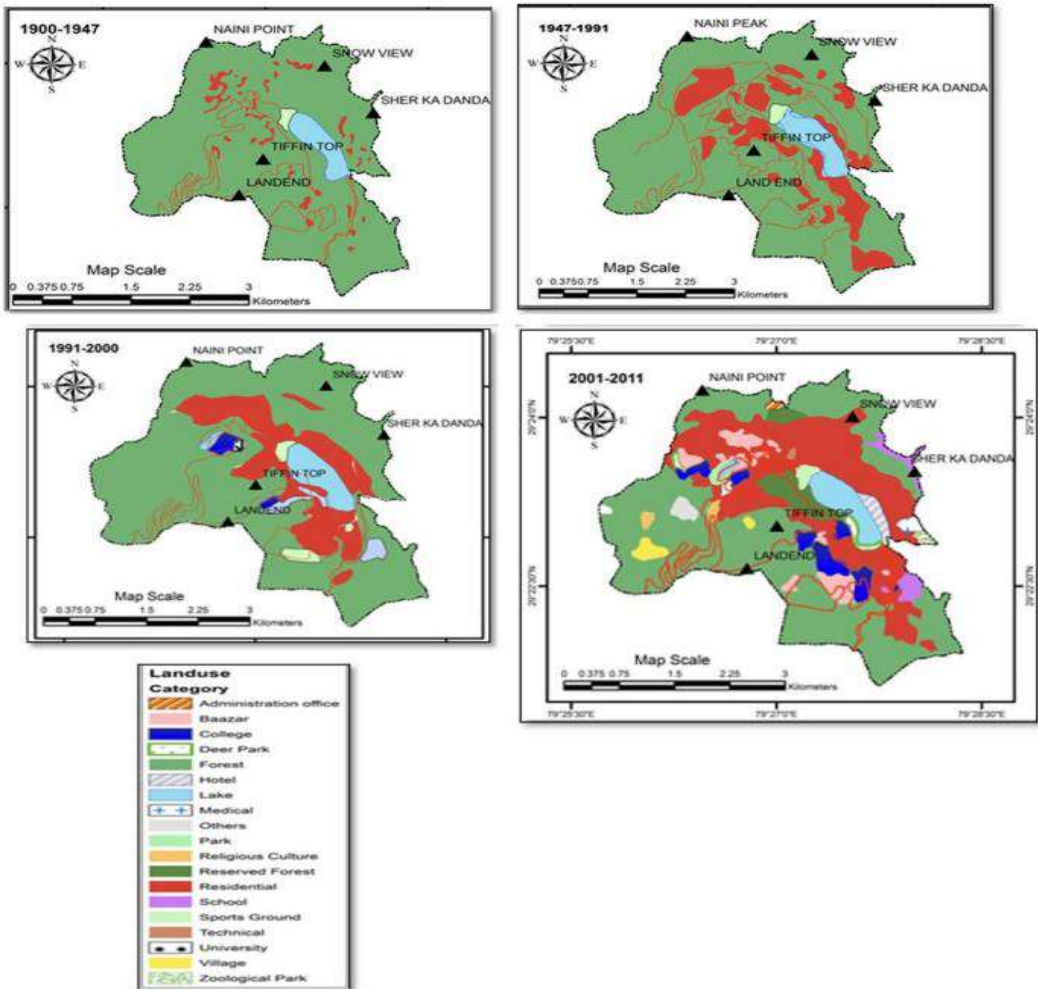
Estimated Population		
Year	Nainital	Joshimath City
2011	41377	16709
2021	53000	21700
2022	54000	22300
2023	55000	22900
2024	56000	23500
2025	57000	24200
2026	58000	24900
2027	59000	25600
2028	60000	26300
2029	61000	27000
2030	62000	27800
2031	63000	28600

Source: Census Data

Figure 4: Cleaning of Affected Water Bodies

Source: Hindustan Times

Figure 5: Environmental Degradation of Nainital



Source: ResearchGate

References

Ahmed, R. (2018, February 26). Tourism potential and constraints: An analysis of tourist spatial attributes in Pakistan. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3129935

Albalade, D., & Bel, G. (2008). Tourism and urban transport: Holding demand pressure under supply constraints. *Social Science Research Network*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1828644>

Butler, R. (1999). Sustainable tourism: A state-of-the-art review. *Tourism Geographies*, 1(1), 7–25. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616689908721291>

Dodds, R. (2019). The phenomena of overtourism: A review. Retrieved from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-phenomena-of-overtourism%3A-a-review-Dodds-Butler/c677c62ce414a8e6196f70ea07e9ad76b8223d90>

Duignan, M. (2018). ‘Overtourism’? – understanding and managing urban tourism growth beyond perceptions, executive summary. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420070>

Fincham, D. (2009). The fundamental importance of archaeological context. *Social Science Research Network*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1446957>

Framba, A. (2020, May 22). Overtourism: Causes, consequences and solutions. *Ecobnb*. Retrieved from <https://ecobnb.com/blog/2020/02/overtourism-causes-consequences-solutions/>

Ivanov, S. H. (2013, October 3). Mass Ecotourism vs. Eco Mass Tourism. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2335365

Mehrotra, M. A. (2019). Poverty reduction through pro-poor tourism: A case study of handicraft sector of Varanasi. *Social Science Research Network*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3387889>

Mirsanjari, M. M. (2012, May 1). Importance of environmental ecotourism planning for sustainable development. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2049452

Ohridska-Olson, R. V. (2010, September 24). Creative tourism business model and its application in Bulgaria. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1690425

Pande, P. (2013). Sustainable tourism – A case study of Nainital, Uttarakhand. *Green Clean Guide*. Retrieved from <https://greencleanguide.com/sustainable-tourism-a-case-study-of-nainitaluttarakhand/#:~:text=Outside%20vehicles%20were%20refused%20entry,he%20will%20keep%20it%20clean.>

Ramaswamy, S., & Kumar, G. S. (2010). Tourism and environment: Pave the way for sustainable eco-tourism. *Social Science Research Network*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1565366>

Vanamali, K. V. (2022, July 19). Why over-tourism may spell trouble for tourist spots? Retrieved from https://www.business-standard.com/podcast/current-affairs/why-over-tourism-may-spell-trouble-for-tourist-spots-122071900108_1.html

Verma, L. (2021, July 13). After the photos, the numbers: over 32,000 in Nainital for weekend, 20,000 in Mussoorie. *The Indian Express*. Retrieved from <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/covid-protocol-after-the-photos-the-numbers-over-32000-in-nainital-for-weekend-20000-in-mussoorie-7401679/>

Ting, H., Yusrini, L. & Sita, S. E. D. (2022). Responsible travel and ethical tourism: Trends and issues. *Journal of Responsible Tourism Management*, 3(1), 1–14. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.47263/jrtm.03-01-01>

Xu, S., & Hu, Y. (2021, June 15). How do residents respond to negative environmental impacts from tourism? The role of community participation in empowering residents' environmentally responsible behavior. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 23(6), 1099–1111. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2471>

Bertocchi, D., Camatti, N., Giove, S., & van der Borg, J. (2020, January 9). Venice and Overtourism: Simulating sustainable development scenarios through a tourism carrying capacity model. *Sustainability*, 12(2), 512. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12020512>

Wendt, M., Sæþórsdóttir, A. D., & Waage, E. R. H. (2022, September 7). A break from Overtourism: Domestic tourists reclaiming nature during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Tourism and Hospitality*, 3(3), 788–802. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/tourhosp3030048>

Yoon, H. (2020, May 31). Exploring the phenomenon of overtourism and policy responses in Bukchon Hanok village. *Journal of Tourism and Leisure Research*, 32(5), 53–67. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.31336/jtlr.2020.5.32.5.53>

Jiang, J., Zhang, J., Zhang, H., & Yan, B. (2023, August 18). Natural soundscapes and tourist loyalty to nature-based tourism destinations: the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 35(2), 218–230.

Koens, K., Postma, A., & Papp, B. (2018). Is overtourism overused? Understanding the impact of tourism in a city context. *Sustainability*, 10, 4384.

P. (2008, November 23). Growth rate of tourism industry to fall by 10% in FY'09: ASSOCHAM. *The Times of India*.

Singh, K. (2023, January 8). Joshimath sinking: 10 crore people visit Uttarakhand a year, how much can it take, say experts. *The Times of India*. Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/10-crore-people-visit-uttarakhand-a-year-how-much-can-it-take-say-experts/articleshow/96823611.cms>

Khan, M. M. (1997, October). Tourism development and dependency theory: mass tourism vs. ecotourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(4), 988–991. Retrieved from [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0160-7383\(97\)00033-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0160-7383(97)00033-9)

Ren, C. (2021, January 28). (Staying with) the trouble with tourism and travel theory? *Tourist Studies*, 21(1), 133–140. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468797621989216>

DOLANA, S. (2018, June 18). Ecotourism planning in a wetland of international importance and sustainable territorial development. *Journal of Urban and Landscape Planning*, 3, 77–86. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.54508/julp.03.08>

Ivanov, S., & Dimitrova, M. G. (2010). Tourism management and planning in Bulgaria. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1599611>

Dodds, R., & Butler, R. (2019, December 9). The phenomena of overtourism: A review. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 5(4), 519–528. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijtc-06-2019-0090>

Razzaq, A., Khalida, M., & Kausar, A. (2021, October 21). Socio-agricultural correlation and regionalization: A case of the districts of Pakistan. *Journal of Basic & Applied Sciences*, 10, 7–19. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.6000/1927-5129.2014.10.02>

UNWTO world tourism barometer and statistical annex, October 2018. (2018, October 11). *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*, 16(4), 1–40. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.18111/wtobarometereng.2018.16.4.1>

Guliyev, S., & Nuriyeva, K. (2017). Understanding the opportunities of adventure tourism. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2972594>

Joshimath: What's the future of India's sinking Himalayan town? (2023, January 24). BBC News. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-64369752>

Not just Joshimath! Nainital and two other Uttarakhand towns are at risk of sinking, warns geologist. (2023, January 9). *Business Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/story/not-just-joshimath-nainital-and-two-other-uttarakhand-towns-are-at-risk-of-sinking-warns-geologist-359495-2023-01-09>

Towns List India - Population Census 2011. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.census2011.co.in/towns.php>

P. (2023, May 22). Tourist footfall in Nainital rises with summer heat - Pioneer Edge | Uttarakhand News in English | Dehradun. Pioneer Edge | Uttarakhand News Today | Dehradun News Today|. Retrieved from <https://www.pioneeredge.in/tourist-footfall-in-nainital-rises-with-summer-heat/#:~:text=The%20hill%20station%20is%20crowded,spot%20along%20with%20the%20zoo>

Bera, B., Saha, S., & Bhattacharjee, S. (2023, October). Sinking and sleeping of Himalayan city Joshimath. *Quaternary Science Advances*, 12, 100100. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.qsa.2023.100100>

R., Goswami, D., Arya, D., Arya, G., Bisht, M., Joshi, A., & Kaushal, B. (2021, December 30). Diversity and abundance of insects in cropland of Himalayan Tarai region of Ramnagar, Uttarakhand. *International Journal of Agricultural and Applied Sciences*, 2(2), 151. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.52804/ijaas2021.2223>

SATI, V. P. (2020, December 30). The nature of tourism and tourists/pilgrims' inflow in Uttarakhand Himalaya. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Tourism*, 5(2), 115–124. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.31822/jomat.731386>

Bhattacharyya, P., DasGupta, S., Das, S. (2020). Landslide susceptibility analysis: A case study of Nainital Municipal area. Retrieved from Research Square <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-106891/v1>

CASE STUDY 16

Panauti Community Homestay

Sadrish Marasini

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Community homestay Network (CHN) started its operation back in 2012. It was initiated by a woman with just one house in Panauti, Nepal. Within a year with the flow of tourist arrival ten more houses were added and more homestay communities were established in other parts of Nepal as well; To organize the homestay communities all over Nepal, further more staffs were hired anchored a fully functional website was built for digitalization of homestay network and international reach. Being distinct organization establishing itself as social entrepreneurship, it received a grant from Booking Booster (2017), CHN and through other partnerships and investments community homestay was able to spread its reach throughout 36 other communities all over Nepal.

The Homestay Community that will be focused on this paper however is Panauti Community Homestay which operates under Community Homestay Network (CHN). In an around 30 kilometers from the capital Kathmandu, Panauti lies in Kavrepalanchok District; The major source of income for the inhabitants of this place is tourism and communal homestay is the perfect operating business for this place. Homestay attempts to maintain originality and authenticity while attracting tourists as they seek to experience the rural lifestyle. The homestay however faces problems regarding operations and developments. And such problems are identified in this paper while suggesting a few possibilities and suggestions for a more successful outcome.

1.2 Vision and Mission

The Panauti Community Homestay program, run by the prestigious Royal Mountain Travels' 'Community Homestay Network', is a rare initiative that blends cultural preservation, sustainable tourism, and community empowerment. It was founded by Mr. Shiva Dhakal.

The community homestay's mission is to help tourists experience Nepal as if they're the natives to this soil, to experience Nepal not only with the senses but also with emotions. While living in the homestays of Panauti alongside fellow Nepalese brothers and sisters the visitor gets to experience affection and culture with authenticity while

spending the bare minimum. The community homestay of Panauti hopes to expand its resources within a few years and welcome more and more tourists and visitors. The homestays of Panauti are run by women and with additional resources and development, the homestay hopes to provide employment and income to more local women of Panauti. Various cultural programs alongside local instrumental music, cultural dresses are performed which helps in acculturation of guests. Many long-lost traditions are getting revived because of capitalization as locals get economic incentive to preserve and promote local food, music, dances and dresses.

1.3 Products and services

The homestay consists of 17 different houses from 17 different families of Panauti. The guest is free to choose the family they want to reside with. The guest is provided with their own bedrooms with a private bathroom with hot water (while most of them have western style toilets a few have eastern style toilet). As the houses are surrounded by rice fields and hills, the guests can enjoy nature to the fullest. Panauti is a place of religious significance as well, with temples around the guests can visit the temples and observe the worships and festive activities with the host families. The guests also can pick up their hiking boots as the hills in panauti lead to paradise. And for energy before the hike and after a tiring hike day the guest get to enjoy the local cuisine made with the labor of love by the Aamas(mothers) and Didis(sisters).

Cultural programs are core part of attraction. Local dances, music, dresses and food provide authentic Nepalese experience. Guests are taught to cook Nepalese cuisine, identify cooking method along with various spices, visit the fields that yield food and take part in plantings

1.4 Target market

Panauti Community homestay operates under the umbrella of ‘Community Homestay Network’ which targets tourists who are looking for authentic Nepalese experience. Panauti, Kavre lies close to Kathmandu valley yet has preserved its authentic allure and it hopes to attract tourists from all over the globe through digital sources and host tourists in Nepal just for the homestay experience.

Those who want to experience culture of Nepal get gateway through food, music, dances and dresses. It’s safe to say target group of Panauti Community Homestay is cultural tourist alongside hikers who want to enjoy short hikes near Kathmandu valley. (Community homestay network, n.d.)

Figure 1: View of Panauti



1.5 Organization and management

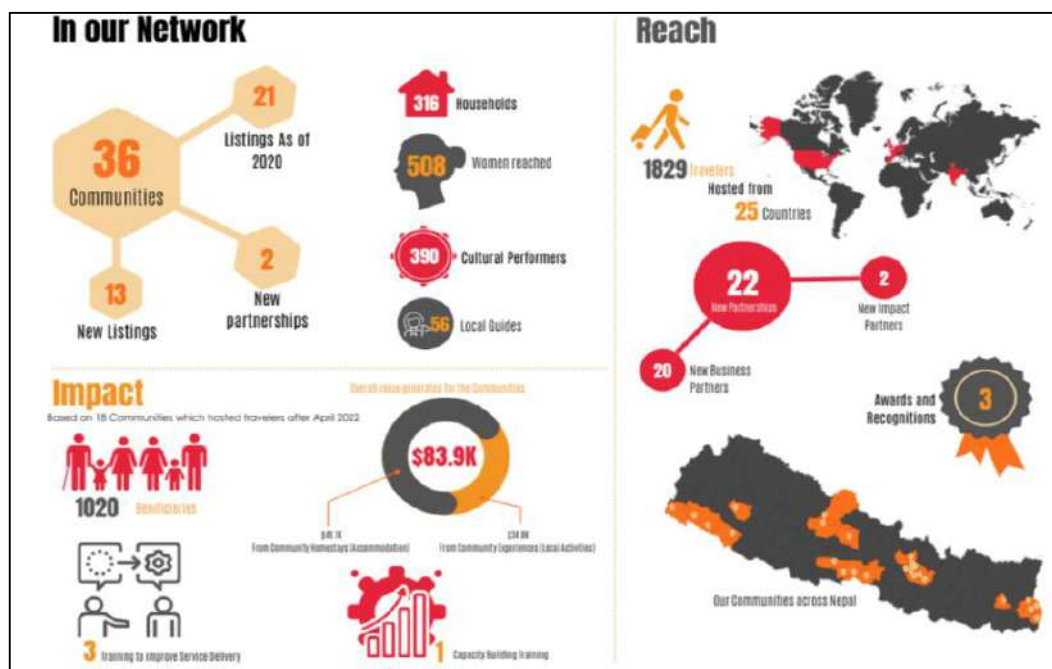
The homestay in Panauti is run by the people of that very household, there are about 17 households that run the homestay of Panauti. The guests can however book the residence home through community homestay website. The website is run by Community Homestay Network P. Ltd; the startup company manages all the homestays in Nepal.

As of 2023 the startup has linked 36 community homestays across Nepal. The startup consists of 12 members who each have their own roles and responsibilities. Each community homestay has Chief Operating Officer [COO] who acts as mediator between homestays and 'Community Homestay Network'. The company is situated in Kathmandu and they have the executive role and they are responsible for the management of the homestays. (<https://www.communityhomestay.com/impact>, n.d.)

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

The total income generated by each household in the homestay is divided into 80/20%; 80% of the income going to the owner of the household and 20% to the community homestay network. 20% of the 80% received by the household goes to Community Development Fund.

Figure 2: Impact Roadmap



Source: <https://www.communityhomestay.com/impact>

The 20% received by CHN goes into marketing, promotion, product development and other managements. The fund received by community development fund goes into the amendment and upgrading of the facilities of the homestay. (<https://www.communityhomestay.com/impact>, n.d.)

The Community Homestay Network works under parent company 'Royal Mountain Travels' which funded earliest phases of establishment of Panauti Community Homestay. Further Grants were available when CHN won Booking Booster Grant on 2018. Such Grants and funds are utilized in upgrading Homestays.

1.7 Other information

The homestay of Panauti is run fully by women and a survey done showed that the confidence level in all the women had risen and they felt empowered, had control over family decisions, gained respect from the society and felt the standard of living had increased. Many traditions on the verge of collapse have been rescued as locals get economic incentive to preserve them. 'Dhime' a musical instrument essential to Newari tradition was brought back to life. Locals and youngsters have relearned their traditions. "when we thought to welcome guests using local music, we searched for dhime musicians yet only found 3-4 in whole of Kavre, Panauti. When we used them in welcome ceremony, guests liked it a lot and it became a core part in their stay. Ever since we have started dhime lessons to locals, many have learned, even few youngsters regularly take classes"- interviewee 4th.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

"Average length of stay for tourists is 2 days, since there are not many activities that can entertain them for longer. Once we tried 4-day accommodation stay and it would be safe to say it was a failure. Short hikes, local food and plantation can provide only 2 days' worth of guests stay." – interviewee 3rd "Average Income of single Household in peak season is NPR 50,000" -interviewee 4th "Guests sometimes have specific requirements such as attached bathrooms, western style toilets, spacious rooms. Some homestay can provide such requirements while others cannot. Sometimes homestays are unable to receive guests even if it's their turn"- interviewee 4th.

The primary problem in this homestay industry in Panauti to be specific falls under the category of business scalability and sustainability. Upon interviewing the hosts of the homestay houses it was found that there was faultiness in business model. The maximum earning of a single household in a peak season was fifty-thousand rupees from which 20% was allocated for CHN and from the 80% the household received 20% went to community development fund. With that sort of income and gross profit it was certainly not enough to sustain the household and the 20% that went to community development fund was minute and meant nothing for what the development required. CHN as a business is scalable as it can further include homestays all over Nepal but host community and individual household was not scalable under the business model.

Another challenge manifests as operating challenge, Individual homestays gain guest based on order. In the end of a year all homestays should have gained customer. The challenge emerges as guest request a specific requirement. Some may want attached

washroom/toilet, spacious rooms, specific views or face of windows. These guests cannot be accommodated on homestay based on order. Hence, homestay with specific offerings gained more guests. The homestays who couldn't meet such requirements suffered a loss. Furthermore, Homestays have resources that can entertain guests for average of two days. To maximize income tried to expand length of stay of guests but could not. If this problem is sorted out. This venture has potential to be more sustainable.

2.2 The business idea

This business project attempts to innovate individual homestays idea into community homestays. The individual ventures that have been competing with one another, gaining little economic advancement and next to none community involvement and improvement now as they have combined, can provide back to communities where they operate and also gain larger customer base with next to no change or capital involvement in upgrading their individual business.

Furthermore, homestays typically in Nepal are run by mothers and women of household as males generally visit cities and foreign nations in order to generate income. These women now have income source to run their household according to their own style, provide better for children and elevate status in society.

Through combination of individual homestay much has been achieved in realm of possibilities in improvement in economic and cultural overview of localities. The business idea is replicated among other communities across Nepal as it contains little logistic challenges. Furthermore, Nepal boasts an impressive ethnic demography, within a single locality there exists various sub-cultures. A Newar way of life is different from Gurung way of life, different from brahmin- Chhatriya way of life. Languages, style of Homes, food culture, dresses, music is different in its own subtle ways. Through community style homestays, guests have opportunity to experience a little of all of them.

2.3 External analysis

There has been growing trend among Nepalese tourist in general sense of viewing Nepal as affordable cultural tourism attraction. According to survey in 2021 and 2022, a foreign tourist spent an average of \$48 on a daily basis, he said. In 2023, their expenditure is expected to rise to between \$70 and \$75 each.¹

Community homestays are both attractive in terms of affordability and provide cultural exposure. Hence there is enough and growing market to cover using Community Homestays. However with covid-19 pandemic there are concerns in health and safety aspect. “ During covid-19 pandemic flow of tourist was completely halted, it has regained during current times but flow of tourists is half of what was before. It is

understandable that there is concern for health and safety. Tourists may not want to be exposed with local population yet.”²

Panauti Community Homestay has adopted safety measures like washing hands, wearing gloves and masks, using separate cooking utensils for guests which is projected to increase flow of tourists in the future. As of May 2023, tourist flow has increased to more than half of pre-pandemic levels.³

2.4 Internal analysis

The main strengths of Panauti Community Homestay concerning effective implementation are

- Availability of various sub-cultures within a single locality. Gurung, Magar, Newar, Brahmin, Chattriya groups each having their different yet subtle touch in food, dress, style of Homes and conduct in life.
- Panauti Community Homestay is largely run by women. The males of household are either in cities or foreign nations for economic sustenance. Through homestays women have earned a living, provided better for children and gained status in locality.
- Preservation of authentic cultural aspects like dance, music, dresses in verge of extinction.
- Providing economic benefit to whole community as opposed to single business venture.
- Providing business opportunity to youths through supplementary ventures such as: cycle renting business.
- Utilization of Community Fund in improving infrastructure of locality by building electric transmission lines, warm clothes during winter, scholarship to under privileged children.
- Hiking routes near Homestay that provide nature-based experience.
- Panauti Community Homestay engages guest in Plantation, cooking of local foods with introduction to spices, Cultural programs in form of dances, dress ups, music and so on.

As regard to weakness of Panauti Homestay lies in Both Business model and Operation Model.

The industry currently faces the problem in expansion of the homestay services. For expansion of the services there must be funding from various sources. The problem arises as the network hasn't any sufficient profit for development of resources. As mentioned, 20% of total income goes into CHN and 20% of the household earning goes

to development fund but from such fragile earnings there isn't sufficient monetary budget for further investments in the host sector. The expansion of the host sector is necessary, the business model and the networking of the host and the guests have already been developed but the industry faces the problem of drought of guests; The homestay reflect the cultural lifestyle and way of living and the tourists come to experience that very way but due to lack of exposure, due to lack of resources and the capacity of the homestays to host a large number of tourists it faces a problem.

The operation model faces challenge in form of accommodating guest in specific homestay. As a community Homestay model to succeed it needs to accommodate guest in every household according to sequence or order. But guests can have certain needs, they may want to experience specific sub-culture or need spacious rooms, windows facing mountains, western model toilets and so on. The homestay should have taken guest according to order may not have such specific requirements. Hence, it is denied of accommodating guest.

2.5 Activities

The Activities required to lessen limitations of business following activities have been articulated: The Project Requires further grants and funds with proper allocation of resource funds. National and International funding of community homestays rather than CHN (Community Homestay Network), as individual communities has fleshed out problems and they can be solved with more ease.

Funding, if used in expanding spaciousness of homestays and adding resources that assist in lengthening stay of guests can improve scaling of homestay business in Panauti. Fundings can also be used to identify more natural resources near Panauti, figuring new Hike routes and developing more robust cultural programs by providing training sessions as similar to "Dhime"

As Panauti Community Homestay already has access to diversified cultural heritages, skills and practices- songs and dances, there is possibility of opening a 'Rodhi Ghar'(a particular kind of house in a village where the locals gather after a long day of labor to unwind, sing, dance, and celebrate). It will immensely help with improving length of stay of tourist, potentially solving problem of low economic yield of homestays. (Community Homestay network, n.d.)

2.6 Stakeholders

During development of project various stakeholders have been identified.

- Tourists gain much by getting access to cheap accommodation which provides invaluable experience in form of cultural exposure.

- Homestay owners as their participation and service provision directly affects business.
- The local community gains much through arrival of tourist which has chain reaction in the economy of locality.
- Independent tour guides contribute much more to knowledge-sharing and assist figuring out hike routes.
- Tourism promotion bodies such as Nepal Tourism Board which assists in marketing and managing flow of tourist into the country. The income of Homestays correlates with increased flow of tourists.
- Local Public Bodies such as Village development Committee responsible for maintenance of Roadways, Electric lines, water pipelines and so on.
- Investors along with Royal Mountain Travels and Community Homestay Network. They partake in marketing and promotion of destination.
- Musicians and dance performers that direct local festivals. Those with expertise in local arts, local music, local dresses and dances have strong impact on quality of experience felt by guests.

2.7 Target market beneficiaries

The following targets are considered to be impacted by venture

- **Back packer tourists:** Travelers can become fully immersed in regional traditions and customs thanks to the real cultural experiences they provide. By residing with local families, travelers can discover less well-known places with the support of insightful advice and recommendations. Additionally, it presents a chance to improve cultural awareness and linguistic proficiency in the region. Community homestays save money on lodging because they are economical. They encourage interpersonal relationships and bonds, resulting in enduring memories.
- **Cultural tourists:** Community Homestay provides visitors a fully immersed cultural experience by letting them stay with local families and experience their regular rituals and customs. Their comprehension and admiration of the local culture are deepened by this firsthand experience. It involves cultural activities and interactions that enrich the cultural experience, such taking part in customary ceremonies or learning traditional crafts, cooking traditional foods, identifying spices, partaking in plantations. staying with local hosts encourages sincere bonds and interactions that allow for important cultural exchanges and opportunity to learn about locals' traditions and beliefs firsthand. hosts from the locality serve as cultural ambassadors by imparting their knowledge.

- **Nature lovers and hike enthusiasts:** It enables visitors to easily access breathtaking natural settings so they can fully appreciate nature's beauty. Local hosts have in-depth knowledge of the area and may provide helpful advice on hiking paths, fauna, and flora. Specific interests and preferences are catered for in guided tours and customized hiking experiences. Choosing community homestay promotes environmental preservation and sustainable development. These facilities encourage interactions with other outdoor enthusiasts, developing deep conversations and possibly friendship.

2.8 Partners

The venture aims to engage in partnership with local administration to host cultural events in the area. Collaboration of local business for providing resources to guest like food and drinks. Collaboration with tour guides and tourism experts. Further partners such as ICIMOD and planeterra are associated partners with CHN and Panauti community Homestay.

Figure 4: Booking Booster Grant Awarded to CHN



2.9 Finances

As specified above, CHN won Booking Booster Grant (€225k) in 2018 (booking.com, n.d.), Using same grants Meeting Hall of Panauti Community homestay was developed. Funds were also utilized in developing attraction of homestays by providing new bedding, clothes, carpets and coloration of houses. This grant was used across all community Homestays established under CHN. (booking.com, n.d.)

2.10 Human resources

Additional Human resource were needed in form of cultural performers of dance, music during earlier phases. But through providing training session of homestay owners and locals, additional human resource need has been uplifted. There is immense internal contribution of CHN members and Local Tour guides.

2.11 Marketing and communication

Promotion activities are mostly performed online as international guests are mainly targeted. Social media advertisement is the main method of marketing. CHN has won various awards and recognitions such as Booking Booster award (2017), IIPT Awards (2019), PATA Gold award (2020), Selected as one of the winners for UNWTO SDGs Global Startup Competition for SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth (2021). By gaining such recognitions Community Homestay network has been able to attract guest from twenty-five countries as of 2023.

3.0 Impact

3.1 For stakeholders

“Mothers and sisters who had to survive on income of their husbands, their contribution to society was economically worthless, now gain medium of income that is utilized on education of their children”-interviewee 1st “Places which had frequent power cuts now have access to solar energy.

Children’s get quality education. Households have access to warm clothes and blankets in winter all thanks to community homestay tourism”- interviewee 2nd “my mother now has more power and respect in society as never before. It’s possible because she has started earning.”-interviewee 3rd.

Communities have progressed much during operation of Panauti Community Homestay since 2012. They have access to electricity, internet, solar power, healthy education, confidence, preservation of exotic local food, dresses, dances, music and art.

As mentioned, 20% of total income goes into CHN and 20% of the household earning goes to development fund, which is used to buy warm clothes in case of winter, provide scholarship to at least one child per year. Provide water pipes and give access to water to isolated households. The impact community style homestays have on Panauti is impressive. If this ambitious idea has reached till here then it can travel further more.

3.2 For target market

Panauti Community Homestay provides a genuine and distinctive glimpse into the way of living there. They give visitors a daily immersion into regional traditions and customs. Visitors may explore the colorful world of Nepalese cuisine, tasting its unique flavors and discovering the spices that go into making it. These homestays also give guests access to beautiful hiking trails and spectacular views of the surrounding hills covered in lush greenery.

Mesmerizing music and entrancing dances are performed for the guests, and they touch the soul and elevate the mind. They also provide helpful insights into Nepal's cultural philosophy and way of life. Travelers have the chance to support sustainable tourism efforts and make a beneficial impact on the community by choosing to stay in these lodgings.

3.3 For environment

Provide opportunity for 'Responsible tourism', a step further from sustainable tourism. As tourists are not only helping in preservation of currently available value but adding value by providing economic incentive for development for communities itself rather than a singular hotel business. Creating bio-degradable waste as all resources were used from community itself and did not need to be imported.

3.4 For company (CHN)

For community homestay network, working with community homestays have provided opportunity to expand its market base. As of 2023 CHN has expanded its reach among 36 communities across Nepal. It has also managed to expand into previously uncovered targets. This is unprecedented reach in tourism industry in context of Nepal all thanks to its social-entrepreneurship model.

3.5 For the CoE

Center of excellence (CoE) has gained much insight into the nature of tourism business. Through analysis and formatting of all of our cases we have learned valuable

lessons on how to conduct research, contact and approach business for approval. CoE has gained exposure to local Business ethics and structure of Nepal.

As a researcher, I have learned small changes can have big impact. A thought or change present can have big impacts 10 years down the line. But even most ambitious projects do have flaws as no business can have infinite resources and infinite scalability. One needs to find resources and scale business with the help of various stakeholders. A business may not need to be perfect from the inception but continuous improvement and evolvement is needed to sustain in rapidly changing and adapting, dynamic tourism market.

CHN has definitely evolved, learned from its mistakes over the years of its operation. Operators of Panauti Community Homestay have evolved in their ways of viewing and reacting to tourism over the years. Methodology of assisting and accommodating guest has been more polished. This continuous evolvement teaches me about philosophy of life itself. Only those who adapt can sustain and through stability comes growth.

4.0 Conclusion

Diversified Cultural Heritages, skills and practices and cultural way of living, eating, celebrating is present within the single community. This is the unique power on which this business is defined. Its faces challenges in form of business model and operating model and these challenges can be mitigated through implementation of few methods. Grants and funds should be specified for the use of community as they contain fleshed out problems. New resources such as 'Rodhi Ghar' should be implemented for lengthening stay of guests.

The possibility of enhancement, the possibility of change and progression remains intact in the concept of homestay and all it needs is a few hands, hands willing to help them rise. The possibility that it might receive what it needs, the hope in the eyes of the hosts, the people of Panauti remains intact and with those hands willing to contribute to this community of homestay the field of tourism in Nepal will prosper and Nepal will prosper.

4.1 Possibility of replication

Further research is needed in area of potential scalability of business in order to benefit both CHN and Panauti Community Homestay.

Endnotes

1. Republica. (2023). Fresh NTB survey to find average expenditure by foreign tourists. *My Republica*.
2. (S Amatya Personal communication, May 9, 2023).
3. Ibid

CASE STUDY 17

A Case Study on Tourism Even and Research Center

Raj Giri

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Tourism event and research Centre is established as a unique even organizing company that not only manage and hosts meetings, convection, events and exhibitions but also different programs that explores and promote the natural diversities along with its preservation. Tourism Event and Research Centre conducting research, promote and organize pollution free events or at least try to minimize the pollution that is created through fossil fuel. They intend to thrive the tourism business via different dimension with their continuous efforts and research in this sector and ultimately the changing the trend of tourism prospects in Nepal.

Tourism event and research center define any event organizing with the tourism theme is called Tourism Events. If any event, TERC organize with the involvement of tourists and earning foreign currency is called tourism event. Tourism event and resource center is promoting cultural, social and environmentally related events we are organizing. Where peoples are engaging cultural preservation, social awareness and environmentally friendly with tourist's involvement.

1.1 Vision And Mission

Its vision and mission are as follows.

1. Its main aim is to preserve local cuisine, costumes, cultural activities, art, trade and tradition, local language by means of cultural tourism event and promote it to the international arena by preserving its authenticity.
2. The company try to attract the international conference, Meeting, Seminar, expo and exhibition organizer to organize their events in Nepal.
3. Generating huge jobs and capable youth community that they can start their own business in their own local area.
4. Encourage and engage Nepalese youth including college and university students with tourism activities.

1.2 Product/services

1. Signature Events: This company organize only one event that is model for the other even organizer company. We don't repeat same event as commercially. i.e. Cultural Events

2. Regular Events: This company organize regular types of event to sustain financially. i.e. Sports related events.
3. Package Tours: For the sustainability this company organize the outbound and inbound package tour for the Nepalese and foreigners. In this tour package we create the event during tour where package can be interesting.

1.3 Target market

Tourism events and research center offer a wide range of serviceas event organizing, research, cultural exchange programs, bouldering competition, mice tourism. So its target market is tourist all over the world, corporate sector and youths from the college and universities.

1.4 Organization and management

This company is located in Kamaladi, Putalisadak with single man handled company. It has one founder Mr. Manoj Kumar Giri with 5 regular staff and volunteer while need in the event organizing time.

This company created and plan the signature event and organize it as eventually. But regular base events can be organizing regular.

1.5 Cost structure and revenue streams

- Rent: This company pay the office rent monthly basis to its landlord. Office can be rented the vehicle, tent, table and chairs while they organize the event.
- Employee Expenses: Company pay the basic salaries to its employee in monthly basis. Some time they get allowances while event goes in profit. They get training from the company side and company pays the costs of it.
- Utilities: Office pay the utilities bills as overhead costs.
- Marketing Advertising Cost: Company pay the marketing and boosting cost to event promotion.
- Taxes: Company pay the taxes of 13% VAT to the government with income tax.

1.6 Revenue streams

Event Tickets: This company sales the event tickets, and collect revenue for its expenses.

Tour Package: Company sales the tour package for its sustainability.

Training: company provides the training to other agencies and members that earns the revenue for the company.

Sponsorships and donation: Company get sponsorships while it organize the event, sometime it gets donations in the event.

1.7 Other Information

This company design the tourism events that created the job for the new generation. It has very good plan for the new generations to train them in tourism sector. It has plan for training to youth. Tourism event and research center have plan for research in Hashish and Marijuana in Nepal. That recalls the hippy era again in Nepal.

2.0 Innovation and Sustainable Tourism

This company is established to fulfill and find the solutions of the entrepreneur in Nepal. Most of the entrepreneur has not sufficient skill and training for marketing in international market. Nepal Tourism Board has very good efforts for tourism marketing in internationally but it is not sufficient to make over the need of hospitality sector entrepreneur. Many entrepreneurs have capital to establish their company, experience but they don't have proper marketing idea in international expos, seminar, and conference. In such a condition this company have specific idea to design their booth in the expos and exhibition. Before departure they need certain guidelines and orientation. This company provides all the services for them. Good revenue and income is a backbone of the company, so this company gets revenue from the training.

International even organizer they can be attracted in Nepal. Organizing event in Nepal is more efficient and cheapest for them. Organizing an event in any European country and Nepal is big different in terms of cost saving and participation of the program. Nepal has given on arrival visa for most countries, so many participants can be participated in Nepal then Europe, USA, Australia or other developed countries. Organizing an event in Nepal is higher chances to participate many participants from developing and least developed countries. More poor countries people benefitted.

Organizing cultural event in Nepal is better idea to explore and preserve their culture. We promote carbon free events that generates the positivity to the general public. For the sustainability, company has different revenue plan as inbound and outbound tourism activities.

2.1 Business project idea

TERC is organizing local level events in Nepal's domestic ground that is attracting international organizer in this tourist friendly, beautiful and budget destination. Now the event is organizing as in partnerships model with them.

2.2 External analysis

Cultural tourism is growing trend in Nepal. Tourism event research center organize cultural events by collaborating with different local agencies and partners.

2.2.1 Threats

But we have many challenges here as financial crisis, qualified human resources and ideal venue for the varieties of events. And we don't have proper access to travel international event organizer though can contact them via email but most of the international organizer does not interested to reply via email there. For the local level event we are not sure policy and local governmental bodies are confirm to support in the program. In recent days we faced the Covid19, Indian blocked, national financial crisis, local gang's donation demand, administrative hassles and more we are suffered.

2.2.2 Opportunities

We have great opportunities organizing any events in Nepal because of very few program is happening so we have many opportunities in every field, and we don't have similar types of agencies in this field.

When we organize events many other agencies try to follow our strategy and intended establish in event organizing field.

We can organize small level event as less than 500 participants can be gathered for the events in hotel or outdoor venue.

2.3 Internal analysis

Tourism Events and Research Center is grown in its capacity and initiation, which organized one signature event, one regular event and similar works.

2.3.1 Strength

We are experienced in local level events, local resources, financial situation and administrative hassles so we managed to organize at least some events.

2.3.2 Weakness

We don't have qualified human resource, partners to support in our events and financial support. It difficult to convince partners to success the event.

2.3.3 Activities

Initiatives need to implement the new business on sustainable tourism is the company need for the diversification of the company. Company need to identify its

target market and requirement of product and service for the expansion of the company. TERC need to employing new human resource for the expansion of the product and service to its consumer.

2.3.4 Stakeholders

Tourism event and Research center offer a various tourism related event and service to its clients and participants. Stakeholders for the TERC is tourist, hotel, vehicle rental company, local, bodies, government bodies , media, online media, host community ,employees.

Employee: A vital stakeholders for tourism event and research center is its employee who support the company in daily operation. Success of the events depends on their performance. TERC provide supportive workplace environment and also offer at training to its employee when required.

Local bodies: TERC is located in Kathmandu metropolitan city. Metropolitan City permits the events that we organize.

Government bodies: government bodies are those stakeholders which act as a regulatory body for the TERC sometimes TERC conduct its event with collaboration with government bodies like Nepal tourism board.

Vehicle rental company: TERC is an event management and tour organizer company during the periods of event and when operating the tour, it hires a vehicle from the vehicle rental company.

Hotel: hotel is one of the key stakeholder for the TERC when it organizes the tour package accommodation part is conducted by the hotel.

Media: TERC promote its cultural events, signature events via media

Guthi: Guthis are independent community based organization who are responsible to organize the Jatra and Parvas in Kathmandu Valley and across the country. TERC jointly organize the events with them.

2.4 Target market and beneficiaries

Target market and Beneficiaries impacted by the TERC

1. **Cultural tourist:** Tourism event and research center provide cultural events to its costumer by organize cultural tour during the particular time when the cultural event jatra festivals occurred here in Nepal such as Bisket jatra, Gaijatra, Indraajatra etc.
2. **Youth and students:** Tourism event and research center organize tourism related adventure events such as rock climbing competition, open youth wall climbing battle which promote domestic tourism, engage Nepalese youth to tourism activities and make some fun for them.

3. **Event organizer:** Tourism event and research center attracts the international event organizer to organize their event in Nepal where many country's participants can be participated and budget of the event might be cheaper rather than organizing event in highly developed country.

2.5 Partners

Tourism event and research center has strategic alliance to protect and promote Nepali culture, costume, tradition, art, language more over .with other various organization such as Pashupatinath Development Trust, local club, Jatra (religious festival) organizing committee.

2.6 Finance

Tourism event and research center have been driven by self-financing from its founder, Mr. Manoj K. Giri.

2.7 Human resources

In most of the cases TERC uses its internal human resources but some time high level skill consultancy is needed for its special program.

2.8 Marketing and communication activities

As it is commercial company TERC conduct its promotional activities through various platform now. Company is focused its marketing and communication activities through digital platform i.e. Twitter, Youtube, Facebook, Instagram.

2.9 Problem faced by TERC and solution

Problems and challenges faced by TERC as event organizer company there is the lack of ideal venue for the various event to organize besides that administrative hassles to organize the event for those event where permission is required from the government. To organize mega event here we don't have infrastructure to make success for. As we have unstable government we are lacking to provide safety guarantee for their clients.

Solution for such obstacle: Such problem can be solved by assuring the development of infrastructure from which tourism event can be made success and government employee should not provide hassles for such company and government should improve the safety and security for its citizen and the tourist from which company like TERC can make assure that security trust to their clients.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market

Tourist got cultural experience of Nepal during the event organize by TERC. Youth got attracted towards tourism activities by the engagement of youth in tourism activities. This company provide every solution of tourism related activities and try to connect every event as tourism event by combining tourism activities to the event

3.2 Impact for the stakeholder

TERC has various impact for its stakeholders in different sector.

1. Capacity development: Its stakeholders will get working capacity development through event experiences, knowledge on facing challenges and general knowledge.
2. Income generation: Its stakeholders definitely will get some financial assistance in its own effort and will have experience for further event.
3. Learning new strategy for marketing: Stakeholders will get knowledge on marketing strategy and marketing ideas while TERC organize the event.
4. Experience sharing: Stakeholder will share the ideas after concluding the event, flows and weakness, planning ideas, venue ideas and more.

3.3 Impact for the environment

TERC organize pollution free events so TERC is always conscious for environmentally friendly events. In the cultural events TERC managed well for cleaning the venue and keep environment up to date as previous was.

3.4 Impact for the company

Company has many challenges and opportunities so that it created the opportunities and have sufficient knowledge to manage the events.

3.5 Impact for the center of excellency

The center of Excellence (COE) play a vital role in supporting research by providing mentorship and guidance during research process information I am grateful to be a part of this initiative and got a chance to gain a knowledge during research. Research mobilization among tourism stakeholder. Innovative model of cultural tourism, sports tourism.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflection

TERC try to implement sustainable tourism practice through the innovative approach. Various way of implementing event organizing, company emphasis on promoting the cultural events Jatra (cultural festivals), local cuisine of Nepal and try to promote Nepalese authentic culture to the global market. As they are concern about environment protection they try to organize pollution free events.

It trying to create the jobs conducting skill training, knowledge workshop and seminars. As company aim to attract international conference, expo, convection, exhibitions in Nepal company promote Nepal as a best destination for such activities. TERC promote and brand any events which involve tourism activities as tourism destination to its target market. It always make sure that if any event can attract tourist around the world TERC try to include tourism activities in such events.

Gallery

Figure 1: Company Logo & Banner



Figure 2: Company Banner



Figure 3: Activities Photos



Figure 4: TERC Guest Enjoying Gai Jatra (Cultural Festival) in Bhaktapur



Figure 5: TERC Organizing Tihar Program

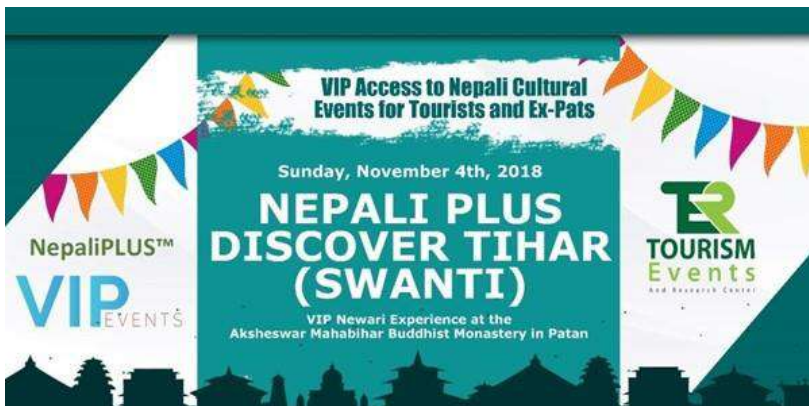


Figure 6: Cultural Dance Program Organize By TERC



CASE STUDY 18

Bhaktapur Jatra Committee: The Role of Bisket Jatra in Promoting Local Traditions & Preserving Cultural Heritage

Pukar Karki

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Bisket Jatra is a traditional festival celebrated in Bhaktapur district of Nepal. The festival is associated with worshipping the Hindu gods *Bhairava and Bhadrakali*, regarded as the city's guardians. The festival lasts for eight days, during which time tall wooden poles are erected, colorful flags are flown, and oil lamps are lit. People congregate during the festival to celebrate as well as participate in a variety of cultural activities. The festival of Bisket Jatra is thought to have been observed for more than a thousand years and is regarded as a significant component of Nepal's cultural heritage. People take part in a variety of cultural activities during Bisket Jatra, such as the display of chariots, the playing of traditional music, and the presentation of dance and drama. The annual celebration is also distinguished by a unique event in which two communities (Thane & Kone) are represented by opposing groups of people who pull a chariot as tug of war. The winning team is believed to have good fortune for the entire year if they are successful in moving the chariot to its aimed location. The Nepalese people value the festival of Bisket Jatra as a chance for them to unite and celebrate their cultural heritage.

Bisket Jatra showcases the unique customs and indigenous culture or we can say Newari culture of Nepal. International visitors are also drawn to this gathering to see some of the unique rituals, dances, and celebrations that are performed there. The event serves as a reminder of Nepal's rich cultural legacy and gives visitors a chance to get connected with and appreciate the nation's past and present. The Bisket Jatra has grown to be an important occasion for Nepal's tourism industry, drawing travelers from all over the world who come to see the show and experience the local culture.

As I interviewed one of the leader of the committee as secretary officer, I found out that the Bhaktapur Jatra Committee has been in charge of overseeing the Bisket Jatra's planning and execution., which also includes locals. Laxmi Bhakta Ghyemasu, the committee's top leader (*Bhairav Naike*), is in charge of overseeing the group and is giving orders to ensure that the jatra is managed and celebrated properly. He is joined by other five leaders as Bhairav pujari who work together in order to assist the leader and ensure the jatra runs well including various other supporting members. It is a non-profit organization formed since the reign of *King Yaksha Malla* in the 12 th century.

It is a non-profit organization founded by numerous individuals from various families in the central area of Bhaktapur city. As it was passed down from their grandparents, they are responsible for managing and preserving the jatra in a sustainable manner. The 55 houses in the central region of Bhaktapur, including families like Nagaju, Ghyemasu, Chukang, Chauhal, and Suwal, will be used to select the six leaders.

1.1 Vision and Mission

The vision of the committee is to preserve and advance the cultural and traditional significance of Bisket Jatra and promoting domestic tourism with the integration of cultural festival. Their goal is to keep the festival celebrated in its original style, showcasing the rich culture and traditions of their neighborhood. They also want to encourage the younger generation's active participation in the celebrations by increasing festival awareness among them. Also, to carry on the jatra in a sustainable manner while taking the changing environment and modernization into consideration. Indigenous residents of Bhaktapur are dedicated to preserving this cherished tradition for upcoming generations because they believe that Bisket Jatra is essential to promoting social cohesion and enhancing their community's cultural identity.

By increasing visitors' experiences with better infrastructure, safety precautions, and the dissemination of details about the festival's schedule, significance, and associated events, organizer aim to attract increasing number of tourists year by year. To raise awareness of the traditions and practices connected with the festival while educating locals (*especially youngsters*) and visitors about its cultural and historical significance. And promoting local companies, artisans, and craftsmen, encouraging the sale of traditional goods, and providing opportunities for income generation during the festival are all ways to support the local economy.

1.3 Services

The Bhaktapur Jatra Committee is a nonprofit organization that promotes the bisket jatra's sustainability. They manage and properly arrange the jatra by carrying out a variety of cultural events and offering a range of services to both locals and tourists without asking for payment in return.

- **Cultural performance:** The cultural performances at Bisket Jatra include a variety of traditional musical, dance, and theatrical performances. The festival gives artists and performers a stage on which to display their skills and entertain the audience.
- **Religious ceremonies:** People can participate in religious ceremonies and rituals at the Bisket Jatra to worship the gods Bhairava and Bhadrakali. Priests and other religious leaders (6 Bhairava Pujari) perform prayers, sacrifices, and blessings during these ceremonies.

- **Chariot procession:** The chariot procession is one of Bisket Jatra’s biggest draws. Large chariots pulling idols of the gods through the streets are drawn in a procession that is organized and supervised by the Jatra Committee. Visitors and participants can watch and participate in this impressive procession.
- **Lingo erection:** A service offered during Bisket Jatra is the construction of tall wooden poles known as “lingo.” These linguistic poles stand for the ultimate victory of goodness over evil. To add to the joyful atmosphere and cultural importance of the occasion, skilled artisans and volunteers carefully raise these poles in the appropriate locations. Lingo erection service offers a visually stunning sight for festival attendees and participants to enjoy while showcasing the traditional workmanship.
- **Information:** Regarding the events’ schedule, locations, safety precautions, and any particular rules or regulations pertaining to the festival, Jatra Committee provide information and advice to participants.

1.4 Target market(s)

1.4.1 Primary target market

Local residents (Newar communities): The festival holds significant cultural and religious importance for the local residents of Bhaktapur. They take part in festival activities, perform religious rites, and add to the festive mood. The main priorities are ensuring their participation, maintaining their traditions, and fortifying ties within the community.

1.4.2 Secondary target market

Domestic tourists: Travelers from all over Nepal who are eager to take part in the unique cultural celebrations and traditions are drawn to the Bisket Jatra. For the vibrant celebrations, domestic tourists may travel specifically to Bhaktapur, boosting the local economy.

International tourists: International recognition has helped Bisket Jatra draw visitors from all over who are interested in Nepali culture and traditions. International visitors come to Bhaktapur to learn about its rich history, experience the grand chariot procession, and immerse themselves in local culture.

The festival’s organizers may also focus on specific audiences with a particular interest in Nepal’s traditional festivals and its cultural heritage, such as the country’s cultural enthusiasts, historical enthusiasts, and spiritual seekers. These target markets can be effectively reached by marketing campaigns, travel agencies, and digital platforms used to promote the festival.

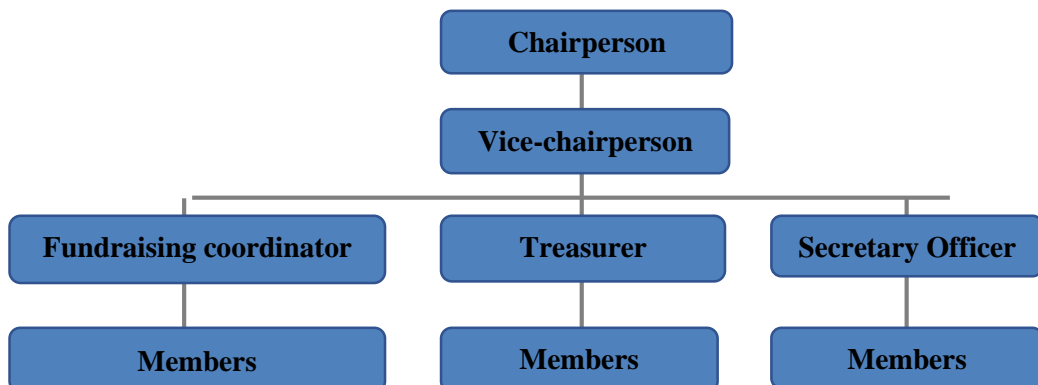
1.5 Organizational management

The committee has a main leader (*Laxmi Bhakta Ghyemasu*) in charge of overseeing and directing others to complete the task correctly and efficiently. He is more experienced than others and has the knowledge needed to complete the task at hand and celebrate the festival in a proper, organized, and sustainable manner. In addition to *Bhairava Pujari*, there are five additional supporting leaders beneath him who assist the leader in all matters besides worship. Construction of the chariot and lingo are also necessary for the jatra to be carried out. Since the wood used in the lingo is very special and made out of a single tree, the other 4 members, known as *Pakhabhari*, have been separated to bring the necessary wood for the construction and renovation of the *Chariot* and the *Lingo*. They are therefore in charge of bringing the right tree from the location known as *Taathali* for the lingo.

Ram Krishna Naga, one of the committee's leaders, is in charge of the finance section. However, the youngest of the six leaders, *Krishna Bhakta Chukang*, fills the role of the figurehead. The youngest leader oversees all activities because he is knowledgeable about the jatra and the procedures that the leader must follow because the main leader was unable to travel everywhere for the preparation of the jatra. He is currently keeping a close eye on everything and has developed some new ideas in recent years. The *pakhabari* and the team in charge of building the chariot and getting the lingo ready for the erection are among the few additional members under the leader. The specific duty is to carry out the jatra according to proper maintenance and procedure while informing and directing the visitors regarding the jatra. The organizational structure of this committee is based on Guthi.

1.6 Organizational structure

Figure 1: Organizational Structure of Jatra Committee



Source: Author's contribution

1.7 Cost structure and revenue streams

Being a non-profit organization, it doesn't have a set source of income, but because the money from the *Guthi group* (group of people among various family to carry out specific task) in society doesn't meet the needs, the leaders have to pay for the jatra preparation out of their own pockets. According to the leader, it costs about NPR.29,00,000 to execute the jatra with proper planning, but this year's revenue from guthi and voluntary donors was only about NPR. 24,00,000. The leaders also added the necessary funds out of their own pockets and successfully carried out the jatra. Even without any profit they are always able to conduct the activities of the festival smoothly and sustainably.

2.0 Sustainable Tourism Challenges

Lack of participation of youth: The festival's minimal youth involvement and engagement may make it more difficult for current generations to pass on cultural knowledge and customs, which might have an effect on Bisket Jatra's potential to remain a popular tourist destination in the long run. Youth are present during the jatra celebration; however, they choose to engage in mischievous activities rather than appropriately celebrating the jatra. The young also emphasize other excursions, travels, rides, and other extra activities above the jatra since they are adopting patterns from western culture and tendencies. They are not taking the jatra seriously because it will be passed down to their generation. They are participating less in cultural events because they believe that they are out of date in the twenty-first century, yet history and culture have their own significance and worth that they should be taught before it's too late. For the sustainability of the cultural heritage its in their hands now. So, Youth participation is the major challenges for the sustainable tourism.

Modernization: Especially for the younger generation, modernization presents a serious challenge to Bisket Jatra. Traditional celebrations like the Bisket Jatra run the risk of losing their attraction and relevance due to the rapid growth of technology and shifting cultural norms. The appeal of contemporary entertainment and digital diversion may overshadow the cultural importance of such occasions. The youth, who have been impacted by Western patterns, could put more value on convenience and personal interests than participation in traditional traditions. Because of this, there is an increasing need to come up with creative approaches to involve the younger generation and strike a balance between preserving cultural history and embracing the advantages of modernization.

Generation gap: The generation gap is a major challenge, especially for the younger generation. Although the yearly holiday in Nepal is deeply rooted in culture and religion, younger generations frequently find it difficult to relate to its customs and rituals. Young people nowadays are no longer connected to their cultural heritage because of quick societal change, technological development, and Western influences. Many young people find it difficult to understand the rituals, symbols, and traditions connected to Bisket Jatra, which could cause them to lose interest and involvement. To close this gap and ensure the festival's survival for future generations, efforts must be made to involve and educate the youth about the historical significance and relevance of the event to their identity.

2.1 Initiatives

The committee wants to improve the Bisket jatra procedure for better experiences for visitors. The committee is concentrating on the chariot procession process to make it easier to move with more durable ropes that pull the Chariot. They are concentrating on the wood that gets damaged every year and intend to use more quality wood to make the Chariot. The chariot has also been made smaller in order to be transported safely across the city so that it won't harm its surroundings because the roads are narrower in the central area. The committee has also asked some youth groups such as *Taumadi Youth Club & Jatra Sahayog Samiti* to assist them during the festival to carry out the jatra more effectively by providing guidelines and information about the jatra and its rituals. The committee has asked Red Cross Society groups to provide medical backups during the jatra in case if anyone gets injured during the jatra. They have been adapting modernization and preserving the culture at the same time for the sustainability of the indigenous culture and festival which is known throughout the nation as a biggest and joyful festival. Additionally, through youth clubs, they have been running a marketing and awareness program on the Bisket jatra to engage the next generation in the continuation of the culture and custom.

2.2 External analysis

The committee's initiatives led to an increase in the number of young people participating in youth clubs, campaigns, and awareness-raising programs. The festival uses environmentally friendly measures to lessen its effect. This includes employing eco-friendly materials for décor, encouraging waste management and recycling programs, and educating guests and participants on the value of environmental preservation. The celebration draws the neighborhood together, promoting a sense of cohesion and belonging. This widespread participation can provide chances for intergenerational

knowledge transfer, community link strengthening, and social cohesiveness. It increases tourism in Bhaktapur and draws tourists from all over the world. When tourism is managed well, it may benefit the local economy by generating jobs, boosting sales for small local businesses, and promoting cultural artists.

Talking about the threats, there are westernize cultural activities like bars and dance. Such westernize cultural are coming as the threats.

2.3 Internal analysis

The committee's primary strength is the continuation of the jatra without any financial gain. Without having to worry about money, people may carry out the rites and celebration of jatra in an appropriate manner. The leader would immediately terminate it if there were any financial problems. As a result, the jatra is gaining continuity in a swift manner. Due to the youth club's help, it is simple for them to manage everything effectively and provide the visitors the necessary instructions.

Additionally, since they are utilizing high-quality ropes and wood, there won't be any more damage than before, lowering the expense of the chariot's repairs for the following year and allowing it to run more efficiently. And, since they were initiated into the Chariot procession, it has been simpler for them to maneuver it while the tourists could do so without any problems.

2.4 Activities

Chariot procession: The "Rath Yatra," a large chariot parade, is a highlight of the Bisket Jatra. Deities' statues most famously those of the deity *Bhairava* and the goddess *Bhadrakali* are mounted on beautiful chariots and drawn through the streets by joyful spectators. Music, chanting, and dancing accompany the chariot parade. The "Yosin Dyo" chariot-pulling competition is a feature of Bisket Jatra. Two teams, each representing a different neighborhood or clan, are formed within the community. With the goal of bringing the chariot of their respective deity to a certain location, each team competes to draw it. It is an exciting event that draws sizable throngs of people.

Lingo erection: One of the main activities of Bisket Jatra is raising the lingo. At various locations throughout Bhaktapur, tall wooden poles known as "lingo" are erected. These poles represent the triumph of good over evil and are covered in vibrant flags and banners. The community as a whole contributes to the ceremony of lingo raising. In the midst of applause and cultural music, people work together to lift and secure the poles in place. It is an impressive spectacle that heightens the festive atmosphere of Bisket Jatra. The lingo acts as a focal point for the festivities, serving to remind attendees of the

festival's cultural and spiritual significance while also serving as a tangible example of the community's devotion and unity.

Musical performance (Mali Baja): Bisket Jatra celebrations include musical performances. Traditional musicians and artists perform during the festival called *Mali Baja*, bringing a lively and vibrant element to the celebrations. Traditional musical instruments like drums, cymbals, flutes, and various stringed instruments fill the streets with their melodic sounds. Local musicians perform folk songs and dance to the beats while dressed in vibrant traditional attire. Participants and onlookers alike are drawn in by the music's enchanting atmosphere. These musical performances not only amuse the audience, but also significantly contribute to the preservation and promotion of the area's rich cultural heritage.

Cultural dance/drama: Cultural dances and plays are a big part of the celebrations at Bisket Jatra. With their vibrant costumes and graceful movements, local dancers present traditional dance genres such as the Newari classical dance. These dances bring to life Bhaktapur's rich cultural heritage by illustrating mythological tales and historical events. There are also theatrical performances with colorful characters and fascinating stories. The audience is captivated by these cultural dances and plays as they amuse them and preserve and promote the region's traditional arts and stories. They enhance the cultural significance of Bisket Jatra and add to the festive mood, making it a captivating and immersive experience for all.

2.5 Stakeholders

Locals (Newari people): The festival is deeply rooted in the neighborhood, and the locals actively take part in the festivities, rituals, and other activities related to Bisket Jatra.

Local businesses: Both domestic and foreign tourists flock to Bisket Jatra in large numbers. Local companies that provide lodging, dining, gift shops, and transportation services profit from the festival's increased tourism.

Visitors and tourists: To witness and take part in the Bisket Jatra, people travel to Bhaktapur from all over Nepal and the world. Their presence and zeal add to the festival's energetic atmosphere.

Government authorities: Municipal authorities, for example, play a part in ensuring the festival runs smoothly, upholding law and order, and providing the necessary infrastructure and support.

Artists and performers: Traditional dances, music, and theatrical performances are highlighted during Bisket Jatra by musicians, dancers, actors, and other artists. They contribute their skills so that the audience is entertained and involved.

2.6 Target market and beneficiaries

By the successful execution of the jatra is directly benefited to the locals, entrepreneurs/local businesses and visitors/tourists.

Locals (Newari people): The local resident especially Newar community's culture is strongly influenced by Bisket Jatra. Locals can celebrate and display their traditions at the festival, boosting their sense of cultural pride and community. By bringing the neighborhood together, the Bisket Jatra promotes social cohesion and a sense of community among the locals. It gives people a chance to interact, connect, and take part in group celebrations. The festival holds great religious significance to the locals, who can take part in ceremonies, rituals, and prayers that are thought to bestow blessings and promote spiritual health.

Local business: Bhaktapur receives a significant number of both domestic and foreign tourists during the Bisket Jatra. Tourism-related businesses like hotels, restaurants, guesthouses, souvenir shops, and transportation services are benefited by the arrival of tourists. Local businesses receive a significant economic boost from the festival's increased foot traffic and visitor spending, which enables them to increase sales and add jobs. During the festival, local artisans, craftsmen, and traders have the chance to display and sell their handmade goods, artwork, and traditional products to a larger audience.

Visitors/tourists: Tourists can watch and take part in traditional ceremonies, dances, musical performances, and theatrical performances at Bisket Jatra, providing them with a complete cultural experience. It offers an expanded understanding of the customs and cultures of the area. Visitors can take in the energetic and joyful festival environment while taking in the grand chariot procession, street celebrations, and cultural performances, all of which will help them remember Bhaktapur forever. The festival offers visitors a chance to get involved in the neighborhood, talk to the locals, and discover more about their way of life, traditions, and customs.

2.7 Finances

To carry out the new initiations they did add some extra money than usual. But as a non-profit, there are fewer revenue sources available than for other organizations. but the leader also added another NPR.9,00,000 to the budget for the renovation and high-quality wood and ropes. In order to make the festival run smoothly, youth clubs and the red cross society performed other voluntary tasks.

2.8 Human resource

No additional human resources were needed in the committee. But the youth clubs and governmental security providers were there to assist to carry out the initiations.

2.9 Marketing and communication

Since it is a non-profit, it lacks a marketing or communication channel of its own. However, organizing the jatra is a form of marketing in which thousands and hundreds of people attend for enjoyment. In addition, various print media and travel agencies are indirectly involved in the Bisket Jatra's marketing.

3.0 Impacts

3.1 Impacts for the target market

The younger generation is now being encouraged to participate in the jatra's various activities, including *the Mali Baaja*, as locals were the primary target market. Younger people are expressing interest in joining youth clubs in order to take part in voluntary activities, learn about different rituals and activities, and provide information and guidelines to visitors. Their musical instrument is receiving little attention, and many young children in primary schools are learning the Mali Baja in order to participate in the actual jatra performance. With proper knowledge of the ceremonies, tourists can now enjoy the festival in a more secure and safe manner, and they can take part in the chariot procession more joyfully as the chariot is made stronger and more durable.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Stakeholder are affected in positive result from this initiative's move to safeguard cultural assets in a sustainable manner, which has attracted a lot of tourists through appropriate management and helped local businesses make money from the high volume of tourists. In this way, it has benefited all parties involved.

3.3 Impact for the environment

It encourages tourists to value and support environmentally friendly and locally sourced goods by highlighting regional customs, crafts, and products. The festival may also increase public awareness of the value of protecting heritage sites and the environment, encouraging responsible travel and conservation practices. Overall, Bisket Jatra's emphasis on cultural immersion and eco-friendly tourism can benefit the environment by encouraging eco-aware behaviors and supporting regional initiatives.

3.4 Impact for the committee

The act of passing down culture and tradition from one generation to the next carries a significant sense of responsibility for organizers. They take on a crucial leadership position within their community or committee by upholding and putting these traditions into practice. By carrying out this duty, the organizers not only preserve their cultural heritage but also guarantee its survival for future generations. Their contribution to upholding the customs and values that give their community its identity is acknowledged and credited through this process. In essence, their commitment and dedication serve as a catalyst for the dissemination of knowledge and a way to promote a flourishing, interconnected society. And lastly, the committee is credited to pass the culture and traditions to next generation for the sustainability of Bisket Jatra.

3.5 Impact for CoE

CoE is acting as helping hand to do the research activities by providing mentorship, guidance and information about the research process. We are very grateful to be one of the part of it and we learned a lot during this time period. Thus, there are some impacts on the development of the CoE which concern:

- 1. Knowledge transfer and best practices:** CoE is able to identify and document best practices in sustainable tourism through the case study project. The CoE can facilitate knowledge transfer and encourage the adoption of sustainable practices by disseminating these findings to industry stakeholders, including tourism businesses, policymakers, and researchers. The performance of the tourism sector's sustainability efforts can be improved as a result of this.
- 2. Innovation and entrepreneurship:** The case study project can encourage and support innovation and entrepreneurship in the travel and tourism industry. As an incubator, CESTOUR can help aspiring entrepreneurs create sustainable tourism initiatives or businesses by offering advice, mentorship, and resources. Findings from the case study project can be used as a basis for creative suggestions and responses that tackle sustainability problems and create new opportunities.
- 3. Policy influence:** CESTOUR's case study project has the potential to significantly influence the processes involved in formulating policies and making decisions. Policymakers can learn about effective sustainable tourism models from the project's findings and recommendations, which also highlight the advantages and negative effects of each model. This may have an impact on the formulation of laws and rules that encourage eco-friendly business practices, foster an environment that supports

eco-friendly enterprises, and encourage the industry as a whole to adopt eco-friendly practices.

- 4. Reputation and visibility:** A fruitful case study project can improve the CESTOUR incubation center for sustainable tourism's reputation and visibility. The project's successes and beneficial effects can be widely publicized and shared through a variety of channels. This could draw interest from the travel and tourism sector, academics, and potential partners, further solidifying their name in the sustainable tourism sector.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflection

With the proper participation and involvement of the locals, the organizers were able to carry out the jatra more smoothly than they had previously. The chariot was constructed with higher-quality wood, which reduced damage and made it more comfortable to pull where it had previously been much harder. With the assistance of the supporting committee and youth clubs, they were able to offer additional services like drinking water and tiffin along with the correct information and directions to the visitors and tourists. Through a thorough understanding of the locals and visitors, the organizer was able to conduct the worship ritual and carry out other ceremonies without incident.

Everything went smoothly while carrying out the new initiations and the jatra, but there were a few minor issues while carrying out the various activities. They had difficulty getting the single tree log to the location where the lingo would be erected while still keeping it intact. Due to the unreliable and careless work of the builders, the organizer encountered some difficulties during the chariot's construction. Less participation was also visible in the drama, dance, and musical performances. So to improve those errors the organizer may conduct extra counseling to the constructors and should provide them suitable environment to work efficiently. Participation of the performers could be increased by teaching the young generation about the cultural music, dance and drama. Transportation facilities can be improved by consulting with the local government for the transportation of the Lingo. By implementing those things, the organizer may run the process more smoothly and effectively.

Figure 2: Eldest Leader or Top Leader (Bhairab Naike) Secretary Officer as well as Program Manager (Laxmi Bhakta Ghyemasu and Krishna Bhakta Chhukang)



Figure 3: Interaction with Secretary Officer of the Committee



Figure 4: Construction of Chariot before the Festival



Figure 5: During Lingo Erection



Figure 6: During Chariot procession



Source: Reference Image from holidaystonepal.com

References

<https://www.bhaktapur.com/discover/bisket-jatra-or-biska-jatra/holidaystonepal.com>

<https://www.himalayanglacier.com/bisket-jatra-a-colorful-affair/>

CASE STUDY 19

Bhairavnath Topi Pasal

Sumina Shrestha

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Souvenirs in tourism are items or objects that are often representative of culture or history of the place and travelers purchase as a reminder of their travels and experience. They can be anything from traditional handicrafts and artworks to small trinkets like keychains and magnets.

Bhandgaunle Topi or also known as Bhadgaon Topi, is a traditional Nepali hat that has become a popular souvenir among tourists visiting Nepal. Bhadgaunle Topi is a hand-woven hat made of cotton or silk fabric with a distinctive shape and design and has a wide brim with a tapering top and is adorned with a small tassel at the center.

It is an integral part of Nepalese society and is believed to have originated from Bhadgaon (now Bhaktapur). The cap has been worn by Nepalese people for centuries and is deeply rooted in the country's history and traditions. Wearing it is a way for people to show their pride and connection to their cultural heritage.

It is traditionally made by hand using a special weaving technique. It requires skill and patience. It showcases the craftsmanship and artistry of Nepalese people.

As a souvenir, it represents Nepali culture and tradition and is often purchased by tourists as a memento of their visit to Nepal. It is popular among Nepali diaspora and can be worn on special occasions like weddings, festivals, and cultural events. This has created opportunities for small business owners to sell their hats locally and internationally, contributing to Nepal's economy.

Kiran Prandhananga has been running a small local store which is an active seller of this topi. Bhairavnath Topi Pasal ran by her is located right beside the Bhairavnath Temple in Bhaktapur, 350m from Bhaktapur Durbar Square and sells all kinds of Nepali locally made clothes like Daura suruwal, Dhaka Topis, Bhadgaunle Topi, and many others. It was established more than 80 years ago by entrepreneur's forefathers and has contributed a lot for the exposure of locally made products.

1.2 Vision and Mission

- The owner's mission is "Continue her family legacy."

- The owner took over this business 10 years ago after the demise of her father and has been running it since then and continued her family legacy.
- The shop has a wide selection of Nepali clothes that showcase the culture and history of Nepal and offers a personalized shopping experience to their customers.
- The owner is responsible for selling the products in the offline store and her brother handles buying and producing the products.
- The business has been employing women to hand woven the products and empowering them. The business keeps its authenticity and has been using and promoting the use of local resources and goods to integrate local and cultural products such as Bhadgaunle Topi, Dhaka Topi and others as tourism products not only in the local market but also international market.

1.3 Products and services

The store includes an array of diverse choices of traditional clothes which are:

Dhaka topi: For diaspora tourists and local men. Dhaka Topi is a traditional hat commonly worn by men during festivals in Nepal. It is made of Dhaka fabric, which is a handwoven cotton or silk cloth.

Bhadgaunle topi: For diaspora tourists and local men. It is an integral part of traditional attire in Nepal, particularly for men. It has a unique shape that features a pointed crown and folded edges and is made from fine wool or silk fabric and is adorned with intricate embroidery, often showcasing traditional motifs and designs.

Daura Suruwal: For children. It is the national dress of Nepal and is commonly worn by men during festivals and special occasions. It consists of a knee-length, double-breasted shirt (Daura) paired with loose-fitting trousers (Suruwal).

Waistcoats: For adults and children. It is a sleeveless vest-like garment that covers the upper body and is worn over a shirt or kurta. It is worn as a part of formal or traditional attire. It comes in various styles, fabrics, and designs, reflecting the cultural heritage of different regions and communities.

Coat sets: For children. Coat sets are a part of the traditional attire worn in Nepal, particularly for formal occasions and cultural events. It consists of a coat or jacket, a shirt or kurta, and matching trousers. It is worn during festivals, weddings, formal gatherings, or cultural ceremonies in Nepal.

Woolen caps: For men, women and children. It comes in various styles, shapes, and colors, and is crafted from warm and cozy wool materials to provide protection from the cold weather.

Weaning dress: For children. It is worn during the weaning ceremony or also known as “Pashi” or “Rice Feeding Ceremony”, which is an important milestone in a child’s life. These dresses worn during the weaning ceremony in Nepal symbolize cultural identity, family heritage, and the transition of the child from infancy to early childhood.

Along with the products the owner also provides the service of personalized shopping experience, recommendations and ability to customize the products.

1.4 Target market

The main targeted market is in-state tourists and native residents. To meet the needed requests of the target market, the owner keeps stock of a wide range of traditional handmade clothes of different sizes and varieties.

The main targeted market is during the peak seasons which are:

- 1) **Wedding season:** During this auspicious ceremony, many like to wear the attire of Daura suruwal, Dhaka Topi and Bhadgaunle Topi.
- 2) **Bartabanda (pre marriage ritual) season:** This ceremony requires the one who’s bartabanda is done to wear traditional Nepali attire, which includes daura suruwal (a knee length shirt and trousers) with a cap and shawl.
- 3) **Festival season:** During major cultural and religious festivals such as Dashain, Tihar, and Teej, many Nepalese wear traditional clothing, including Dhaka Topi, Bhadgaunle Topi, Daura suruwal and others.

Since, the traditional attire is a symbol of rich heritage, culture and tradition and holds significant cultural value, it is commonly worn during festivals and special occasions in Nepal.

1.5 Organization and management

The Bhairavnath Topi Pasal is a private organization which has been running as a family legacy for more than 80 years. It has been currently ran by Mrs. Kiran Pradhananga and her brother (Mr. Krishna Manjur).

This store is run in-person by the owner (Kiran Pradhananga) who does all the dealing with the customers and makes sure that their need is satisfied and her brother (Krishna Manjur) is responsible to buy the necessary raw materials for manufacturing the products (Bhadgaunle Topi, Dhaka Topi and khada).

They have around 5 part time employees who receive the raw materials from the owner and manufacture the goods by hand. They usually buy the raw materials from Amit Shrestha in Palpa and import it to Kathmandu by road.

They have been empowering and employing women of their local community to handmade their products and utilizing locally available resources.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Sales of topi are seen to be more in numbers and profit in comparison to other goods in the store.

Table 1: Budget Data based on Usual Sales

S. N	Product name	Cost price	Selling price	Profit margin
1.	Dhaka Topi	130	300	56%
2.	Bhadgaunle Topi	110	250	56%
3.	Daura suruwal	750	1600	53%
4.	Waistcoats	600	1300	54%
5.	Coat sets	800	2000	60%
6.	Woolen caps	250	400	38%
7.	Weaning dress	800	1800	56%

Source: Author's contribution

Since the sales are seasonal, the revenue structure varies and is not fixed. The profit made during the sales of the products in the peak season is utilized to manage and deal with the cost structure of the store in the off-seasons.

1.7 Other information

It is one of the oldest shops located in Bhaktapur and produces most of their products by hand. They believe in maintaining the quality that they have been maintaining for years. For this they import all the raw materials all the way from Palpa and have hired women employees to produce the products by hand.

They focus on maintaining the originality of the traditional attires and as one of the oldest stores in the area have maintained a good position in the competitive market with their well-crafted products.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

The Bhadgaunle Topi is a traditional attire which is locally handwoven by using cotton which is a sustainable material and is an important part of Nepali cultural heritage

and tradition. Local production of this not only preserves cultural heritage but also creates employment opportunities for local communities and local people.

However, the demand for the products is highly seasonal, with peak periods during the festival seasons and it is challenging for the shop owner to maintain sales and profitability and there is also a high level of competition in the market, with many shops selling similar products.

There also seems to be an emerging challenge for lack of employees who know how to make the Topis in traditional ways have been leading to the products not to be ethically sourced and made originally.

In this century, a strong online presence is essential for businesses to reach new target markets and connect with the customers, and promote the products not only locally but internationally. Since the store is only run offline and doesn't have an online presence it has become difficult to expand the product and services to new target markets and customers.

2.2 The business/project idea

During the starting of the business, the store only sold Dhaka Topi and Bhadgaunle Topi. It was enough to generate income and profit. But gradually the market started expanding and becoming more competitive along with the influence from foreign culture, the sales of topi were not enough to support the cost structure of the store.

So, the competition led to addition of more products like waist coats, Daura suruwal and other attires to the store. The strategy of expanding the product choices for the customers leads to increase in the number of sales and profit.

This business idea not only helped the business to sustain for all these years but also helped to generate employment opportunities for local people and local communities to preserve as well as promote their local cultures and traditions.

2.3 External analysis

This business idea resulted in growth of interest of not only the native residents but also in state tourists who were visiting occasionally. The expansion in choices and the products being locally made from utilizing the local resources became a preference for the consumers.

Since the products are making use of local resources and taking advantage of local employees there is no need for importing foreign goods and there is reduced taxes on the products and it is easy to compete with imported products.

The only threat that was seen was some of the consumers perceived the locally made products as inferior to imported products and led to unwillingness to purchase the products.

2.4 Internal analysis

The main strengths concerning the business idea are:

- As an old local business of that area, the reputation led to attract customers;
- There are enough financial resources to invest in production;
- There are 10 skilled and motivated workforces to help in the production process;
- Products that meet the customer demand were produced and kept.

As regard the weakness, there is a lack of technological resources for production and it is difficult to find new suppliers for required raw materials.

2.5 Activities

The main activities that were needed in the implementation of the business idea were:

- Identification of requirement of market: What sort of products are mostly and commonly popular among the targeted customers and the expected price for them while maintaining the quality as well as profit structure for the store.
- Employing new human resources: Expanding the products meant more production process and for that process new and skilled manpower were needed for efficient production.
- Research for new suppliers: Increasing and producing new products directly meant search for new and qualitative raw materials for which new suppliers were needed.
- Expand the stocking and storing capacity of the store: Showcasing new products came along with increasing the stocking capacity of the store.
- To keep and maintain the quality of the product, qualitative raw materials were used

2.6 Stakeholders

During the process, the main stakeholders that have been identified are:

- 1) The employees: they are the pillars for the idea to be effective as the expansion of product means more production.
- 2) Suppliers: Their contribution is needed to get the necessary raw materials for the production process. Therefore, their support to obtain qualitative raw materials is required.
- 3) Local community: the local community can be positively benefited from the project for generation of employment and preservation of local culture and practices.

- 4) Tourists: the tourists can benefit from the wide range of selection and locally sustainably made products.

2.7 Target markets and beneficiaries

The main targeted market and beneficiaries of the business project idea are:

In-state tourists: It provided the tourist with a wide range of choices to choose from and contribute to preserve the local culture and tradition.

Diaspora tourists: During the time when foreign employment was slowly gaining popularity, the expanded product choices in traditional attire in one shop made it easier for them. Diaspora tourists are the ones who are far away from their home country and visit time and often to their homeland to stay connected to their roots.

The business actively targets frequent foreign visitors to Durbar Square as a secondary market as it appreciates their value. To maintain its growth and success, the company wants to increase international tourism by fostering a memorable experience, understanding each customer's specific preferences, and offering tailored services.

2.8 Partners

The business idea of adding a new product range in the store opened the gate to partnership with numerous suppliers in the area. For the production of new products, it required communication and business activities with numerous suppliers to get the raw materials as well as transport companies for transmission of the raw materials and finished products. The production process not only involves the relationship with the suppliers but also with numerous local peoples for employment purposes.

2.9 Finances

Implementing the new business idea of adding new products to the store included a hectic process and also stable financial sources. At the early stage of the project, the activities were funded from the coming profit of the company with 5,000 per month. It was easy going in the initial stage as it was slowly pacing up. But along with the increased production the cost also increased. Only the profit from the store was not enough to fund the production process. So later the owner received funding from her close

2.10 Human resources

The company's initial production staffing consisted of a group of five part-time employees. But by hiring an additional 10 full-time employees, the business made a significant advancement in its efforts to increase efficiency and speed up the production

process. By utilizing the skills and dedication of full-time employees, the business was able to meet rising demand and guarantee on-time delivery of goods thanks to this strategic decision to increase the workforce. With the addition of these qualified workers, the company's production capabilities were strengthened, facilitating a more efficient workflow and opening the door to growth and success in the competitive marketplace.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

The company decided to reach out to the nearby to inform them of the product expansion by means of offline promotion. To attract early customers, they also introduced special discounts and promotions. Word-of-mouth advertising was of the utmost significance because pleased customers told their social networks about the company and shared positive feedback and recommendations.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market

Target markets can preserve and promote their unique heritage by staying alive through offering them a platform to showcase their culture and traditions. It opens doors for interaction between cultures, promoting respect and understanding between various communities. People can proudly display their traditions and customs, thereby making them feel more linked to their roots. This cultural display not only benefits the neighborhood but also draws tourists, boosting the local economy.

3.2 Impact for stakeholders

The beneficiaries of this project idea include all of the stakeholders. First and foremost, it has created job opportunities for the locals, giving them a source of income and financial security. The project also celebrates and preserves the community's distinctive heritage by promoting local culture and tradition, which fosters a sense of pride and identity. Additionally, using local resources and goods supports regional businesses and fosters sustainable development by boosting the local economy.

3.3 Impact for the environment

The project takes sustainability seriously and produces its goods using locally produced raw materials. This strategy reduces the environmental footprints associated with transportation while also promoting local businesses. Additionally, the project places a high priority on the efficient use and recycling of products and materials.

Throughout the production process, waste reduction measures are put into place to ensure effective resource use and reduce environmental impact. The project benefits both the environment and the community by implementing sustainable practices, setting an excellent example for ethical and environmentally friendly production.

3.4 Impact for the company

The impact on the company is both strategic, competitive and economic. In the concept of the first aspect, the company has strengthened its market and products to offer. The project ensured the position of the company in the competitive market of that area. In the economic aspect, the initial phase of the project was financially draining but the final phase made huge profit and helped the company to sustain economically for a longer period of time.

3.5 Impact for CoE

The Center of Excellence (CoE) plays a crucial role in supporting research activities by providing mentorship, guidance, and research process information. We are grateful to be part of this initiative and have gained valuable knowledge during this period. As a result, the CoE has experienced significant impacts on its development, which include:

- **Innovative techniques and information transfer:** The CoE identifies and documents best practices in sustainable tourism through its case study project. By disseminating these findings to industry stakeholders, policymakers, and researchers, the CoE facilitates knowledge transfer and encourages the adoption of sustainable practices, leading to improved performance in the tourism sector's sustainability efforts.
- **Innovative thinking and entrepreneurial efforts:** The case study project stimulates innovation and entrepreneurship within the travel and tourism industry. Acting as an incubator, the CoE provides guidance, mentorship, and resources to aspiring entrepreneurs interested in developing sustainable tourism initiatives or businesses. The project's findings serve as a foundation for generating creative ideas and solutions to address sustainability challenges and create new opportunities.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

The project concept was put into action in response to the escalating market competition, and it was a resounding success for the business, helping it survive in the intensely competitive market environment.

The project's execution required a number of crucial components, including fresh human resources, raw materials, advertising strategies, reliable financial support, and new suppliers. Local connections made it easier to find new human resources, simplifying the recruitment process. However, the way that the employees were paid was not as advantageous as it could have been, which resulted in less effective work. To make this situation better, the business could have given staff members rewards by educating them about their potential advantages, such as by offering bonuses based on strong sales and financial success. With this strategy, the staff would have been encouraged to work harder and contribute to the company's success.

In order to complete the project, raw materials had to be obtained, and the company had a strong working relationship with a network of suppliers. By guaranteeing the quality of the raw materials used in the manufacturing process, the overall quality of the finished goods was improved. Strong supplier connections helped keep the supply chain reliable and trustworthy, ensuring efficient operations and customer satisfaction.

The majority of the project's promotion activities were offline, using traditional methods of marketing. However, it is known that using online promotion strategies could have produced better outcomes. It would have been possible to reach a global audience through online marketing in addition to the local market. Utilizing social media, digital advertising, and online platforms would have increased brand awareness and broadened the market reach. The business could have connected with a larger customer base and increased market penetration by using the power of online promotion.

Despite this room for improvement, the project was successful in keeping the business alive in a competitive marketplace. It demonstrated the business' capacity to respond to market demands, make effective use of available resources, and create lasting relationships with suppliers. The project's success served as a reminder of the value of making strategic decisions, managing resources well, and continuously assessing market trends. The business could strengthen its competitive edge and maintain its upward growth course in the market by addressing areas that need improvement, like rewards for staff and online promotion.

Figure 1: The Store Owner (Mrs. Kiran Pradhananga)



Figure 2: The Owner with the Store



Figure 3: Products showcased



References

<https://kathmandupost.com/valley/2015/01/13/bhadgaule-topi-winning-over-young-hearts>

<https://www.seema.com/all-you-need-to-know-about-traditional-clothing-of-nepal/>

<https://encyclocraftsapr.com/caps-bhadgaunle-topi/>

<https://handicraftsinnepal.com/dhaka-topi/>

CASE STUDY 20

A Case Study on SASA: TWA - ससः वा

Kuldeep Dahal

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Sasa: Twa Restaurant welcomes you into a world where the spirit of Newari culture comes to life. This remarkable hospitality organisation welcomes you to go on a mesmerising trip into the rich tapestry of Newari culture, nestled in the heart of Kirtipur, a culturally blessed town located 6 Km South of the country's capital Kathmandu. As an extension of the prestigious Sasa Newa, which was founded in 2010, Sasa: Twa symbolises the imaginative objectives of Mr Phiroj Singh, a devoted Kipu City citizen who wishes to communicate the essence of this dynamic town with a broader audience.

As soon as you enter Sasa: Twa, you'll see how the creative architectural style integrates with the historical Newari tradition. Every nook and cranny oozes the aura of the past, resulting in an immersive setting as whisks you away to another time. Within the enchanting Nepal Bhasa, the native Newari language, "Sasa" symbolises the warmth and hospitality found within an in-law's house, while "Twa" signifies the vibrant neighbourhood or "Tole" that brings the community together.

Sasa: Twa is committed to giving customers a remarkable experience that reflects the opulent treatment given to sons-in-law when they are welcomed into their father-in-law's home. Enjoy a gourmet frenzy while sampling delicious Newari cuisine and a variety of mouthwatering drinks. Immerse yourself in the atmosphere, where every element has been painstakingly chosen to capture your senses and leave you with unforgettable memories.

Sasa: Twa embraces excellence and is pleased to display the prestigious International Quality Certification by Iudex as proof of its everlasting dedication to providing exceptional service and following the highest management standards. Sasa: Twa offers you to enjoy unmatched hospitality that defies world conventions with its stunning architecture, genuine Newari art, and a warm and welcoming ambience.

Welcome to Sasa: Twa Restaurant, where the charm of Newari culture, delectable cuisine, and heartfelt hospitality unite to create an unforgettable journey for every guest.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Sasa Twa's vision is to promote indigenous knowledge, customs, and values linked with the Newa Community, Civilization and culture, as well as to protect cultural assets and derive commodities value to the local products.

Sasa Twa's mission is to represent Nepali culture across the globe by sharing the rich indigenous knowledge, traditions, and morals of the Newa people. The restaurant seeks to uplift women, promote social entrepreneurship, uphold cultural traditions, and enhance the value of local products. Sasa Twa aims to serve a larger market while ensuring wealth distribution, fostering authenticity, and exploiting local skills by employing local flavours/tastes and cuisine, unique and creative ideas and models as a potent instrument of branding and other marketing tactics. By releasing this objective, Sasa Twa will contribute to the development of the Nepali economy and uplift the tourism industry in addition to promoting Newa culture globally.

1.3 Products and services

Sasa Twa takes pleasure in providing a wide range of goods and services intended to further and protect the alluring Newari way of life. Live music performances that immerse audience members in Nepal's colourful soundscape are at the centre of the company's services. The menu, which was thoughtfully designed to highlight the best of Newari cooking, offers a mouthwatering selection of meals made from ingredients that can be found nearby. Each taste, from sweet sweets like Yomari to savoury pleasures like Bara and Choila, captures the luscious flavours and long-cherished culinary customs.

Sasa Twa urges visitors to partake in Aila, a traditional local beverage recognized for its distinctive flavour and cultural importance, to round out the cultural experience. This delicious combination transports guests to a setting where harmony, flavour, and history all coexist. Sasa Twa accepts its duty as a cultural ambassador beyond the culinary experience by exhibiting and lauding the outstanding infrastructure and heritage sites that personify the character of the Newa people.

The restaurant's architecture and interior are both embellished with beautiful artwork that captures the majesty of the traditional Newari style. Every angle has a tale to tell, enticing visitors to investigate the cultural tapestry woven throughout every element. Sasa Twa provides the chance to take part in traditional cultural performances like Kumari Dance and Dhime Nitra. The mesmerising rituals and expressions that have been handed down through the decades may be experienced personally thanks to these enthralling performances.

1.4 Target market(s)

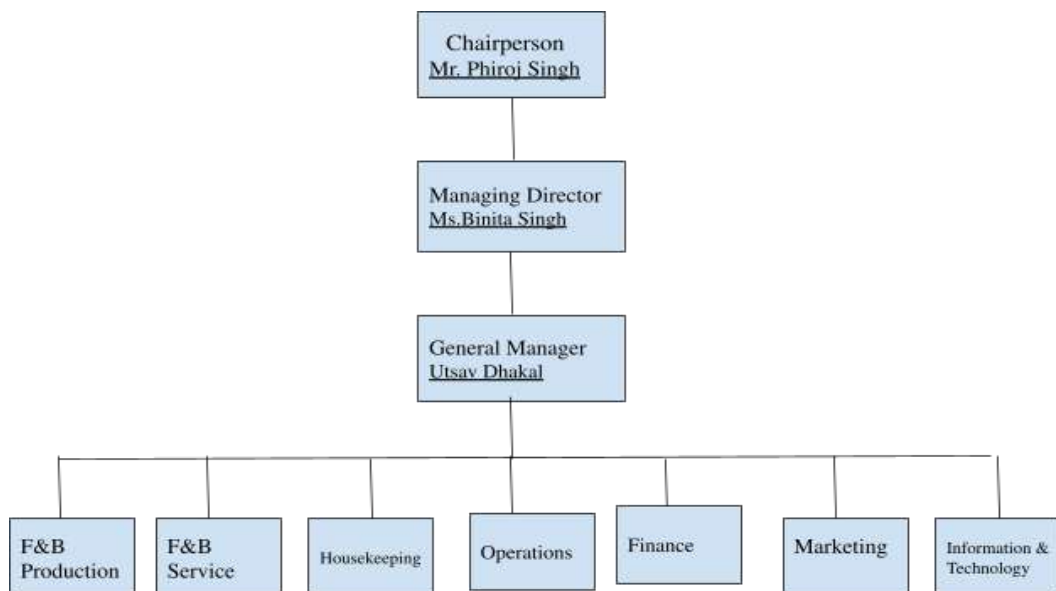
Sasa Twa's target markets are diverse and all-encompassing, appealing to a wide range of people. Cultural enthusiasts that are interested in learning about the Newa population and culture are one of the main target markets. Important target consumers include both domestic and foreign travellers looking for a genuine cultural encounter and a taste of regional cuisine. The restaurant wants to make dining enjoyable for families and people of all ages, including infants and the elderly. Sasa Twa also appeals to the youth demographic by offering them music and entertainment as per their taste with constant innovation.

Sasa Twa furthermore offers banquet services to corporates, governmental bodies, and private citizens who wish to host sizable meetings and events. The restaurant sets itself apart from other banquet venues with a distinct cultural experience. With the aim of providing a genuine cultural experience and promoting the Newa community and culture, Sasa Twa's target customers are diverse and include everyone from culture enthusiasts and tourists to families and businesses.

1.5 Organization and management

Sasa Twa is managed and administered by a solid team of experts that are thoroughly embedded in the local Newari setting.

Figure 1: Sasa Twa's Management Structure



Mr Phiroj Singh, the chairperson and inspiration behind the organisation, leads the team. Mrs Binita Singh, the managing director of Sasa Twa, has the same enthusiasm for maintaining Newari culture and offering real service. The organisation is staffed mostly by Newari and locals, with 75% of the workforce being female. Sasa Twa employs around 109 people who work together to realise the organisation's vision and objectives. Sasa Twa's management structure is intended to guarantee effective integration and execution of the organisation's goals.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams cost structure

- **Rent and utilities:** These costs cover the cost of renting a small portion of restaurant spaces as well as the cost of paying for utilities like gas, water, and electricity.
- **Food and beverage costs:** From sourcing raw materials to the preparation and distribution of Newari Cuisine
- **Labour expenses:** In order to have a committed crew working at the restaurant to offer clients high-quality service, this also covers employee salary and perks, training and other benefits.
- **Maintenance and repair costs:** These costs pay for the building's care and maintenance as well as any needed upgrades to the machinery or fixtures.
- **Marketing and advertising costs:** This covers the funds allotted for marketing initiatives, occasions, and social media marketing efforts designed to draw customers and raise visibility.
- **Insurance and legal fees:** These expenses include paying for the required licence and permit to conform to legal standards, as well as purchasing liability insurance coverage.
- **Taxes and other fees:** This covers the payment of sales tax as well as any additional charges or taxes related to running the business.

1.7 Revenue streams

- **Food and beverage sales:** Sasa Twa's main source of income is the sale of Newari food and drinks to diners that come into the establishment.
- **Cultural tours and experiences:** Sasa Twa provides cultural excursions so that guests can fully experience Newari customs while earning money from tour packages.
- **Partnership with tourism companies or travel agencies:** Through referrals and joint marketing initiatives, Sasa Twa can increase its customer base and increase its revenue by working with tourism organisations or travel agents.

- Cooking classes and workshops: To increase sales, the restaurant offers cooking seminars and workshops where patrons can discover Newari culinary specialities.
- Private event bookings: Sasa Twa derives revenue by offering out the lounge and banquet space for private occasions including weddings, parties, and business gatherings, conferences and other events.

1.8 Other information

In terms of future ambitions, Sasa Twa sees franchising as a way to extend its reach and promote the idea and experience of real Newari food and culture in many places. Additionally, the restaurant has plans to create lounges, banquets, and executive dining halls to offer a larger variety of eating alternatives, as well as to introduce baby meals to meet the needs of families.

Sasa Twa takes great satisfaction in using best practices that promote sustainability and capture the genuine atmosphere of Newar areas. By switching out traditional trash cans for mud ones, the restaurant has made efforts to limit plastic waste while adhering to the cultural norms and values of the Newa neighbourhood. Sasa Twa preserves the integrity of Newari culture in every facet of its activities by combining traditional, genuine, and indigenous customs.

Sasa Twa's success is greatly influenced by its strategic name and setting. The term itself, which is derived from the Newari language, symbolises the valued bond between a son-in-law and his father-in-law's home as well as the lively neighbourhood or "tole." The restaurant's ideal position in the culturally rich town of Kirtipur, which is close to Kathmandu, makes it more accessible and draws tourists looking for an authentic cultural encounter.

Sasa Twa wants to have an impact that goes beyond that of a typical restaurant. It intends to increase the range of products and services it offers, giving customers a total experience that extends beyond dining. The promotion of growth and the provision of a varied range of cultural activities, events, and services rely heavily on inclusion and partnership with other parties.

Sasa Twa goes above and beyond being a simple restaurant by embracing its role as a living monument to the Newa people's rich cultural infrastructure and heritage. It ensures that the customs and heritage of the Newa community endure and are honoured by acting as a portal for tourists to explore the fascinating tapestry of Newari culture.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Sasa Twa faces enormous hurdles in sustainable tourism and innovation as it works to enhance marketing efforts, protect Newari culture, and reduce negative effects. In order to support the company's dedication to sustainable business practices and ethical ingredient sourcing, securing a steady supply of raw materials and veggies from neighbourhood farmers and vendors is one of the main hurdles. It is challenging to efficiently balance resource demand and availability given the seasonal variations in visitor arrivals.

Another big difficulty is educating visitors about sustainable tourism and gradually changing their behaviour. Sasa Twa understands the value of empowering and encouraging its visitors to adopt sustainable practices while they are there, having a good effect on the environment and neighbourhood. Maintaining sustainability requirements requires effective supply chain management. To maintain the seamless flow of goods while upholding sustainable practices, Sasa Twa must forge strong relationships with suppliers and develop effective logistical procedures.

Employee training is essential for encouraging staff loyalty and sustainability. It is crucial to give staff members thorough training on sustainable practices and give them the tools they need to actively support the company's sustainability objectives. Sasa Twa can flourish sustainably if traditional activities like manufacturing Aila and Chhyang are modernised and standardised. The company can achieve a balance between tradition and advancement by embracing innovation while retaining the spirit of local expertise.

Sasa Twa can accomplish its goals of encouraging sustainable tourism, maintaining Newari culture, and having a beneficial impact on the environment and neighbourhood by confronting these issues head-on, putting into practice sustainable tourism methods, and using creative approaches.

2.2 Business idea

Sasa Twa embodies an innovative approach to sustainable tourism, placing a priority on the participation of all stakeholders and consistently monitoring and assessing its sustainability activities. The company shows a dedication to sustainable waste management by making adjustments like switching to mud containers for dustbins and redirecting leftover food to a local pig farm. The company's passion to maintain Newari culture is shown in the thoughtful naming and location decisions.

Utilising energy-saving lighting systems and using energy wisely are two energy-efficient strategies that help reduce the carbon impact. The goal of trash

segregation is to encourage recycling and decrease landfill waste. Sasa Twa uses established procedures to produce alcohol while maintaining the authenticity of age-old drinks like Aila. Working together with government agencies aids in the formulation of policies and strengthens initiatives for sustainable tourism.

Furthermore, Sasa Twa is accessible to a broad client base, from the working class to students, thanks to the moderation of pricing components. Sasa Twa portrays itself as a sustainable tourist enterprise that promotes cultural preservation, stakeholder participation, and environmental responsibility by incorporating these cutting-edge approaches.

2.3 External analysis

2.3.1 Threats

- Quite a few competitors: Sasa Twa faces competition from other businesses in the hospitality industry. However, Sasa Twa has managed to outperform its rivals because of its distinguishing qualities, uniqueness and special selling characteristics.
- Seasonal Fluctuations: The fluctuation may make it difficult to manage resources, keep a steady client flow, or control employee numbers. To make sure that the company can successfully respond to changing demand and optimise income throughout the year, rigorous planning and adaptability are required.

2.3.2 Opportunities

- Policy-level cooperation: Sasa Twa has the chance of collaborating with government agencies to establish regulations and regulations that promote ecotourism and cultural preservation.
- Understanding market trends and demands: Sasa Twa can modify its experiences and offers to match the changing needs of its target audience by keeping up with market trends and consumer requests.
- Digitalization of products and technology-friendly environment: Sasa Twa can improve client experiences and operational efficiency by embracing digitalization and incorporating technology innovations.
- Branding and international acceptance: Sasa Twa has an opportunity to develop a strong brand identity and obtain awareness in the worldwide market, drawing a larger consumer base and developing global acceptability.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- Huge experience in the industry: Sasa Twa has a lengthy history in the hospitality industry, dating back to 2010 BS. This experience gives essential insights and knowledge in providing excellent client experiences.
- Indigenous skills and originality: Sasa Twa highlights the rich indigenous abilities and uniqueness of the Newari culture, providing authentic and one-of-a-kind experiences that distinguish it apart from its rivals.
- Well-established relationships with stakeholders and partners: Sasa Twa benefits from enduring relationships with stakeholders such as local suppliers, farmers, artists, and members of the community. These connections help to ensure the authenticity and sustainability of its products.
- Strong supply chain management: The restaurant excels in supply chain management, ensuring a consistent and dependable flow of high-quality goods, products, and resources.
- Industry expertise and strong management team: Sasa Twa has a team with extensive industry experience that provides effective leadership and strategic decision-making to drive the enterprise's success.

2.4.2 Weakness

- Dependence on local resources: The dependence on locally obtained resources and foodstuffs may pose difficulties in terms of scalability and availability, especially during times of strong demand or seasonal changes.
- Limited geographical presence: Although Sasa Twa has had a significant impact in its current location, there is room for growth and a chance to reach a larger audience in other locales.

2.5 Activities

A number of important initiatives aiming at encouraging eco-friendly behaviours and reducing environmental effects were part of the Sasa Twa on Sustainable Tourism's implementation. The usage of sustainable materials throughout the establishment was one of the main points of emphasis. Sasa Twa used materials that were eco-friendly and generated from renewable sources to execute reformation and obtain decor items. This strategy made sure that the whole atmosphere and design adhered to sustainability ideals. The implementation of an online reservation system was another significant undertaking. Sasa Twa lessened the usage of printed documents and the production of

garbage by providing this practical paperless option. Through the Internet platform, visitors may quickly and simply reserve their slots, enhancing efficiency and simplifying the booking process.

Sasa Twa also planned eco-cooking classes to teach tourists and residents about environmentally friendly culinary methods. These classes placed a focus on adopting eco-friendly cooking methods, using locally produced materials, and minimising food waste. Sasa Twa intended to increase awareness and motivate people to make ecologically responsible culinary decisions by encouraging sustainable cooking. The preservation of water was another important concern for Sasa Twa. The establishment adopted a number of water-saving strategies, including the installation of water-saving fixtures and low-flow toilets. These initiatives seek to reduce water usage and encourage ethical water management on the property.

Sasa Twa also actively participated in recycling and garbage segregation campaigns. They used proper waste management techniques, which included sorting garbage generated inside the facility. This helped to minimise the total environmental impact by ensuring that recyclable items were handled properly. Overall, by implementing eco-friendly techniques, lowering trash output, and encouraging the protection of natural resources, these activities illustrated Sasa Twa's dedication to sustainable tourism.

2.6 Stakeholders

Sasa Twa engages with a diverse range of stakeholders who play significant roles in the success and sustainability of the enterprise. These stakeholders include:

Local Community: A vital stakeholder for Sasa Twa is the local community. They are directly touched by restaurant operations and contribute to the cultural heritage. Sasa Twa engages the neighbourhood community in a number of ways, including hiring local workers, purchasing products from nearby farms, and promoting the Newari culture, which helps to build a great connection with the community.

Employees: Sasa Twa's personnel are significant stakeholders who support the company's daily operations and overall success. The restaurant values its staff and upholds fair employment standards. It also offers chances for training and development and fosters a supportive workplace atmosphere.

Local Farms and Suppliers (Vendors): For the procurement of fresh food and resources, Sasa Twa relies on local farmers and vendors. Sasa Twa supports the neighbourhood economy, encourages sustainable agricultural methods, and assures the integrity and calibre of its products through working with nearby farmers and suppliers.

Government Bodies and Regulators: In order to adhere to laws, regulations, and health and safety requirements, Sasa Twa engages in communication with authorities and regulators. The efficient functioning of the restaurant and adherence to pertinent regulations is ensured by close collaboration with these partners.

Local Bodies - Kirtipur Municipality: Within the boundaries of the Kirtipur Municipality, Sasa Twa does business. Keeping good ties with the local government is essential if you want to get the licences, permissions, and assistance you need to run your business.

Travel Agencies and Industry Associations: To promote tourism and draw visitors, Sasa Twa works with trade organisations and travel firms. Sasa Twa gains from collaborations by gaining more exposure, marketing possibilities, and access to a larger client base.

Media and Local Communication Channels: Sasa Twa promotes its services, cultural events, and sustainable practices through interacting with the media and regional media outlets. The restaurant is able to reach a wider audience and spark interest in the Newari culture and cuisine thanks to media coverage and promotional initiatives.

Guthi Sansthan and Cultural Institutions: For the purpose of preserving and advancing Newari culture, Sasa Twa collaborates closely with Guthi Sansthan and other cultural organisations. Collaboration with these parties supports the preservation of cultural traditions while ensuring the authenticity and correctness of cultural portrayal.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Sasa Twa's sustainable tourism initiative aims to benefit various target markets, catering to the diverse interests and needs of different groups:

Cultural Enthusiasts: One of Sasa Twa's main target markets is the local and international cultural lovers looking for a genuine experience of the Newari culture. They want to get fully immersed in the customs, culture, and food of the Newa people. Through its exhibitions, live music performances, and traditional activities, Sasa Twa offers them a platform to discover and appreciate the rich cultural history of the Newa people.

Food Connoisseurs: Another target demographic for Sasa Twa is food admirers who value unusual and traditional culinary experiences. The restaurant offers a delicious variety of flavours and meals that are difficult to find elsewhere, showcasing authentic Newari cuisine made using locally produced products. Sasa Twa's extensive menu attracts foodies looking for a real experience of Nepal's culinary pleasures.

Educational Institutions: As part of their target market, Sasa Twa also provides services to educational institutions including colleges and universities. Sasa Twa gives

students a worthwhile educational experience by giving educational programs, cooking workshops, and cultural excursions, allowing them to get insights into Newari culture, sustainable practices, and traditional cooking methods.

Responsible Tourists and Eco-Tourists: Sasa Twa caters to ethical travellers and eco-tourists who value eco-friendly travel strategies. These people are aware of the importance of protecting the environment and helping their community. This target demographic connects with Sasa Twa's dedication to sustainability, ethical sourcing, and cultural preservation, giving them the chance to partake in responsible tourism.

Researchers: Sasa Twa also benefits researchers with an interest in Newari culture, ecotourism, and culinary customs. They can research and record the customs, native abilities, and preservation efforts made by the eatery. For academics studying sustainable tourism and cultural heritage, Sasa Twa is a useful resource and case study.

The effort of Sasa Twa reaches out to other people who appreciate genuine experiences, cultural preservation, and ethical tourism methods, such as family tourists, fans of sustainable cuisine, and others. Sasa Twa encourages community empowerment, sustainable development, and the preservation of Newari culture by providing goods and services to these varied target audiences.

2.8 Partners

With a variety of stakeholders, Sasa Twa has formed strategic alliances to advance projects for sustainable travel. Collaboration with the local governing body, Kirtipur Municipality, guarantees regulatory compliance and promotes a climate that is favourable to sustainable practices. Sasa Twa broadens its audience by promoting sustainable tourist services through alliances with businesses that handle travel.

Engagement with Guthi Sansthan and local host communities allows Sasa Twa to actively involve the community in preserving and showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the Newa people. By working together, they ensure that tourism activities align with sustainable principles and respect local traditions. Sasa Twa has teamed up with Ramailo Events to organise the live music performance, event management services and cultural workshops. In-Depth Photography has been associated with capturing the awesome thrilling monuments guests spend in Sasa Twa.

In addition to these partners, Sasa Twa has worked with artisans, cultural institutions, environmental organisations, educational institutions, corporates and more. These diverse collaborations broaden the scope of sustainable tourism initiatives, fostering creativity, knowledge exchange, and community engagement.

2.9 Finances

Sasa Twa's financial prospects have been largely driven by self-financing from its founder, Phiroj Singh, who utilised earnings from his former initiative, Sasa D Nawa. This self-funded approach has allowed for greater control over the financial operations of the venture and has enabled the organisation to invest in various aspects of the business.

One significant investment made by Sasa Twa is in the architectural design, heritage preservation, and overall traditional concept of the establishment. The attention to detail and the incorporation of authentic elements have not only enhanced the visitor experience but have also contributed to the unique selling proposition of Sasa Twa. The investment in creating an ambience that reflects the vibrant cultural heritage of the Nawa people has been instrumental in attracting customers and generating revenue.

Money has been a prime factor in the business model of Sasa Twa, but it has also been accompanied by a broader goal of community empowerment, collaboration, and revenue sharing. By involving the local community, suppliers, and partners, Sasa Twa has fostered a sense of ownership and collaboration, leading to mutual benefits and shared financial success. This approach aligns with the principles of sustainable tourism, where financial gains are not solely focused on the organisation but also on the local community and stakeholders. These factors have played a significant role in driving revenue generation and establishing Sasa Twa as a financially viable and sustainable tourism venture.

2.10 Human resources

Given the increasing demand and influx of tourists, acquiring more staff members who are well-educated and trained in sustainable tourism initiatives is crucial. By investing in proper education and training programs, the workforce can effectively contribute to the organisation's sustainable practices. Expanding the IT department will enable the integration of digitalization and the adoption of tech-friendly upgrades and trends, ensuring a seamless and efficient operation. It is crucial to restructure the organisational structure and assign duties in accordance with sustainable tourism criteria. The whole staff will actively participate in sustainable practices by embedding sustainability goals into company culture, improving the viability of sustainable tourism initiatives.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

Sasa Twa is able to efficiently use a variety of digital media, including well-known ones like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, for marketing and communication purposes. Sasa Twa may communicate with potential customers using various platforms,

provide interesting content, and highlight the distinctive culture and values of the business, all of which will improve the entire customer experience.

For visitors to understand more about the company's dedication to sustainable tourism, a special area of their website can be set aside to promote their sustainability initiatives and best practices. Sasa Twa might use conventional channels like local and national media in addition to digital marketing to reach a broader audience and publicise their sustainable tourism practices. Sasa Twa may associate with educational institutions and NGOs to broaden their influence and connect with like-minded people and groups while gaining access to their networks and working together on sustainability projects. Sasa Twa can raise awareness about its sustainable tourism practices and persuade potential customers to experience its distinctive offerings by distributing leaflets to corporate buildings, banks, government buildings, educational institutions, and major tourism hubs like hotels, lodges, and travel agencies.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Sasa Twa has had a substantial influence on its target market(s) and will continue to do so as a sustainable tourism enterprise. The chance for guests to sample the rich flavour and genuine delicacy of Newari cuisine is one of the main effects. Sasa Twa's authentic Newari cuisine not only meets the culinary needs of its patrons but also teaches them the distinctive tastes and culinary customs of the Newari culture. The target market(s) are significantly impacted by Sasa Twa's dedication to offering exceptional customer service and a memorable dining experience. The business makes sure that each visitor has an improved experience and departs with a pleasant image by appropriately handling consumers and providing effective services. In addition to increasing customer pleasure, this also encourages good word-of-mouth, which draws in more potential clients and broadens the consumer base.

In conclusion, Sasa Twa's sustainable tourism venture has a significant impact on its target market(s) by providing traditional Newari cuisine, fostering business growth, enlarging the local market, offering top-notch customer service, enhancing the customer experience, and reaching out to new potential clients through efficient marketing efforts.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Sasa Twa's sustainable tourism initiative has a big influence on a lot of different stakeholders. In the first place, it boosts the local economy by generating employment

possibilities and monetary benefits for the community. Second, by exhibiting the rich Newari culture's customs, rituals, and creative manifestations, it plays a significant part in maintaining and branding it. Additionally, Sasa Twa aggressively encourages the use of local producers' goods, therefore promoting the sustainability of traditional crafts and agricultural resources. Finally, the company establishes alliances with groups and travel companies to promote cooperation and mutual growth in the tourist business. Sasa Twa's sustainable tourism initiative has a favourable overall effect on the local population, the Newari way of life, and all other stakeholders.

3.3 Impact for the environment

Sasa Twa's sustainable tourism enterprise, via a number of projects and practices, significantly affects the environment. Utilising indigenous techniques and skills lessens the carbon imprint that transportation causes, helping to safeguard the environment. Sasa Twa encourages the use of sustainable items like Tapari (Leaf Plates), brassware, and clay pots as alternatives to conventional materials. Additionally, the project places a focus on using locally obtained raw materials and products to lessen the environmental effect of long-distance shipping and to support regional farmers and suppliers. Sasa Twa actively participates in environmental conservation and tree-planting initiatives with the goal of preserving and reestablishing the natural ecosystems. The project also uses effective practices and water management strategies, energy efficient measures and waste management to maximise resource use. By implementing these policies, Sasa Twa exhibits its dedication to sustainability and significantly contributes to protecting the environment for coming generations. Sasa Twa's sustainable methods have a good overall effect on the environment, encouraging eco-consciousness and responsible tourism.

3.4 Impact for the company

The impact created for the host company is both profound and rewarding. Firstly, the firm generates wealth through a variety of business ventures, allowing for long-term development and growth. Sasa Twa accomplishes both financial success and social transformation by putting into practice an innovative social entrepreneurship approach. By encouraging a sense of empowerment and advancement, the business improves the community by generating job possibilities and promoting economic diversification. Sasa Twa has also strengthened its brand image by placing a high priority on preserving and advancing Newari culture. This dedication has garnered the firm global acclaim and established it as a key participant in the sustainable tourism

sector. As the brand starts to be associated with authenticity, cultural experiences, and sustainable practices, its value rises.

In essence, Sasa Twa has had a wide-ranging and inspirational influence on the host organisation. It includes the creation of wealth, a fresh take on social entrepreneurship, the improvement of the surroundings, and the construction of a solid brand frame that attracts awareness and value appreciation.

3.5 Impact for the CoE (Center of Excellence)

The CESTour project, funded by Erasmus+ and the European Union, has had a transformative impact on the case organisation involved. This collaboration between the organisation and academic institutions has created a platform for research, innovation, and knowledge exchange. This has also resulted in more informed decision-making processes and the implementation of sustainable practices across various aspects of the organisation's operations. It has improved the organisation's relations with the academic community and made it easier for businesses and universities to collaborate in the area of sustainable tourism. By being connected to these institutes, the organisation has been able to make use of their research and experience while being at the forefront of industry innovations. The CoE has promoted an innovative culture and new viewpoints by involving students in real-world projects and giving them the chance to put their knowledge and abilities to use.

The CESTour project has had a significant impact on the company by integrating student learning experiences, aligning practices with sustainable tourism principles, building professional expertise, collaborating with academic institutions, and creating a network of cooperation. These adjustments have elevated the organisation to a position of leadership in Nepalese university-business collaboration, economic growth, and sustainable tourism.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Sasa Twa has exemplified the successful implementation of sustainable tourism practices through a collaborative and innovative approach. Several aspects of the implementation process have worked well for Sasa Twa. Firstly, the organisation's emphasis on preserving the Newari culture and promoting authentic delicacies has resonated with the target market, resulting in a strong customer base. The use of indigenous techniques and eco-friendly products has not only contributed to environmental protection but has also enhanced the overall experience for visitors. The integration of technology, such as the online booking system and IT services, has

improved efficiency and convenience for customers, while the strategic marketing efforts through digital channels and leaflet distribution have effectively promoted the venture to a wider audience. While the implementation process has been largely successful, there are areas where further improvements can be made. One aspect to consider is the scalability of the sustainable practices implemented by Sasa Twa.

Exploring opportunities to replicate these practices in other tourism establishments and collaborating with industry partners to disseminate knowledge and best practices would help to amplify the impact of sustainable tourism initiatives. Additionally, implementing a robust evaluation and monitoring framework from the early stages of the project would provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the sustainable tourism practices and help identify areas for refinement. This continuous assessment would ensure that the project remains aligned with its sustainability goals and allows for timely adjustments and improvements.

Furthermore, maintaining open lines of communication and collaboration with all stakeholders is vital for the long-term success of the venture. Regular engagement with partners, including travel agencies, cultural institutions, and event management firms, would facilitate ongoing support and promote the sustainable tourism agenda.

In conclusion, the implementation process of Sasa Twa has showcased the successful integration of sustainable tourism practices, benefiting the organisation, the local community, and the environment. By focusing on scalability, evaluation, and stakeholder engagement, Sasa Twa can further enhance its impact and serve as a model for sustainable tourism initiatives in the region and beyond.

Figure 2: Sasa: Twa Restaurant, Gallary









Source: <https://sasa.com.np/home.php>

CASE STUDY 21

Royal Mountain Travel

Bimal Subedi

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Established in 2005, Royal Mountain travel is one of the leading travel company specialized in providing unique and authentic travel experiences to its clients. It is a company based in Lal Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal with experienced travel professionals curating a wide-variety of tours, treks, mountaineering expeditions and community-based experiences in Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan. Royal Mountain Travel is a trusted name in the tourism industry of Nepal and known for its high-quality personalized services to its clients.

Royal Mountain travel has been recognized itself one of the best names in the country in promoting and practicing of sustainable tourism. Since from the time of its establishment Royal Mountain Travel is committed in practicing responsible tourism with the concept of sustainable and eco-friendly tours to its valued customers.

Travelife, Sustainability is at the core for doing travel business and it is one of the few companies in Nepal to be awarded with The Travelife “Excellence in Sustainability” certification. This means the comply with over 160 criteria related to sustainability Management. RMT also has been recognized by other different International organizations like SKal International, PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association) and International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPT), for its outstanding commitment to sustainable tourism. With a motive to build sustainable tourism in Nepal, Royal Mountain Travel is focusing on economic empowerment, waste reduction, green tourism and sustainable communities. The organization has its three main core values for sustainability and they are a. community empowerment, b. Environmental Stewardship and c. Giving back.

This company has very simple approach and always tries to offer visitor something different: genuine experiences, designed sustainably with the objectives building a better future for all.

Development and promotion of community-based tourism is one of the major projects of Royal Mountain travel in Nepal. RMT has played significant role in developing and promoting community-based tourism especially in the rural areas of Nepal. They have initiated several projects that involve local communities in tourism

activities, aiming to create economic benefits for local people while preserving their cultural and natural heritage. Royal Mountain Travel supports community-based tourism through their village Tourism project. The main reason behind giving priority for rural areas is to divert the mass flow of the tourist in different reason so the its negative impact can be minimized.

1.2 Vision and Mission

The vision of Royal Mountain Travel is to become a leading Travel company which aims at promoting sustainable tourism in the country which benefits both travellers and local communities while protecting the environment and preserving of cultural heritages.

The mission of Royal Mountain Travel is to create life time experiences for the visitors. Visitors can participate in daily activities such as cooking, farming, and handcrafts and can learn about Nepali customs and traditions. Mission includes; Providing authentic and immersive travel experiences that connect travellers with local communities and culture. Contributing to the economic development of Nepal by promoting community-based tourism and supporting local businesses. Encouraging sustainable and responsible tourism practices that minimize negative impacts on the environment and preserve cultural heritage. Ensuring the safety and well-being of their clients, employees, and partners.

Overall, Royal mountain travel's vision and mission reflect their commitment in promoting sustainable and responsible tourism in Nepal, while providing high-quality travel experiences that benefit both travellers and local communities.

1.3 Products/services

Company's approach is simple. It seeks to offer visitors something different and genuine experiences designed sustainably for creating positive impact. Royal Mountain travel is guided by the following three pillars based on sustainability (Community empowerment, environmental stewardship and giving back) in developing and designing the products. The Royal Mountain Travel offers best holiday packages and also develops and design tailor-made itinerary for creating dream activity as per the required and demand of every type of travellers.

Royal mountain travels not only sales tour products but also initiates in developing new destination and incorporate new communities in its existing product line. Royal mountain travel organizes different range and categories of products and services so that costumer can choose best among the alternatives. Some of their main offerings include;

Trekking and hiking packages, cultural tours, Adventure activities, hotel and transportation arrangements, customized itineraries. Royal Mountain Travel is committed to promoting sustainable and responsible tourism in Nepal, and on of their initiatives in the area of community-based tourism. Some of the community-based tourism products offered by Royal Mountain Travel include;

Homestay experiences; they offer homestay experiences in rural villages where travellers can live with local families, learn about their culture and daily life, and participate in activities such as cooking, farming, and handicrafts.

Community-based treks: RMT offer trekking experiences that are led by local guides and porters, providing employment opportunities for members of the local community. These treks often include visits to community projects such as schools, health clinics, and micro-enterprises.

Cultural immersion tours; RMT offers tour that allow visitor to experience the unique culture of various ethnic groups in Nepal, such as the Tamang, Newar, and Tharu communities. These tours often involve homestay, cultural performances, and traditional meals. Volunteering opportunities: RMT offer volunteering opportunities in various community development projects, such as education, health, and environment. Volunteers can work with local communities to make a positive impact and gain a deeper understanding in Nepali culture.

Overall, Royal Mountain Travel's community- based tourism products provide a unique opportunity for travellers to connect with local communities, learn about their culture, and make a positive impact through responsible and sustainable tourism practices.

1.4 Target market(s)

Royal Mountain travel targets a range of groups from adventure seekers to family tour seekers. For adventure lovers RMT offers different types of outdoor activities like trekking, hiking, rafting, paragliding in the different regions of Nepal. Cultural enthusiasts; RMT organizes especial tour who are interested in learning about the Nepal cultural heritage, historical sites, where they can experience traditional music, dance and food.

Sustainable and responsible travellers: Those tourists who are interested in sustainable and responsible tourism practices and wants to benefit by contributing to local communities and tries for minimizing negative impacts on the environment, support in preserving cultural heritage are offered with different types of community-based tourism activities.

Volunteer travellers: RMT also targets travellers who are interested in volunteering their time and skills in community development projects in Nepal.

Family and group travellers; RMT target families and groups who are looking for customized travel experiences that meet their specific needs and interests. Furthermore, RMT's target customers are diverse and include solo travellers, couples, families, groups, educational groups, and corporate groups who are interested in exploring Nepal's Natural beauty and cultural heritage while supporting sustainable and responsible tourism practices.

1.5 Organization and management

Royal Mountain Travel's Management team is made up of experienced professionals who have worked in the industry for many years. RMT has a hierarchical organizational structure with clear lines of authority and responsibility for delivering high-quality services to its clients. The company is led by a Managing director who oversees the entire team and is responsible for setting the company's strategic direction.

Each department is headed by a departmental manager who reports to the managing director. These managers are responsible for the day-to-day operations of their respective departments and work closely with their teams to ensure that everything is being operated smoothly. The company also has a strong focus on training and development and also educates and aware in practicing principles of sustainability in Tourism . Regular training sessions are provided to staff members to ensure that have the full level of competencies to give their best on their respective jobs.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Royal Mountain Travel's revenue streams are diverse and generate income from different sources while offering wide range of services to its clients. Royal Mountain Travel generates revenue through various sources including;

Tour Packages: Royal Mountain travel offers different tour packages of adventure travel and cultural tours. The company generates revenue by charging fees for these packages.

Customized tours: The company offers tailor made packages to fulfil the needs preferences of specific clients and collects revenue by charging fees for these customized tours. By organizing different Trekking and mountaineering expeditions programs and even also earns through commissions from partners, with other tour operators, hotels and transportation companies.

1.7 Other information

Normally other travel company they sell tourism products of different types but Royal Mountain not only sale tourism product but also develops and manage tourism destination and according develop destination products, does promotion and sales as well.

With the development of community-based tourism, Royal Mountain travel is being able to develop entrepreneurship among the women which is itself one of the powerful tools for promoting gender equality. One and only the best way to empower the women is creating opportunity to have access in income generation. Community based tourism had created this opportunity through entrepreneurship development because of which unpaid job has been capitalize as paid job. For entrepreneurship development, RMT has trained community women on various aspects of tourism such as hospitality, customer service, marketing. This will help women to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to run their own tourism-related business. When women started running homestay on their leadership after this the living standard of the family upgraded because of which children of particular family got economic support and got access to quality education and health facilities. This kind of initiation had proved that women can play crucial role in promoting and preserving of their culture by sharing their knowledge and skills with tourists.

Apart from this RMT works closely with local communities to promote sustainable tourism practices and ensure that tourism benefits local economy. The company hires local guides and porters supports local conservation initiatives and provides training and development opportunities for the locals. It is also committed in minimizing environmental footprint and promotes eco-friendly practices with minimizing waste and plastic use. RMT also promotes and supports for gender equality, child protection and human rights. The company also operated charitable foundation that supports education, healthcare, and community development initiatives in Nepal. Royal Mountain Travel is actively involving in advocating for sustainable tourism practices in the policies of Nepal since from the date of its establishments.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Practicing sustainability in tourism requires careful planning, collaboration, and commitment from all the stakeholders involved. Despite having different challenges Royal Mountain Travel remains committed and has been playing significant role in promoting sustainable tourism successfully. As per the requirement company is

rigorously doing research in finding innovative solutions to overcome the challenges. Balancing sustainability with profitability is one of the biggest challenges for the company while its mission is to promote sustainable tourism. The company also operated charitable foundation that supports education, healthcare, and community development initiatives in Nepal, these kind of welfare activities also require huge budgets.

Another most important initiation done by Royal Mountain Travel that is supporting homestays for the installation of Solar panel especially to rural homestays there is absence of hydropower-based electricity. It is the best approach to afford clean energy and supporting for sustainability.

Environmental Stewardship is one of the major priorities and for this RMT has initiated for using reusable aluminium bottles instead of single-use plastic water bottles. RMT is committed to shared responsibility of unburdening the planet by waste reduction by joining hands with its partners, locals and travellers.

Royal Mountain Travel follows the three Rs of waste Management techniques (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle). This means that they are committed to reduce the amount of waste generate in first phase, reuse items as much possible and recycle it, after recycle it can be re-used.

Giving Back is the philosophy developed by the RMT “Our communities are what make us. When they benefit, we benefit and when benefit, they should benefit too” So, “NO POVERTY”.

The company uses biodegradable and compostable products, such as plates, cups and cutlery, made from natural materials such as bamboo or corn-starch, which can be safely disposed in the environment without causing harm. For the production of these kind of product RMT provides training to the locals especially to the members of community homestay. Even it does market and promotion of these kind products so that locals can generate some income.

2.1.1 Challenges

Community based homestay tourism is a form of tourism that focuses on local communities and their involvement and participation in tourism business.

Community based tourism with the practice of homestay tourism offers the high possibility to generate revenue through enhancing income-generating capability through development of additional homestays so that more community members can get opportunity to obtain benefits from the development. Since local residents are the part of the product, success of tourism depends on the active participation, ownership development and cooperation of the local community. In community-based tourism people's participation is one of the most essential elements for its success. Community

based tourism involves local participation and developing ownership with in them so that more benefits remains with them.

Tourism not only brings economic benefits to local communities but it can also create social and cultural conflicts and sometimes natural resources can be exploited as well. Royal Mountain travel understands the values the participation of community people in their projects and ensures their active participation in decision-making process.

However, this can be challenging, as some communities may be sceptical about the benefits of tourism or may not have the resources and infrastructure to support sustainable tourism practices.

RMT has been working closely with the local communities to identify their needs, strengths and resources. For this RMT provides training and capacity building programs to help local communities so that community stakeholders can hold ownership and can make decision on their own for running community business successful.

For the quality management of homestay, homestay members need to meet certain standards of cleanliness, comfort and safety to attract visitors. This can be challenging, particularly in rural areas where the infrastructure and resources may be limited. Another challenge faced by RMT is practicing homestay tourism is the need to balance the interests of visitors with the interest of local communities.

Visitors may have different expectations and preferences, and it is essential to ensure that the local culture and environment are well preserved.

One of the biggest challenges faced by Royal Mountain Travel is the lack of awareness among the travellers about sustainable tourism practices. Many tourists are not aware of the impacts of their travel on local communities and the environment and may not prioritize sustainable tourism practices when choosing product and a travel company.

Another challenge faced by the company is the limited resources and infrastructure available for sustainable tourism practices.

Major issues faced by RMT is practicing homestay tourism are ensuring that the homestays meet the expectations and needs of both visitors and the local communities, and balancing the interests of visitors with interests of local communities. There is limited access to sustainable transportation options, limited waste management infrastructure in remote areas.

Sometimes government and policies and regulations can also pose challenges for sustainable tourism initiatives. Government may be limited support and the regulations that make it difficult to implement sustainable tourism practices.

Locals have limited access for education and training and lack tourism professional on sustainable tourism practices because of it becoming challenging to

implement sustainable tourism practices at the local level and to promote sustainable tourism as viable and desirable option for travellers.

2.2 The business/project idea

Community homestay network homestay circuit development: Development and promotion of community-based tourism is one of the major projects of Royal Mountain travel in Nepal. For the promotion of community-based tourism RMT has developed its sister organization as a social enterprise called 'Community Homestay Network', that supports a network of community homestays in Nepal. This Network began as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative. This network connects travellers with communities across Nepal, providing a unique opportunity to stay with Nepali families and can immersed in typical Nepali rural life. After receiving a Booking.com Booster grant to kick-start the platform, it has grown into independent social enterprise that helps to empower women all over Nepal. At the same time, local host families get the opportunity to share their culture and landscapes with world while gaining access to sustainable source of income through tourism.

Community Homestay Network has been instrumental in empowering women where women are encouraged for becoming entrepreneurs by starting their own homestays. This Network provides education and training to women, helps in enhancing their skill and knowledge in the areas such as hospitality, management and operation homestay, and even for marketing and promotion.

Women can have income opportunities to be self-sufficient and can run their businesses in their own which had helped to promote gender equality and support sustainable development in local communities. Access to income is one the best strategy for the empowerment of women.

This network has enlisted on its sites the names of most popular community homestays from Nepal and through this network costumer can book the homestay packages as well. It is one of the best initiatives done by RMT for the promotion homestay tourism in the country.

2.3 External analysis

At present consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the impact they can create on the environment and local communities. Certain groups of consumer demand for sustainable tourism products/packages. Consumers are actively seeking out sustainable travel options and experiences that are responsible and respectful towards the environment and local cultures.

The tourism industry is gradually shifting towards sustainable tourism practices because of this different stakeholder from the industry are adopting sustainable tourism practices in their businesses. Many travel companies are implementing responsible and sustainable tourism practices in their operations and offerings travel product as per the need and demand of the costumer.

It is the era of sustainable development there is increase in collaboration and partnerships between the different stakeholders including travel companies, governments, NGOs, and local communities. Partnerships and collaborations can help to address the challenges of sustainability in the tourism industry and can lead to more effective and sustainable solutions.

2.4 Internal analysis

The main strengths the company have:

- Royal mountain travel has quality team of expertise from tourism industry, with a team of experienced professionals who are knowledgeable about the local culture and environment even they're well trained, educated and experienced in practicing sustainable tourism.
- Royal Mountain Travel has established a strong partnership with the Community Homestay Network, a social enterprise that promotes sustainable tourism and supports local communities. Success of Royal Mountain travel depends on the success of community homestay tourism.
- Royal Mountain travel promotes their partnership with the Community Homestay Network as part of their marketing strategy, emphasizing their commitment to sustainable tourism practices. This helps them to differentiate them from competitors and appeal to clients who are interested in authentic experiences of Nepal rural life.
- The partnership with community Homestay Network has a positive impact on local communities, as it provides them with income-generating opportunities and also has a positive impact on visitors as they have opportunity to get involve with locals and learn about their culture and lifestyles.
- Royal Mountain travel has network of partners and suppliers, including the Community Homestay Network, which helps them to offer wide range of tourism product and services.
- Royal Mountain Travel has a strong reputation in the tourism industry in Nepal. They have received several awards and recognitions for their commitment to sustainability. This reputation has helped them attract new clients and retain existing ones.

2.5 Activities

The community Homestay Network offers a range of packages to travellers who are interested in experiencing authentic Nepal culture and hospitality some of the packages offered by community homestay network are:

Homestay experience: this package offers travellers the chance to stay with a Nepali family and experience local culture, food and daily life.

Trekking and homestay: This package combines trekking in the Nepali Himalayas with homestay experience, allowing travellers to immerse themselves in both and natural and cultural beauty.

Volunteer and homestay: This package offers travellers the chance to volunteer in local community project while staying with a Nepali family, giving them a unique and meaning life time experiences.

Cultural immersion: This package provides travellers with the opportunity to explore Nepali culture in-depth, with activities such as cooking classes, traditional cultural dance performances, and visit to local historical sites.

Adventure and homestay: This package combines adventure activities such as rafting, bungee, and paragliding with a homestay experience, giving travellers the best of both worlds.

Royal Mountain Travel offers homestay tour packages in various destinations through out Nepal. The company carefully selects homestays that meet its quality standards and ensure the travellers have a comfortable stay. Depending on the package chosen, travellers can participate in various activities, cooking classes, trekking, sightseeing around the villages, getting involved in farming activities and volunteering in local community projects. Transportation arrangement with hassle-free travel experience as far as possible to and from homestay destinations. The company provides experienced tours guides who are knowledgeable about the local culture and traditions can help travellers navigate their way through their homestay experience.

2.6 Stakeholders

Royal Mountain Travel has several stakeholders who are involved in promoting the Community Homestay Network and the success of CHN depends on the collaboration and support these stakeholders. RMT plays a critical role in bringing them together to promote the network to others.

Travelers are the primary stakeholders in Royal Mountain Travel's homestay packages. They are attracted to the unique and authentic cultural experience offered by the Community Homestay Network, and their positive feedback and reviews help to promote the network to others.

The Community Homestay Network relies on local hosts who provide hospitality services to the visitors. The hosts are critical stakeholders in the promotion of the network as they offer a unique insight into Nepali culture and hospitality, which draws the attentions of many travellers.

The Community Homestay Network is designed to benefit local communities by providing them with a source of income and promoting sustainable tourism. As such local communities are essential stakeholders in the promotion of the network as they help to spread the word to travellers and provide warm hospitality to visitors.

The staff of Royal Mountain Travel plays a crucial role in promoting the community Homestay Network by educating travellers about the benefits of homestay tourism and helping them select the best packages to meet their needs.

Royal Mountain Travel works closely with other tourism industry partners such as hotel, airlines, and transportation companies to promote the Community Homestay Network and integrate it into broader tourism packages

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Community Homestay Network provides a platform for local communities to showcase their culture, traditions, and the way of typical Nepali rural life to visitors which had helped in creating pride and identity for the local communities. Through this network community members have got opportunity to earn through entrepreneurship development and its ripple economic impacts in the community.

The network provides training and support to homestay hosts enabling them to provide high-quality accommodation and experiences to visitors. This not only benefits the host themselves but also contributes to the overall success of the network.

Tourists/visitors to Nepal benefit from the unique and authentic experiences offered by the Network. They have the opportunity to stay with local families, learn about the culture and traditions of communities they visit, and contribute to sustainable tourism practices. The network supports local businesses by promoting their products and services to the visitors. This includes everything from handicrafts and souvenirs to transportation and food.

Community Homestay tourism Network promotes sustainable tourism practices, such as waste management and environmental conservation. By doing so, the network helps to preserve the natural resources of the destination. With the development of community-based tourism by Mountain travel even other travel company are benefiting by selling homestay-based tourism products.

By promoting tourism in rural areas, the community Homestay Network contributes to the government's goal of sharing tourism benefits to all regions of the

country. The network also supports the government's efforts to promote sustainable tourism practices and preserve the environment.

The following targets, were considered (as an example targets have been taken from the following document, which is also useful for further details <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/cycling-tourism/market-potential>)

2.8 Partners

Local hosts who provide hospitality services to the visitors. The hosts are critical stakeholders in the promotion of the network as they offer a unique insight into Nepali culture and hospitality, which draws the attentions of many travellers. Royal Mountain Travel works closely with other tourism industry partners such as hotel, airlines, and transportation companies to promote the Community Homestay Network and integrate it into broader tourism packages.

2.9 Finances

At this early stage of the project, activities were funded from the company's own resources and after slowly getting success with company has been recognized well nationally and internationally and different NGOs and NGOs started supporting its projects and also supported in marketing and promotion.

2.10 Human resources

Planning and management of community Homestay is done by the staffs of Royal Mountain Travel. No additional human resources were needed for the running of community homestay. Host (Homestay owners) and locals were the main priorities for running of the homestay. For the development of homestay outsourced by Royal Mountain Travel.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

Promotion activities are online and offline. Promotion of Community Homestay is being done through its own company website and from this particular website booking also can be done (through which it is also possible to purchase them). It is also being promoted by Royal Mountain Travel through its website's pages. A coordinated social media strategy was designed between all partners with regular updated posts on Facebook and Instagram to present past travel experiences and to describe itineraries.

Offline, brochures, visiting cards were produced and distributed to all tourist offices in the country. In addition, participation in the different travel mart fair is also being done by the network for its promotion. Finally, an educational tour was organized with journalists from the national and international tourist press.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Staying at a community homestay can raise customers' awareness of environmental issues and promote sustainable tourism practices. Homestays are often designed to be eco-friendly and minimize environmental impact, and customers can learn about sustainable living practices from their hosts.

Homestay also allows customers to interact with locals and build connections with community which can foster understanding and build relationships between people from different cultural backgrounds.

Staying in community can broaden their perspective and lead to personal growth and development. It can be an opportunity to step out of their comfort zone and learn about different way of living. Staying at a community homestay allows customers to immerse themselves in the local culture and customs, providing a unique and authentic travel experience.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

The Community Homestay Network in Nepal has a range of impacts on its stakeholders, including:

Host communities: The homestay program provides an opportunity for host communities to generate income from tourism and diversify their livelihoods. This can help to reduce poverty and improve the standard of living in the community. In addition, the program helps to preserve and promote local cultural traditions, which can boost community pride and identity.

Guests: Guests benefit from the opportunity to experience authentic cultural immersion and to connect with local communities. This can enhance their understanding of local customs and traditions, and provide a unique travel experience. Homestays also offer an alternative to traditional hotel stays, and can be more affordable and sustainable.

Local businesses: The Community Homestay Network supports local businesses such as handicraft shops, restaurants, and transportation providers, which can benefit from increased tourism to the area.

Environment: Community homestays promote sustainable tourism by encouraging responsible environmental practices, such as waste reduction, water conservation, and the use of renewable energy.

Government: The program can help to support local and regional economic development, and promote the image of the country as a destination for sustainable tourism.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs): NGOs that support sustainable tourism and community development can partner with the Community Homestay Network to achieve shared goals, such as poverty reduction and cultural preservation.

Overall, the Community Homestay Network in Nepal has a range of positive impacts on its stakeholders, promoting sustainable tourism and supporting local communities.

The impacts for the different stakeholders have already been mentioned above, however these concern:

- promotion of slow and sustainable tourism practices
- increase in the stay of tourists at the destination and the opportunity to extend their stay in accommodation facilities, this resulting in greater economic impact (possible indicators: number of overnight stays, length of average stay etc.)
- valorisation of local cultural heritage (possible indicators: change in the number of museums'/attractions opening days; change in number of visits to local attractions etc.)
- expansion of the tourist offer and greater attractiveness of the destinations (possible indicators: number of tourism products/proposals on the destination present on TO catalogues etc.)
- maintenance of cycling routes and tracks (possible indicators: presence of new road signs; n. of new services on the route etc.)
- greater visibility of the territory and of the destination (possible indicators: interest on google trends; rise in number of TripAdvisor reviews; rise in hashtag related to the destination/product on social media etc.)

3.3 Impact for the environment

The objective of establishing of community homestay tourism to create positive impacts on the environment. Positive impacts may include:

Sustainable tourism practices: Homestay programs often encourage responsible environmental practices, such as waste reduction, water conservation, and the use of renewable energy. This can help to reduce the impact of tourism on the environment. Conservation efforts: In some cases, homestay programs may support conservation efforts by promoting responsible environmental practices and helping to fund local conservation initiatives. Education and awareness: Homestay programs can help to educate guests about environmental issues and raise awareness about the importance of conservation. environmentally responsible policies and practices, and through partnerships with local conservation organizations and government agencies.

3.4 Impact for the company

The impact on the company is both strategic, competitive, and economic. With regard to the first aspect, the company has increased and strengthened its catalogue of offers and has managed to broaden its market base on previously uncovered targets. This has made it possible to improve its competitive positioning. With regard to the second aspect, the initiative made it possible to diversify the sources of income and reduce the risk. In addition, the project has generated \$\$ additional revenues in its first year of operation.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The potential impacts on the development of the Center of Excellence of the new initiative/business on sustainable tourism concern: new training materials; new internships and new jobs in partner companies; collaborations on communication or for the development of new products and services.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Royal Mountain Travel's success lies in its unwavering commitment to sustainable tourism since its establishment in 2005. The company, based in Kathmandu, Nepal, has garnered a reputation for providing unique travel experiences in Nepal, Tibet, and Bhutan. With a focus on eco-friendly tours and personalized services, Royal Mountain Travel has earned prestigious certifications like Travelife's "Excellence in Sustainability," setting it apart in the industry. International recognition from organizations such as SKal International, PATA, and IIPT further underscores its dedication to responsible tourism. The diverse range of experiences offered, coupled with the expertise of experienced travel professionals, has contributed to the company's standing as a trusted name in the tourism sector.

While excelling in sustainability, Royal Mountain Travel could enhance transparency by providing more detailed information on how sustainable practices are integrated into its operations. Clear communication about community engagement and specific positive impacts on local communities would add depth to the narrative. Additionally, the company could explore innovative sustainability practices, collaborate with local NGOs, and regularly update clients on the progress of its initiatives. By addressing these areas, Royal Mountain Travel can continue to lead in sustainable tourism, ensuring both customer satisfaction and positive contributions to the destinations it serves.

CASE STUDY 22

Kirtipur Community Homestay

Devina Shrestha

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Established in Falgun of 2075 B.S., **Kirtipur Community Homestay** is one of the emerging lodging institutes specialized in providing unique and authentic homestay experiences to its guests. It is a company based in Kritipur, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Kirtipur Community Homestay has been practicing social development through homestay tourism. They provide a family environment to the guests who chose their stay at this community homestay. Since the time of its establishment, Kritipur Community Homestay is committed to practicing responsible tourism with the concept of providing sustainable and eco-friendly facilities to its valued customers.

With a motive to provide the guests with a homely and authentic environment to spend the night, Kritipur Community Homestay also aims to revitalize the culture of Kritipur and promote sustainable cultural tourism of Kritipur. The core values of the homestay for sustainability are:

- a. Provide employment to the local women
- b. To involve the local community
- c. To save and promote traditional culture

This homestay has a very simple approach and always tries to offer the visitors with genuine and indigenous experiences. Development and promotion of community-based tourism and the culture of Kritipur is the major objective of Kritipur Community Homestay.

1.2 Vision and Mission

The vision of Kritipur Community Homestay is to become a leading homestay and accommodation provider in Kritipur, which aims at promoting sustainable tourism in the city which benefits both the travellers and local communities by preserving and showcasing the local and indigenous culture, traditions, heritage and lifestyle of Kritipur. This homestay aims to provide a unique cultural experience to the tourists while promoting responsible tourism practices and contributing to the social and economic development of the community.

The mission of Kirtipur Community Homestay is to create lifetime experiences for the visitors by providing them with an authentic experience during their stay and by involving all the local community members. They aim to create a platform for local families and community members to participate in the tourism industry and benefit from it, and to provide opportunities for the local community to showcase their cultural heritage and way of life, while also improving their livelihoods and preserving their environment.

Major missions of Kirtipur Community Homestay include:

1. Providing comfortable and affordable homestay accommodation in traditional Newari houses, and allowing tourists to experience the local culture and way of life.
2. Promoting the indigenous and authentic cultural heritage of Kirtipur by offering guided tours of the town's historic sites and museums, and providing information about the town's culture and traditions.
3. Supporting local businesses and families by offering local food and handicraft workshops.
4. Promoting eco-tourism and outdoor activities such as trekking and hiking.
5. Preserving the natural environment by promoting responsible tourism practices and supporting community development projects that focus on sustainability and environmental conservation.
6. Providing volunteer programs that allow tourists to work with the local community on various projects such as teaching English, working in local schools, and participating in community development projects.

Overall, Kirtipur Community Homestay's vision and mission reflect their commitment in promoting sustainable and responsible tourism in Nepal, preserving the local culture and traditions, contributing to the economic and social development of the local community, and fostering cross-cultural understanding and exchange through their community, while providing high-quality travel experiences that benefit both travellers and the local communities.

1.3 Products/services

Kirtipur Community Homestay is a community-based tourism established in Kirtipur, a historic town in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal. The homestay offers various products and services to tourists:

1. **Homestay accommodation:** Kirtipur Community Homestay offers comfortable and affordable accommodation in traditional Newari houses. Tourists can experience the local culture and way of life by staying with a local family.

2. **Local food:** The homestay offers traditional Newari food, which is famous for its unique taste and flavors. The local hosts prepare the meals using fresh and organic ingredients, and tourists can participate in cooking classes to learn the recipes.
3. **Cultural tours:** Kirtipur is rich in history and culture, and tourists can explore the town's temples, palaces, and museums. The homestay offers guided tours to historic sites and provides information about the town's culture and traditions.
4. **Trekking and hiking:** Kirtipur is surrounded by hills and mountains where activities like trekking and hiking can be executed to explore the natural beauty of the region. This homestay offers trekking and hiking packages, which include guides, transportation, and accommodation.
5. **Volunteer programs:** The homestay also offers volunteer programs, which allow tourists to work with the local community on various projects such as teaching English, working in local schools, and participating in community development projects, etc.
6. **Handicraft workshops:** Kirtipur is famous for its traditional handicrafts, and tourists can participate in workshops to learn the art of making pottery, weaving, and woodcarving.
7. **Yoga and meditation:** Kirtipur homestay offers yoga and meditation classes, which are conducted by experienced instructors. Tourists can relax and rejuvenate their minds and body by practicing yoga and meditation in the serene surroundings of Kirtipur.

To sum up, Kirtipur Community Homestay offers a unique cultural experience to tourists, allowing them to immerse themselves in the local culture and way of life.

1.4 Target market(s)

The target market of Kirtipur Community Homestay is primarily cultural and eco-tourists who are fascinated in experiencing the local culture, traditions, and lifestyle of the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal. These tourists are usually looking for an authentic cultural experience and are interested in staying with local families, trying local food, and participating in cultural activities and events.

Similarly, the homestay also attracts tourists who are interested in eco-tourism and outdoor activities such as trekking, hiking, and exploring the natural beauty of the region. These are the type of tourists who are interested in an adventurous experience and in exploring the mountains, hills, and forests of Nepal.

In addition, the homestay may also attract volunteers who are interested in participating in community development projects and making a positive impact in the

local community. These volunteers may be students, professionals, or retirees who are interested in giving back to the community and learning about different cultures.

We can broadly categorize the target markets of this homestay as follows:

1. Cultural and Heritage Tourists
2. Eco-tourists
3. Nature and Adventure Tourists
4. Volunteer Tourists
5. Culinary Tourists
6. Yoga and Meditation Tourists (or Spiritual Tourists)
7. Budget Travellers

To sum it up, Kirtipur Community Homestay targets those kinds of tourists who are searching for a unique cultural experience and are interested in exploring the local culture and way of life, while also offering outdoor activities, volunteer programs, and spiritual retreats. The homestay also targets budget travellers who want affordable accommodation and activities that also offer a high-quality experience.

1.5 Organization and management

Kirtipur Community Homestay is a community-based tourism institute that is owned and managed by the local community in Kirtipur, Nepal. The management structure of this homestay is designed to guarantee community participation and ownership, and it involves the following elements:

1. **Community ownership:** Kirtipur Community Homestay is owned and managed by the local community, which ensures that the benefits of tourism are distributed among the community members. The homestay is operated as a cooperative, with each member having an equal say in decision-making.
2. **Management committee:** The homestay is managed by a committee that is elected by the members of the cooperative. The committee is responsible for the day-to-day management of the homestay, including marketing, promotion, and financial management, and works closely with the local hosts to ensure that tourists have a comfortable and authentic cultural experience.
3. **Local hosts:** The homestay employs local hosts who provide accommodation, food, and hospitality services to tourists. The local hosts are trained in hospitality management, customer service, and cultural awareness.
4. **Community volunteers:** The homestay also relies on community volunteers who provide support and assistance to the local hosts and management committee. The volunteers help with activities such as cooking, cleaning, and guiding tours.

- 5. Advisory board:** The homestay has an advisory board that provides guidance and support to the management committee. The board includes representatives from the local government, tourism industry, and community development organizations.
- 6. Tourist services:** The homestay offers various products and services to tourists, including homestay accommodation, local food, cultural tours, trekking and hiking packages, volunteer programs, handicraft workshops, and yoga and meditation classes. The homestay staffs are responsible for managing and delivering these services to the tourists.
- 7. Sustainability and conservation:** The homestay is committed to promoting responsible tourism practices, supporting community development projects, and preserving the natural environment. The homestay staffs work closely with the local community and government agencies to ensure that the tourism activities are sustainable and eco-friendly.

The organization and management of Kirtipur Community Homestay involve a collaborative effort between the local committee, local hosts, homestay staff, and the local community.

1.6 Additional information

Kirtipur Community Homestay is a unique cultural experience that allows tourists to experience the local way of life in the Kathmandu Valley. The homestay is committed to promoting sustainable tourism and community development while providing tourists with an authentic cultural experience.

This homestay offers comfortable and affordable accommodation in traditional Newari houses that have been renovated to provide modern amenities such as attached bathrooms, hot water, and Wi-Fi. The rooms are clean and well-maintained, and the hosts provide warm hospitality to the tourists. They provide local Newari cuisine, which is known for its unique flavors and spices. The food is prepared by the local hosts using fresh ingredients and traditional recipes. The homestay also offers cooking workshops where tourists can learn to prepare local dishes.

Kirtipur Community Homestay is committed to supporting community development projects that focus on sustainability and environmental conservation. The homestay staff works closely with local NGOs and government agencies to identify and support community development initiatives.

Kirtipur Community Homestay has received several awards and recognitions for its contribution to sustainable tourism and community development. In 2019, the homestay was awarded the Best Community-Based Tourism Initiative award by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA).

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge

The sustainable tourism challenges facing Kirtipur Community Homestay are not unique to this initiative but are also common to many community-based tourism initiatives. The homestay aims to address these challenges by promoting responsible tourism practices, supporting community development projects, and preserving the natural environment.

As the popularity of community-based tourism continues to grow, it is essential to manage the increasing number of tourists while minimizing the impact on the local community and environment. The homestay has implemented various sustainable tourism practices, such as promoting eco-friendly activities, supporting local businesses, and promoting cultural heritage. However, as tourism continues to grow in the region, it is essential to continuously monitor and adapt the practices to ensure that they remain sustainable and effective.

The homestay aims to provide an authentic cultural experience to tourists, but it is essential to balance the quality of the local cultural heritage with the tourists' diverse and dynamic expectations and preferences. This homestay hence provides cultural orientation to tourists, explaining the local customs and traditions, and encouraging them to respect the local culture. Additionally, the homestay also offers various cultural activities and events that allow tourists to experience the local culture in an authentic and meaningful way.

Another challenge facing the homestay is the need to ensure that the local community benefits from tourism activities. The homestay aims to support the local community by promoting local businesses, supporting local artisans, and providing volunteer programs that allow tourists to work with the local community on various projects. However, it is essential to continuously monitor and assess the impact of tourism on the local community to ensure that it remains positive and sustainable.

In other words, the key sustainable tourism challenges faced by Kirtipur Community Homestay are the need to balance tourism development with community needs and environmental conservation. As tourism grows in the area, there is a risk of overdevelopment, environmental degradation, and cultural erosion. The challenge is to develop tourism in a way that benefits the local community, preserves the natural environment, and protects the region's cultural heritage.

Other challenges that are faced by Kirtipur Community Homestay are:

- Lack of manpower
- Lack of commitment of the members

- Lack of quality as well as quantity of tourists
- Unpredictability and inconsistency in the flow of tourists
- Lack of attention and involvement of the local government
- They want to extend their horizon to the international market but are facing difficulties in providing standard facilities in the house
- They are not able to motivate the community members to involve and contribute to the homestay as they cannot make them understand the long term benefits of homestay in Kiritipur
- The available space and land were given to the other institutes, hence lack of space lead to no community halls to showcase the culture and tradition.

To address all these challenges, Kiritipur Community Homestay is taking several measures to promote sustainable tourism practices, which include:

1. Encouraging eco-tourism
2. Supporting community development
3. Preserving cultural heritage
4. Minimizing environmental impact
5. Collaborating with Stakeholders

Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative effort between the homestay, the local community, and government agencies to develop and implement sustainable tourism policies and practices that balance economic growth with social and environmental responsibility. Kiritipur Community Homestay is committed to promoting responsible tourism practices, supporting the local economy, preserving the natural environment, and promoting cultural heritage in a sustainable and ethical manner.

2.2 External analysis

From a general point of view, Kiritipur Community Homestay has many reasons to be growing in a global platform. At present, consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the impact they can create on the environment and local communities. Certain groups of consumer demand sustainable tourism products/packages. Consumers are actively seeking out sustainable travel options and experiences that are responsible and respectful towards the environment and local cultures.

Kiritipur Community Homestay strives to provide the same local and authentic experience to their visitors by utilizing the available resources (both tangible and intangible) in their community. They also focus on involving the women of their community. This does not only reflect their awareness on equality, but also their

knowledge on how to reduce outsourcing and give back to the community by providing them with employment opportunities.

The tourism industry is gradually shifting towards sustainable tourism practices and because of this, different stakeholders from the industry are adopting sustainable tourism practices in their businesses. Many travel companies and accommodation institutes are implementing responsible and sustainable tourism practices in their operations and offerings travel products as per the need and demands of the customer.

2.3 Internal analysis

2.3.1 Swot analysis of kirtipur community homestay

SWOT analysis is a strategic method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of a tourism destination. It is a method used for determining the short-term or long-term strategy which helps stakeholders to make important decisions about various problems and to address the issues. This study focuses on the current state of Kirtipur Community Homestay. This model is composed of two conditions of internal and external factors. Internal factors are related to weaknesses (W) and strengths (S) and external factors are related to opportunities (O) and threats (T) of the homestay.

2.3.2 Strength aspects of Kirtipur community homestay

- Rich in natural and Cultural heritage resources.
- Traditions and culture are still strongly attached to the community and traditions have been preserved well.
- This place is rich in architectural heritage, landscapes, folk culture, rural craft, local cuisine, etc.
- Easy Outreach from the capital city.
- Involvement of women and their customs and skills in the homestay business.

2.3.3 Weakness

- Homestay owners are not being able to be the role model for other houses so that other members can show interest in the homestay business.
- The management committee is not able to develop community ownership and the sense of pride for the community people that tourism can bring to them.
- Members from homestay households haven't received cooking and hospitality (housekeeping management training) from specialists.

- Community members lack exposure for understanding towards tourism business so that they can start and build up their tourism business.
- Some houses have been decorated internally so much with modern furniture because of which traditional look has remained hidden.
- Due to industrialization and modernization, various indigenous and traditional products are replaced by modern products. For instance, the traditional stool for sitting (muuda) has been replaced by plastic chairs, which can raise questions on both the preservation of culture as well as maintaining sustainability. Due to this, visitors can't enjoy authentic rural homestay experiences, which can be quite disappointing for the visitors.
- Lack of effective promotion and underdeveloped marketing strategies.
- The Homestay management committee has developed a concrete cut stone-topped trail through the community, but it doesn't look authentic to the traditional environment of Kirtipur.
- Lack of enough capital investment for upgrading the basic infrastructure.
- Lack of effective networks with the tourism industry players or the stakeholders.
- Lack of tourism activities which can play an important role in additional attractions.
- No proper channel adopted by the government or tourism department, as well as by the homestay community themselves, to divert tourists to these areas.

2.3.4 Strengths

- There is scope to develop more activities and other different types of tourism such as pilgrimage tourism, gastro-tourism, ecotourism, etc.
- The mixture of the local community vibe and city environment can attract the tourist as they can enjoy both the city life as well as traditional Newari life in this settlement.
- There are many sites, monuments, and landscapes in Kirtipur that have high cultural and heritage value. Although some of the areas have lost importance due to the ignorance of the local government, these areas can be regenerated.
- A little boost and guidance from the government can develop the whole of Kirtipur City, which can help to increase the value of the city and its indigenous culture.
- A proper channel to divert tourists to these areas will help to increase the number of tourists.
- The community holds a lot of potential, energetic, and knowledgeable people, who only require training programs to develop their skills.

2.3.5 Opportunities

- Increasing the promotion through social media
- Creating websites with sufficient information on what the homestay and the community can offer to the visitors.
- Collaboration with other tourism stakeholders.
- Development of sightseeing places, creation of recreational activities and attractions
- Financial support and investment from the public sector
- The locals of the homestay tourism destination should be given training on leadership, and hospitality management, along with food and beverage (by using the local menu) so that the tourists can get authentic quality service.
- The homestay already uses the Khaja Ghar (traditional local restaurants) that is operated and managed by the local women of the Kirtipur community, who were trained by the homestay and supporting members. More professional training can be provided to these women members to polish their skills and be even more presentable to satisfy the visitors.

2.4 Activities

Kirtipur Community Homestay offers a variety of activities to tourists, including cultural tours of the town, trekking and hiking packages to nearby mountains and forests, handicraft workshops, yoga and meditation classes, and volunteer programs.

1. **Homestay experience:** Visitors can stay with local families and experience their culture, traditions, and way of life. This includes participating in daily activities such as cooking and handicraft making and getting a first-hand view of the local way of life, food, and culture of the Newari Community of Kirtipur.
2. **Village tour:** Visitors can take a tour of Kirtipur village and visit historical landmarks, temples, and shrines. They can also learn about the village's history, culture, and traditions and visit the traditional houses of Kirtipur.
3. **Hiking and trekking:** The homestay offers various hiking and trekking routes that take tourists through scenic countryside. Visitors can visit nearby hills and mountains. This includes trips to the Champa Devi and Taudaha Lake, which offer stunning views of the Himalayas.
4. **Cultural programs:** Visitors can participate in cultural programs such as traditional dance, music, and storytelling. These programs provide insights into the local culture and traditions of the Kirtipur community.
5. **Cooking classes:** Visitors can take cooking classes and learn how to prepare traditional Nepali and Newari dishes. This includes dishes such as Mo: Mos

(dumplings), dal-bhat-tarkari, *choyela* (smoked meat with traditional Newari spices), etc.

6. **Volunteer activities:** Visitors can also participate in volunteer activities such as teaching English in local schools, helping with farming activities, and supporting local women's groups.

In general, Kirtipur Community Homestay provides tourists with an immersive and authentic experience of the local culture, while also supporting and contributing to the local economy and promoting sustainable tourism.

2.5 Stakeholders

The stakeholders of Kirtipur Community Homestay can be broadly categorized into the following groups:

1. **Local community:** The local community of Kirtipur, including homestay hosts, guides, cooks, and other service providers, are the primary stakeholder of the homestay. The homestay provides them with an opportunity to earn a livelihood and showcase their unique culture and traditions to visitors. They are responsible for managing the homestay, providing hospitality services, and promoting local tourism. The families who provide accommodation and other services to guests are also important stakeholders. They have a direct interest in the success of the community homestay, as it provides them with an additional source of income. The local communities are the ones who directly benefit from the initiative by earning income and creating employment opportunities for themselves and their families.
2. **Tourists/visitors:** Tourists and visitors are the main customers of the homestay. They are interested in experiencing the local culture, traditions, and lifestyle of Kirtipur. They expect good quality accommodation, food, and other services from the homestay. They are the ones who use the services offered by the homestay and contribute to the local economy. They can provide feedback and suggestions to improve the quality of services offered by the homestay.
3. **Government authorities:** The government authorities are important stakeholders in the homestay. They regulate the tourism industry and provide necessary licenses and permits for the homestay to operate legally. They also provide support and assistance for the development and promotion of tourism in the area. The initiative promotes sustainable tourism and contributes to the local economy, which aligns with the government's goals of promoting tourism and economic development.
4. **Tour operators/travel agents:** Tour operators and travel agents play an important role in promoting and marketing the homestay to potential customers. They help to connect the homestay with tourists and visitors from different parts of the world.

5. **Local businesses:** Local businesses, such as shops and restaurants, and transport providers can benefit from increased tourism in the area. They are stakeholders as they have a vested interest in the success of the community homestay. The homestay can attract more tourists to the area, which can result in increased business for local businesses.
6. **Non-governmental organizations (NGOs):** NGOs can also be stakeholders of the homestay if they are involved in promoting sustainable tourism and community development in the area. They can provide financial and technical assistance and support to the homestay for capacity building and skill development of the local community, which can help it grow and become more sustainable.

It is the era of sustainable development. There is a considerable increase in collaboration and partnerships between the different stakeholders including travel companies, governments, NGOs, and local communities. Partnerships and collaborations can help to address the challenges of sustainability in the tourism industry and can lead to more effective and sustainable solutions.

2.6 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The Community Homestay Network provides a platform for local communities to showcase their culture, traditions, and the way of typical Newari life to the visitors which had helped in creating pride and identity for the local communities. Through this, community members have got the opportunity to earn through entrepreneurship development and its ripple economic impacts in the community.

The target market of Kirtipur Community Homestay is tourists who are interested in experiencing the local culture, traditions, and lifestyles of Kirtipur, Nepal. Specifically, the initiative may appeal to travellers who are looking for an authentic travel experience, and who are interested in learning about the local community and way of life. It is also suitable for those who are looking for an alternative to commercialized and conventional forms of tourism.

The beneficiaries of Kirtipur Community Homestay are:

- **Local community:** The homestay directly benefits the local community by providing them with an opportunity to showcase their culture and traditions, and by creating employment opportunities for the locals. They provide a platform for the local community to participate in the tourism industry and generate income through homestay services, cultural shows, and handicrafts. It also preserves the local culture and heritage by showcasing it to tourists.
- **Homestay owners:** The homestay owners benefit from the opportunity to showcase their hospitality, and cultural traditions, and earn additional income by providing

accommodation, meals, and other services to tourists. They also benefit from the income generated through the homestay, which can help them improve their economic status.

- **Tourists:** Tourists who stay at the community homestay benefit from a unique, immersive, and authentic cultural experience where they get to stay with a local family, learn about the local culture and traditions, and engage in various cultural activities. They get to learn about the local culture and traditions from the locals themselves.
- **Local businesses:** The increase in tourist traffic generated by the community homestay initiative can also benefit local businesses, such as restaurants and souvenir shops.
- **Environment:** Kirtipur Community Homestay promotes sustainable tourism practices and encourages tourists to respect the environment and local culture. This helps to preserve the natural and cultural resources of the area for future generations.
- **Government:** The government benefits from the revenue generated through tourism in the area, which can help to support local development plans. It has a responsibility to ensure that the initiative is implemented in a sustainable and responsible manner, which benefits the local community and the environment.

With the development of community-based tourism, the travel industry can benefit by selling homestay-based tourism products. By promoting tourism in such traditional Newari settlement areas, we can contribute to the government's goal of sharing tourism benefits to all regions of the country as well as support the government's efforts to promote sustainable tourism practices and preserve the environment.

To sum it up, Kirtipur Community Homestay is a win-win situation for all stakeholders involved, as it promotes sustainable tourism and community development while also providing tourists with a unique and authentic travel experience.

2.7 Partners

Local hosts who provide hospitality services to visitors can be considered the main partner of Kirtipur Community Homestay. The hosts are critical partners in the promotion of the network as they offer a unique insight into traditional Newari culture and hospitality, which draws the attention of many travellers.

2.8 Finances

At this early stage of the venture, activities were funded from the community's own resources. The homestay had been supported by the local government authorities in

the beginning, but their attention has been seen to slowly be diverted towards other commercial projects.

2.9 Human resources

Planning and management of community Homestay are done by the local community members of the Kirtipur Homestay. No additional human resources were needed for the running of the community homestay. Hosts (Homestay owners) and locals were the main priorities for running the homestay. Though certain specialized manpower is required to maintain a proper social media platform for the flow of information about the homestay, the community members seek help from the government as well as institutes to provide training and research programs to their community.

2.10 Marketing and communication activities

Promotional activities are online and offline. Promotion of Kirtipur Community Homestay is being done through the Facebook page of the homestay while brochures and visiting cards have been produced and distributed to all tourist offices in the country. In addition, participation in different tourism projects is also being done by the homestay for its promotion. A coordinated social media strategy is yet to be designed between all partners. The community member should be trained regarding the benefits that come with regularly updated posts on Facebook and Instagram to present past travel experiences and to describe itineraries. They also require assistance to create and manage an official website page.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Staying at a community homestay can raise customers' awareness of environmental issues and promote sustainable tourism practices. Homestays are often designed to be eco-friendly and minimize environmental impact, and customers can learn about sustainable living practices from their hosts.

Kirtipur Community Homestay allows customers to interact with locals and build connections with the community which can foster understanding and build relationships between people from different cultural backgrounds.

Staying in the community can broaden their perspective and lead to personal growth and development. It can be an opportunity to step out of their comfort zone and learn about different ways of living. Staying at a community homestay allows travellers

to immerse themselves in the local culture and customs, providing a unique and authentic travel experience.

The impact of Kirtipur Community Homestay on the target markets can be summarized as follows:

- **Cultural exchange:** The homestay program offers visitors a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in traditional Newari culture and way of life by staying with local families. This cultural exchange benefits both the visitors and the local community, as it promotes cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.
- **Authentic experience:** The homestay program provides visitors with an authentic cultural experience that is not typically available in other traditional hotels or resorts. This experience allows visitors to learn about local customs, traditions, and ways of life that are unique to the region.
- **Economic benefit:** The homestay program also provides economic benefits to the local community by generating income for local families. This income helps to support the families' livelihoods and provides a source of income for the community, while equally promoting the local culture in the global market.
- **Sustainable tourism:** Kirtipur Community Homestay promotes sustainable tourism by encouraging visitors to support the local economy and minimize their impact on the environment. This approach to tourism helps to preserve the natural and cultural resources of the region for future generations.

Taking everything into account, the Kirtipur Community Homestay program has a positive impact on its target markets by providing visitors with a unique and authentic experience, promoting cross-cultural understanding, supporting the local economy, and promoting sustainable tourism practices.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

The Community Homestay of Kirtipur has a range of impacts on its stakeholders, including:

1. **Local families:** The homestay program benefits the local community by providing a source of income for local families by allowing them to host visitors in their homes. This income helps to support the families' livelihoods, improve their quality of life and provide economic opportunities for the community. Additionally, the program promotes cultural preservation by encouraging visitors to learn about and respect local customs and traditions.
2. **Community:** The program helps to promote economic development in the local community by encouraging visitors to support local businesses and services of

Kirtipur. This support can have a positive impact on the community's overall economic well-being.

3. **Visitors:** This experience can have a positive impact on their personal growth and development. The homestay program provides visitors with a unique and authentic experience of traditional Newari culture and way of life. The travellers have the opportunity to learn about local customs and traditions firsthand, which promotes cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. Additionally, visitors have the satisfaction of knowing that their tourism activities are benefiting the local community and promoting sustainable tourism practices.
4. **Tourism industry:** The homestay program contributes to the development of the tourism industry in Nepal by providing a unique and authentic tourism experience through the local community of Kirtipur. This type of tourism promotes cultural preservation and sustainability, which can help to enhance the industry's reputation and minimize its impact on the environment, as well as help to differentiate Nepal from other tourism destinations. Furthermore, the program contributes to the diversification of the tourism industry by providing a unique alternative to traditional hotels and resorts.
5. **Government:** The program can have a positive impact on the local economy by promoting sustainable tourism practices, which can contribute to the overall economic development of the region. This can lead to increased tax revenue for the government and provide opportunities for further investment in the area. Moreover, the program helps to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Nepal, which is an important part of the country's identity and a valuable asset for tourism.
6. **Non-governmental organizations (NGOs):** NGOs that support sustainable tourism and community development can partner with such community homestay networks to achieve shared goals, such as poverty reduction and cultural preservation.

Kirtipur Community Homestay program has a positive impact on a range of stakeholders, including the local community, visitors, the tourism industry, and the government. The program provides economic benefits to local families, promotes sustainable tourism practices, cultural preservation, and economic development, enhances the cultural understanding of visitors, and supports the preservation of the environment, which are all important priorities for stakeholders in the tourism industry.

3.3 Impact for the environment

The impact of Kirtipur Community Homestay on the environment is an important consideration, as sustainable tourism practices are essential for preserving the

natural resources of the region for future generations. The homestay program has both positive and negative impacts on the environment, which can be analyzed as follows:

3.4 Positive impacts

- 1. Environmental awareness:** Kirtipur homestay promotes environmental awareness by encouraging visitors to support the local economy and use resources responsibly. Visitors are encouraged to minimize their environmental impact by using water and energy efficiently, reducing waste, and supporting local environmental initiatives.
- 2. Preserving local environment:** The homestay program can help to preserve the natural environment by promoting responsible tourism practices. Visitors are encouraged to explore the local environment in a sustainable way, which can help to minimize the impact of tourism on the region's natural resources.
- 3. Sustainable practices:** Kirtipur Community Homestay promotes sustainable practices, such as the use of renewable energy and organic farming methods. These practices can help to reduce the impact of tourism on the environment by minimizing energy use and promoting sustainable agriculture.
- 4. Education and awareness:** Homestay programs can help to educate guests about environmental issues and raise awareness about the importance of conservation. Environmentally responsible policies and practices can be introduced and implemented through partnerships with local conservation organizations and government agencies.

3.5 Negative impacts

- 1. Resource consumption:** The homestay program may contribute to increased resource consumption, such as water and energy use. Visitors may use more resources than they would in their daily lives, which can have a negative impact on the environment if these resources are not used responsibly.
- 2. Waste generation:** The homestay may contribute to increased waste generation, such as food waste and plastic waste. Visitors may generate more waste than they would in their daily lives, which can have a negative impact on the environment if this waste is not disposed of responsibly.

Kirtipur Community Homestay is making a positive impact on the environment by implementing and encouraging sustainable and responsible tourism practices that promote the conservation of natural resources, reduce waste, use renewable energy, and protect biodiversity for future generations. The homestay is setting an example for responsible tourism and highlighting the importance of preserving the environment for

future generations. Nevertheless, it is important to continue to monitor the program's impact on the environment and work to minimize any negative impacts that may arise.

3.6 Impact for the company

The impact on the company is strategic, competitive, and economic. We can list out the components that could create an impact on the operations, performance, and sustainability of Kirtipur Community Homestay as follows:

1. **Political and regulatory environment:** The political and regulatory environment in Nepal can impact Kirtipur Community Homestay's operations and sustainability. Changes in laws and regulations related to tourism, environmental conservation, and community development could affect Homestay's ability to operate and deliver its services.
2. **Economic environment:** Economic factors such as exchange rates, inflation, and the availability of funding for sustainable tourism projects could impact Homestay's sustainability and growth prospects.
3. **Technological environment:** Technological advancements in the tourism industry, such as online booking platforms and digital marketing tools, could impact the homestay's ability to attract and retain customers.
4. **Social and cultural environment:** The social and cultural environment in Nepal could impact the homestay's operations and ability to attract tourists. Changes in social norms and cultural practices could affect the homestay's ability to provide an authentic cultural experience to tourists.
5. **Competitive environment:** The competitive environment in the tourism industry could impact the homestay's ability to attract and retain customers. The emergence of new sustainable tourism initiatives and homestay accommodations in the region could increase competition for customers.

Kirtipur Community Homestay needs to stay updated with the latest developments in the political, economic, technological, social, and cultural environments. The homestay needs to adapt its strategies and operations to respond to changes in the external environment and maintain its competitiveness in the sustainable tourism market. Additionally, building strong partnerships and collaborations with the local community, government agencies, and other stakeholders can help the homestay navigate the challenges and achieve its sustainability goals.

Other significant impacts of the homestay program on the company can be analyzed from several perspectives:

1. **Brand reputation:** This homestay program promotes sustainable tourism practices

and supports the local economy, which can enhance the company's reputation as a socially responsible business. The program can help to build a positive brand image and increase the company's revenue as it can attract customers who value responsible tourism practices.

2. **Revenue generation:** The homestay program generates revenue for the company by charging a fee to the visitors for its services who stay with local families. The program provides a source of income for the company, which can help to support its operations and growth by helping the company to cover its operating costs and invest in new initiatives.
3. **Customer loyalty:** The homestay program offers a unique and authentic cultural experience for visitors, which can help to build customer loyalty. Visitors who have a positive experience are more likely to recommend the program to others and to return for future visits.
4. **Community engagement:** The homestay program engages with the local community by supporting local businesses and providing economic benefits to homestay hosts. This engagement can help to build strong and positive relationships between the community and the company and enhance the company's reputation as a responsible business. This engagement can lead to positive word-of-mouth marketing and increased visitor satisfaction.
5. **Business development:** The homestay program can help to promote the company's expansion into new markets and regions. The program can help the company to develop new partnerships and collaborations with different organizations, which can lead to new business opportunities.

Kirtipur Community Homestay program has a positive impact on the company by enhancing its brand reputation, generating revenue, building customer loyalty, engaging with the local community, and promoting business development. By adopting responsible tourism practices and supporting the local community, the program can help the company to differentiate itself from its competitors and attract more visitors to the region, and eventually build a sustainable and successful business model.

3.7 Impact for the Center of Excellence (CoE)

After going through this report, CoE can have valuable insights into the best practices and strategies for promoting sustainable tourism development in Nepal. This can be one of the best case studies on the practice and implementation of sustainable tourism development in local communities which can be shared with tourism stakeholders. Information from this report can be used by CoE to position themselves as

thought leaders and experts, providing the new institutes with required training, and gain opportunities to develop new products and materials, which could lead to increased recognition and opportunities for other research and collaboration.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 Reflection

While there is some information available on the implementation of sustainable tourism development by Kirtipur Community Homestay, it is not clear what monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are in place to assess the impact of these practices. After having interactions with the chairperson and community members of Kirtipur Community Homestay, the shared information suggests that this homestay has implemented a range of sustainable tourism initiatives and has been practicing eco-tourism which could be one of the best approaches to practicing sustainable tourism. This community homestay has made some positive strides toward the implementation of sustainable tourism in its local community. Even so, there is always scope for improvement and further refinement of these practices to ensure that they are effective, efficient, and sustainable over the long term. The homestay as well as the community members still require an ample amount of attention from local authorities and government in regard to awareness and promotion of tourism in Kirtipur in a more sustainable manner.

CASE STUDY 23

Gorkhali Handicraft

Jenish Maharjan

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Handicrafts are those objects, which require skill with hands, or in other words, they are man-made. Basically, a product solely made by human hands without using any kind of complicated machinery or equipment is called handicraft. A simple dictionary meaning of handicraft is “activity involving the making of decorative domestic or other objects by hand”.

Export is an imperative in contributing to a nation’s economic prosperity. It leads to an increase in domestic production, economic growth, and the fulfilment of foreign currencies to meet the cost of import. Export is a most important strategy in ensuring a firm’s survival or growth, and firms may achieve competitive advantage in global markets various firms in recent times have focused further attention and allocated more resources in order to export their products to international markets.

Gorkhali handicraft was established in 2000 AD and is located in heart of THAMEL on the Walking Street i.e. Mandala Street. Although the manufacturing company is located in Balaju sites. They deals mainly with handicraft products made from sheep wool. The wools are imported from New eland and dry in Nepal according to the colour as required. Founded by Mr. and Mrs. Ramji Adhikari, Gorkhali Handicraft is one of the bestselling wool based handicraft. The main objective is to provide the employment to the women by giving the proper training. Being a skilled jobs and time consuming mostly women are attracted towards this handicraft making.

1.2 Vision and Mission

The vision of Gorkhali Handicraft is to become brand which aims at promoting sustainable tourism in the country which benefits both travellers and local communities. The mission of Gorkhali Handicraft is to “Enhancing the Nepal culture”.

Mission includes;

- Providing handmade and environmental friendly Felt products.
- Contributing to the economic development of Women by promoting community-based

- Local businesses.
- Encouraging sustainable training and awareness.
- Ensuring the comfort and long-lasting products for their clients, and partners.

1.3 Products/services

Gorkhali Handicraft sale mostly the Felt product which are made from the sheep wool. The products are the hand- made products which is quiet attractive and health friendly. Most of the raw material are been imported from New eland and Australia. In Nepal only the products are processed into finished goods. It requires the skill and trained staff to make such products.

Among the finished good, around 80 % of the good are sold outside the country. Mostly European country i.e Germany, France, Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Most the company deals with B to C model i.e. the customer directly enquiry with the design and products. And the finished goods are exported through the Cargo process.

The most sold good of the Felt products are Caps, Shoes, Bags and all dolls products. But nowadays the youngster are attracted towards the small items such as keyrings, dreamcatcher etc. From the purchase of the raw material to the selling of the finished good the company gets the profit of only around 10%.

Some of the products are

- Felt Wool Laundry Dryer Ball
- Felt Wool Cat Cave Bed
- Felt Wool Handmade Shoes, Slipper & Boots
- Felt Christmas Décor
- Felt Ball Rug, Trivets & Mats
- Felt Christmas Hanging
- Felt Wreath
- Felt Flower
- Felt Kids & Toddlers Supplies
- 10. Felt Painting

1.4 Target market(s)

Gorkhali Handicraft based the range of the international as well as the domestic tourism. The combination is of 90:10 in the favour of the international tourism. To address the needs of the customer different training and new products has been innovated which are also used in a daily life style.

As the products are organic and naturally found the life of those products varies on the making process of the products. The longer time to finish the product the better will be the finishing and the quality. It will also be long lasting. Furthermore, Gorkhali Handicraft target customers are diverse with younger as well as aged group with the modernization the eye appealing products are highly saleable such as bags, keyrings, showcase products, dream catcher etc.

1.5 Organization and management

The organization and management structure of Gorkhali Handicraft can be outlined as follows:

- 1. Ownership:** Gorkhali Handicraft is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ramji Adhikari
- 2. Management:** All the raw material are imported from outside the country as there is no any refinery for the wool in Nepal. Mostly from New eland and Australia. Around 1000-1500 kg are purchase at once of wool. According the order and the design the wool is then colour, press, quality and quantity managed.
- 3. Staffing:** The shops is run by the family member but the manufacturing is done by the trained staff. The training programs are handle by the Mrs. Ramji as most of the employee working are female. Around 25-30 people are working according to the work size and the design.
- 4. Communication:** Communication is one of the important factors in handicraft industry. As most of the customer are of the foreigner as it is term as the luxurious items or showpiece.

So, accordingly to the customer preference and order type They also values customer feedback and encourages open communication with customers to ensure that they are Satisfied with their experience.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Gorkhali Handicraft's revenue streams are diverse and generate income from different sources while offering wide range of services to its clients. Gorkhali handicraft is mostly depends on the import of the raw materials and the exports of the finished goods. Only the processing and labour works is finished over here. After all the costs only 10 % of the selling price is counted as net profit.

Individual clients: Around 20 % of the total sales is done in retail shop located in Mandala Street, Thamel most of the clients are an international travellers with a motive of a daily usable products and also for a sovereign.

Corporate clients: Around 80% of the total sale is send to European country i.e Germany, France, Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Most the company deals with B to C

model i.e. the customer directly enquiry with the design and products. And the finished goods are exported through the Cargo process.

The turnover is mainly based on the sale of packages to foreign agencies and to final consumers.

1.7 Other information

The manufacture company is located in Balaju area where all the storage of the raw material and dyeing process is done. There is an employment opportunities of 25 person in one warehouse. Most of the employer are female which directly uplift income source and self- dependence. Time and again the training program are been schedule so that the employer are well trained and can upgrade their skills. After the COVID-19 there is been gradual decrease in the sale of the products. It is decrease by around 80 %. So, distinguished organization can help them to sustain

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

The concept of uplifting women and the ignored and strengthening their artistry and giving them a chance to sell their products, it's wonderful. So, mainly due to the focus in the employment source for the under educated women, providing the skill to be able to earn income source. The raw material used to prepare the felt products is wool which is natural produce obtains from the animals. Practicing sustainability in tourism requires careful planning, collaboration, and commitment from all the stakeholders involved.

Felting is a complex process and felting of wool is an inherent property of wool that is affected by a number of factors. The process of felting involves relative movement of the fiber which is caused either by mechanical rubbing or by a series of compression-extension operations. Crimpiness, flexibility, and hygroscopic quality combines with delicacy of fibers, are the most important factors in felting whereas alternative temperatures, moisture contracting with dryness also contributes to the felting action. Physical factors such as scales, fineness, and medullation also contribute to the felting properties of the wool. There is a precise relationship between processing parameter and felting as pH, temperature, and use of auxiliaries contribute significantly to the felting properties of the wool. Felting of wool can also be enhanced by heat as it make the wet fiber more elastic and plastic which in turn causes distortion of the fiber leading to felting.

2.2 The business/project idea

2.2.1 Sustainability in the handicrafts

Use natural materials: There are many natural materials such as cotton, wool, linen, and silk that are renewable and biodegradable making them a sustainable choice for handmade products. These materials are grown or harvested without the use of harmful chemicals and pesticides, and are biodegradable, reducing their impact on the environment.

Choose organic materials: Organic materials are grown without the use of synthetic pesticides or fertilizers, reducing the environmental impact of farming practices. Using organic materials can also help support sustainable farming practices and fair labor standards.

Use recycled materials: Recycled materials such as fabric scraps, yarn, and paper can be used to create new products, reducing waste and the need for new materials.

Source locally: Sourcing materials locally can help reduce the carbon footprint of transportation and support local economies. It can also help ensure that materials are being produced in an environmentally and socially responsible way.

Look for certifications: Certifications such as the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) and Fair Trade Certified can help ensure that materials are being produced in a sustainable and socially responsible way.

Use sustainable dyes: Traditional dyeing methods can be harmful to the environment and human health. Using natural dyes or low-impact dyes can help reduce the environmental impact of handmade production.

2.3 External analysis

It is the era of sustainable development there is increase in collaboration and partnerships between the different stakeholders including travel companies, governments, NGOs, and local communities. Partnerships and collaborations can help to address the challenges of sustainability in the tourism industry and can lead to more effective and sustainable solutions.

2.3.1 Opportunities

- There is a rising demand for handicraft products in developed countries such as USA, Canada, Britain, France, Germany, Italy etc..
- Due to the interest in the youth developing fashion industry requires handicrafts products.
- Development of sectors like Retail, Real Estate that offers great requirements of handicrafts products.

- Development of domestic and international tourism sector.
- e-Commerce and Internet are emerged as promissory distribution channels to market and sell the craft products.

2.3.2 Threats

- Different retails business providing the products in cheap price.
- Chinese company producing the same products through machine which is 10 time cheaper.
- Competition in domestic market.
- Balance between high demand and supply.
- Quality products produced by competing countries like China, South Africa.
- Better Trade terms offered by competing countries.
- Increased and better technological support and R & D facility in competing countries.
- Less of the new innovation and skill.
- Few number of trainer available

2.4 Internal analysis

Gorkhali Handicraft is one of the existing organization since 20 years. So, most of the market acknowledgments are built through the base of the those times. As it is located in the heart of the Thamel the organizations. is surviving till date.

2.4.1 The main strengths of handicraft

- Large, diversified and potential market.
- There is large product variety and range is available because of diversified culture.
- It has strong, diversified and supportive retail infrastructure.
- Diversified product range that service different market.
- Cheap labour rates that result to competitive price.
- Need low capital investment.
- There is flexible production flexibility.
- Low barriers of new entry.

2.4.2 Weakness

- Lack of infrastructure and communication facilities.
- Unawareness about international requirements and market.
- Lack of co-ordination between government bodies and private players.

- Inadequate information of new technology.
- Inadequate information of current market trends.
- Less interest of young people in craft industry.
- Lack of skilled labor.
- Still confined to rural areas and small cities and untapped market.
- Lack of promotion of products.

As regards the weaknesses, these mainly concern the lesser knowledge of the local market and a limited experience on this new type of products in market. Some critical issues also reside in the development of local partnerships and in the commitment and cooperation of local tourist promotion bodies to sustain the project

2.5 Activities

The Gorkhali Handicraft offers a range of packages to travellers who are interested in experiencing authentic Nepal culture and hospitality They also provide the live session for those who want to learn the entire process. As most of the clients are foreigner specially form the Europe they are very sensitive for their body products so the quality plays the vital role in this.

- Considering the focus is required between public and private investments in R&D to design and develop sustainable products and services.
- Development of appropriate “green technologies” for manufacturing processes is required
- Spreading awareness about sustainable products and services to end consumers will help in generating interest consequently demand?
- Upgrading the skills of workers, supervisors and managers especially from the Sustainable Consumption & Production angle.
- Minimising waste at every stage of the production process.
- Increasing use of new and renewable resources
- Investing in R&D projects for developing new products and technologies.

2.6 Stakeholders

First, all stakeholders should be mapped and listed who are directly and indirectly involve in the Handicraft business:

1. Consumers: Tourists who purchase the products directly.
2. Distributor of the raw materials of wool and Felt products throughout the Country
3. Different Association: Felt Association in Nepal, Handicraft Association, Nepal Tourism Board.

4. local community: the local community can be positively benefited from the project in terms of new jobs and expansion of business opportunities thanks to tourism.
5. Investors: fundamental subject for the success of the project as their contribution is needed to finance the business development activities.
6. company's employees: Most of the workers of our company are uneducated and without deprived of education they are unable to live standard life.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The following targets, were considered (as an example targets have been taken from the following document, which is also useful for further details <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/cycling-tourism/market-potential>):

Family cyclists: they go on family cycling trips. These trips are often day or multi-day trips. It is important that the distance and activities along the way are suitable for children.

Tour cyclists: they enjoy cycling as a relaxing hobby. They go on one-day, multi-day or multi-week tours. These tourists enjoy the physical activity but are normally not interested in practising cycling as a sport.

2.8 Partners

Gorkhali Handicraft who provide hospitality services to the visitors. The hosts are critical partners in the promotion of the network as they offer a unique insight into Nepali culture and hospitality, which draws the attentions of many travellers. The organization is directly involved with Nepal Tourism Board and also have a membership with the FAN(Felt Industries Association of Nepal).

2.9 Finances

As the business started just after the completion of the higher studies. He took some amount from the family and some amount from his saving. This business starts from 2000 AD with the investment of 300,000 Nepalese Rupees as in the beginning only the family member used to work in so all the profit are directly invested back to the company. So, At present the total net worth of the business is around 40 million Nepalese Rupee.

2.10 Human resources

Most of the workers of our company are uneducated and without deprived of education they are unable to live standard life. Our felt company leads to those

uneducated person to live standard life by providing skilled and training program of all handmade felt products.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

Marketing activities are online and offline. Promotion activities were implemented online for the promotion of the Felt products and Handicraft through different European Nations. Mostly websites, OTAs, Instagram and Facebook pages are actively used. And also Viber and WhatsApp's business is widely used for the enquiry.

Offline: There is a retails shop located in the Mandala Street, Thamel and also the online delivery services are provided. Offline, brochures, visiting cards were produced and distributed to all tourist offices in the country. In addition, participation in the different travel mart fair is also being done by the network for its promotion.

Communication is one of the important factors in handicraft industry. As most of the customer are of the foreigner as it is term as the luxurious items or showpiece. So, accordingly to the customer preference and order type they also values customer feedback and encourages open communication with customers to ensure that they are satisfied with their experience.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Handicrafts are sustainable because in their making process they often use natural and eco-friendly materials, promote local production and fair trade practices, reduce waste, and support artisan livelihoods and communities. With the help of government initiatives, craftsmen strive to promote the use of natural energy and light.

Handmade industries can support local economies by sourcing materials and labor locally. This reduces the carbon footprint associated with transportation and promotes sustainable practices in the community.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

The impacts for the different stakeholders have already been mentioned above, however these concern:

- Handicrafts promote sustainable tourism by encouraging responsible environmental practices, such as waste reduction, water conservation, and the use of renewable energy.
- It helps in promotion of handmade handicraft and Felt products in tourism.
- Increase in the local value in the products

- By providing different training from experience in this field for the skill development.
- Through maintenance of international trade union and eunepal business ot increase the growth of the business greater visibility of society and its culture
- The program can help to support local and regional economic development, and promote the image of the country as a destination for sustainable tourism.

3.3 Impact for the environment

- **Reduce waste:** Handicraft techniques often involve the use of scraps or scraps, which can help reduce waste. Many artisans are also upcycling, which involves reusing materials that would otherwise be discarded into new products.
- **Energy efficiency:** Traditional handicraft techniques often require less energy than mass-produced products. Handmade items are often made using simple tools and techniques that do not require electricity, reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- **Supporting the local economy:** Purchasing handmade items supports the local economy and reduces the carbon footprint associated with transporting goods over long distances. Indeed, handmade items are often made locally and sold directly to consumers, reducing the need for transportation.

3.4 Impact for the company

The handicraft industry is an important player in the slow fashion movement, as it fits naturally into the principles of slow fashion. Businesses can embrace slow fashion by creating unique and timeless pieces, using sustainable materials, promoting ethical labor practices and being transparent about their production processes.

In doing so, they can promote a more sustainable and fashion-conscious approach, which focuses on creating beautiful, sustainable products that are made with care and respect for the environment and the people involved in the production process made in circumstances.

- **Safe working conditions:** Artisans should work in safe and healthy conditions, avoiding exposure to hazards such as hazardous chemicals or physical stressors.
- **Child labour free:** Handcrafted without the use of child labour. It required the skilled and time for preparing.
- **Respect for cultural diversity:** Artisans must respect and celebrate cultural diversity. Artisans must be able to use traditional techniques and designs without fear of misappropriation or exploitation.

- **Transparency and accountability:** handmade businesses must be transparent about their production practices and accountable for their impact on the environment and society. This includes disclosing information about wages, working conditions, and environmental practices.
- **Community development:** handmade businesses can contribute to the development of local communities by supporting education, health, and other social services.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

Through this report CoE can analysis the current status of the handicraft industry and identification of sustainable tourism effort in Nepal I helps in capacity building of experts on sustainable tourism and sustainable tourism development through attractive training creation and implantations It can build the good relationship in development of collaboration network among EU and Asian. Implementation and operation of centre of Excellence for sustainable Tourism

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Although comfort and warmth is the primary reason for the popularity of wool product. Gorkhali handicraft make various products like bags, slippers, dolls, jewelry items, mat, basket, holders, scarf, etc mostly for indoor use. Kids are fond of animals and dolls usually and we make all kind of dolls according to client's request.

Their products are made of high quality materials. They do not used mixed wools unless asked by the clients to do so. Materials can be customized on client's request. Designed is developed by our well experienced designers and crafters who have been working with us since last 21 years. We are well known within our clients for providing high quality products at a very reasonable price.

Through this combination of primary research, content for the Gorkhali Handicraft and wider literature review, it is clear that Nepal has tremendous amount of potential in the field of sustainable tourism. However, many obstacles still remains and inhibit the country from releasing its full potential.

Tourism organizations such as NTB, NATTA, HAN, FAN, and NATHM should take initiative and develop a handicraft so that tourist ca easily choose and purchase their own customized products.

4.2 Possibility of replication

Replication is a study for which any outcome would be considered diagnostic evidence about a claim from prior research. This reduces emphasis on operational characteristics of the study and increases emphasis on the interpretation of possible. As there is increasing in the flow of the tourism so the business are growing day by days. We it has a possibility of replication as the data and information can be retrieve through different sources. As far as through the economic condition of Nepal handicraft plays a vital role in development of the economic growth and also push towards the sustainable tourism.

CASE STUDY 24

Lavie Garden

Pranav Shrestha

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

The Lavie Residency is a renowned restaurant chain known for its commitment to sustainable practices and customer satisfaction. With three outlets strategically located in different parts of the country, The Lavie Residency offers a diverse culinary experience to its customers. The main outlet, located in Boudha, provides a welcoming atmosphere and a wide range of delectable dishes. Biryani Adda in Baluwatar specializes in mouth-watering biryanis and Indian cuisine, while Lekali Bhoj Thakali in Maharajgunj serves authentic and flavorful Nepali cuisine.

The founder of The Lavie Residency, Sudarshan Paudel, established the restaurant with the vision of creating a unique and memorable dining experience for both locals and tourists. The restaurant aims to be a destination where people can come together to celebrate life and enjoy exceptional food in a welcoming environment.

With a strong focus on sustainability, The Lavie Residency implements innovative initiatives to minimize its environmental impact. The restaurant sources locally grown ingredients to support the community and reduce its carbon footprint. Additionally, efforts are made to minimize food waste and implement energy-saving practices to ensure a more sustainable operation.

The Lavie Residency's commitment to customer satisfaction is evident in the quality of its food, warm hospitality, and attention to detail in its decor. Each outlet offers a distinct ambiance carefully curated to provide a memorable dining experience. The Lavie Residency has become a preferred choice for food enthusiasts, families, and friends seeking to indulge in culinary delights and celebrate life.

By combining culinary excellence, sustainability, and a welcoming atmosphere, The Lavie Residency has established itself as a leader in the hospitality industry. With a strong foundation in place, the restaurant chain is poised for continued growth and expansion, while maintaining its commitment to sustainability and customer satisfaction.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: The Lavie Residency envisions itself as a leading exemplar of sustainable tourism, promoting responsible practices while delivering exceptional experiences to its

guests. The establishment aims to contribute to a future where the hospitality industry operates in harmony with the environment, benefiting local communities and preserving cultural heritage.

Mission: The mission of The Lavie Residency is to create a positive impact on the environment, society, and economy through the implementation of sustainable tourism practices. The establishment achieves this by:

1. **Implementing sustainable practices:** The Lavie Residency is committed to minimizing its ecological footprint by adopting sustainable practices across its operations. This includes sourcing local and organic ingredients, reducing waste generation, conserving energy and water, and promoting recycling initiatives.
2. **Supporting local communities:** The establishment actively engages with local communities, respecting their culture and traditions. It fosters collaborations with local suppliers, artisans, and entrepreneurs to contribute to their socio-economic development. By doing so, The Lavie Residency aims to instill a sense of pride and ownership within the community.
3. **Preserving cultural heritage:** The Lavie Residency recognizes the significance of preserving and promoting the unique cultural heritage of the regions where its restaurants are located. It strives to showcase local cuisine, traditional arts, and crafts, encouraging guests to appreciate and respect the cultural diversity of the area.
4. **Educating and inspiring guests:** The Lavie Residency believes in raising awareness about sustainable tourism among its guests. Through various initiatives, such as providing educational materials, organizing guided tours, and offering interactive experiences, the establishment aims to inspire and empower its guests to make environmentally and socially conscious choices during their stay and beyond.
5. **Continuous improvement:** The Lavie Residency is committed to continuously improving its sustainability efforts by monitoring and evaluating its practices. It actively seeks innovative solutions and collaborates with industry partners, experts, and organizations to stay at the forefront of sustainable tourism practices.

By aligning its vision and mission with sustainable practices, The Lavie Residency aims to serve as a catalyst for positive change within the hospitality industry. The establishment strives to provide an exceptional and responsible tourism experience that not only satisfies its guests but also leaves a lasting positive impact on the environment and communities it operates in.

1.3 Products and services

The Lavie Garden, formerly known as The Biryani Adda, emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic with a commitment to providing high-quality products and an

exceptional dining experience. Despite being priced slightly higher than their competitors, The Lavie Garden emphasized the importance of quality and the joy of savoring their products, which set them apart in the market.

1.3.1 Products

The Lavie Garden specializes in Matka Biryani, a traditional Indian dish known for its rich flavors and fragrant spices. Matka Biryani is prepared by layering marinated meat or vegetables with aromatic basmati rice and slow-cooking them in a clay pot. This cooking method allows the flavors to blend perfectly, resulting in a unique and delectable culinary experience.

The Lavie Garden offers a diverse range of Matka Biryani options to cater to different tastes and preferences. From classic chicken and mutton biryanis to vegetarian and seafood variations, they ensure that there is something for everyone. Each biryani is prepared with the utmost care, using fresh, high-quality ingredients and authentic spices to deliver a truly satisfying and flavorful meal.

1.3.2 Services

In addition to their signature Matka Biryani, The Lavie Garden provides a range of services to enhance the overall dining experience for their customers. These services include:

- 1. Dine-in:** The Lavie Garden offers a cozy and welcoming ambiance where customers can enjoy their meals in a relaxed and comfortable setting. The attentive and friendly staff ensures that guests have a memorable experience and are well taken care of during their visit.
- 2. Takeaway and delivery:** Recognizing the evolving needs of customers, The Lavie Garden provides convenient takeaway and delivery services. Customers can savor their favorite Matka Biryani from the comfort of their homes or offices, allowing them to enjoy a delicious meal without compromising on quality or taste.
- 3. Online ordering:** The Lavie Garden has embraced technology to streamline the ordering process for their customers. Through their user-friendly website or dedicated mobile app, customers can conveniently browse the menu, place their orders, and choose their preferred pickup or delivery options.

By focusing on the excellence of their Matka Biryani and providing exceptional services, The Lavie Garden has established itself as a go-to destination for biryani lovers seeking an extraordinary dining experience. Their commitment to quality, flavor, and customer satisfaction has helped them create a niche in the market and gain a loyal following of food enthusiasts.

1.4 Target markets

The Lavie Garden caters to a specific target market that appreciates refined quality, exceptional service, and a memorable dining experience. By understanding their target market's preferences and meeting their expectations, The Lavie Garden has successfully positioned itself as a sought-after destination for discerning customers. Their target markets can be defined as follows:

- 1. Food enthusiasts:** The Lavie Garden appeals to individuals who have a deep passion for food and culinary experiences. These customers appreciate the artistry and craftsmanship behind creating authentic Matka Biryani and seek out unique and flavorful dishes. They value the use of high-quality ingredients, traditional cooking techniques, and the attention to detail that The Lavie Garden provides.
- 2. Locals and residents:** The Lavie Garden has cultivated a strong customer base among local residents. The restaurant's commitment to quality and customer satisfaction has earned the loyalty of the community. Locals appreciate the opportunity to indulge in delectable Matka Biryani that showcases the authentic flavors of their region, combined with the comfort of a welcoming ambiance and personalized service.
- 3. Professionals and office-goers:** The Lavie Garden caters to professionals and office-goers who seek convenient and satisfying dining options. With their takeaway and delivery services, busy individuals can enjoy a flavorful and wholesome meal without compromising on taste or quality. The Lavie Garden's commitment to using fresh and locally sourced ingredients appeals to health-conscious customers who prioritize nutritious and well-prepared meals.
- 4. Event planners and catering clients:** The Lavie Garden's catering services attract event planners, businesses, and individuals looking for high-quality food options for their special occasions. Whether it's a corporate event, a wedding, or a private celebration, The Lavie Garden's Matka Biryani becomes a centerpiece of the dining experience, leaving a lasting impression on guests.

The Lavie Garden's target markets are united by their appreciation for refined quality, authentic flavors, and a desire for a memorable dining experience. By focusing on meeting the specific needs and preferences of these target markets, The Lavie Garden has successfully built a loyal customer base and positioned itself as a leader in the market for high-quality and authentic Matka Biryani.

1.5 Organization and management

The organization and management structure of The Lavie Residency is designed to ensure the smooth operation of the restaurant and uphold its values of sustainability and exceptional customer service. The structure can be outlined as follows:

1. **Ownership:** The Lavie Residency is owned by Sudarshan Paudel, who plays a pivotal role in guiding the overall direction of the restaurant and overseeing its operations.
2. **Management:** The restaurant operates under a hierarchical management structure. Sudarshan Paudel serves as the owner and top-level manager, providing strategic leadership and decision-making. The restaurant also has a dedicated general manager who is responsible for the day-to-day operations, including staffing, customer service, and quality control.
3. **Staffing:** The Lavie Residency prides itself on having a diverse and skilled workforce. The staff members include talented chefs, attentive waiters/waitresses, knowledgeable bartenders, and efficient support staff. Each team member is carefully selected and trained to deliver exceptional customer service, ensuring that guests have a memorable dining experience.
4. **Departments:** The restaurant is organized into various departments that work harmoniously to deliver a seamless dining experience. These departments include the kitchen, where the skilled chefs craft delicious and sustainable dishes using locally sourced ingredients. The bar department ensures that guests can enjoy a wide range of beverages, including specialty cocktails and carefully curated wine selections. The dining area department focuses on creating a welcoming ambiance and ensuring the comfort of guests, while the support staff department handles administrative tasks and assists in maintaining the restaurant's operations.
5. **Communication:** Effective communication is a cornerstone of The Lavie Residency's management approach. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss any operational issues, provide updates, and foster a sense of teamwork. The restaurant also values customer feedback and encourages open communication with guests to ensure their satisfaction and continuously improve the dining experience.
6. **Culture:** The Lavie Residency cultivates a strong company culture that aligns with its values. The restaurant's culture emphasizes sustainability, exceptional customer service, and a welcoming atmosphere. The hiring process prioritizes individuals who share these values, fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce. The result is a team that is passionate about delivering memorable dining experiences while minimizing the restaurant's environmental impact.

The organization and management structure of the Lavie Residency, with its focus on exceptional customer service, sustainability, and a welcoming culture, sets the foundation for the restaurant's success in providing an outstanding dining experience to its discerning clientele.

1.6 Cost Structure and revenue streams

1. **Food and beverage costs:** This entails the expenses associated with procuring high-quality ingredients and beverages, which may fluctuate depending on the menu offerings and the sourcing of premium ingredients.
2. **Labor costs:** The allocation of funds towards wages and comprehensive employee benefits is an integral part of ensuring a skilled and dedicated workforce. The labor costs encompass various positions, including talented chefs, attentive servers, and other essential staff members.
3. **Rent and utilities:** The financial outlay for securing a desirable restaurant space and covering essential utilities such as electricity, water, and gas is an indispensable aspect of the cost structure.
4. **Equipment and supplies:** The investment in top-of-the-line kitchen equipment, furnishings, and an ample supply of dining essentials like plates, silverware, and glasses is crucial for maintaining operational efficiency and providing a delightful dining experience.
5. **Marketing and advertising:** The strategic allocation of resources towards marketing and advertising initiatives plays a pivotal role in raising awareness, attracting a diverse customer base, and establishing The Lavie Residency as a distinguished dining destination.
6. **Miscellaneous expenses:** This category encompasses a range of additional expenses, including insurance coverage, taxes, licenses, and other miscellaneous costs necessary for smooth operations and compliance with regulatory requirements.

Regarding revenue streams, The Lavie Residency primarily generates income through the sale of exquisite food and beverages to its discerning customers. The restaurant offers a diverse menu selection that caters to breakfast, lunch, and dinner preferences, along with an enticing array of specialty cocktails and drinks. The pricing of menu items is carefully structured to cover the costs associated with sourcing high-quality ingredients and compensating skilled labor, while also incorporating a suitable profit margin.

In addition to the revenue generated from food and beverage sales, The Lavie Residency may explore supplementary income streams through catering services, hosting

private events, and retail merchandise sales, such as branded t-shirts or coffee mugs, allowing patrons to take a piece of The Lavie Residency experience home.

Overall, The Lavie Residency maintains a prudent cost structure that aligns with industry standards, while its revenue streams are strategically designed to capitalize on the exceptional quality of its culinary offerings, aiming to ensure financial viability and sustained profitability.

2.0 Innovations in Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism is an integral part of The Lavie Residency's ethos and commitment to responsible business practices. The restaurant chain has implemented several innovative initiatives that contribute to sustainable tourism in various ways:

- 1. Locally sourced ingredients:** The Lavie Residency prioritizes the use of locally sourced ingredients in its menu. By partnering with local farmers and suppliers, the restaurant reduces its carbon footprint by minimizing transportation distances and supporting the local economy. This approach not only ensures fresh and high-quality ingredients but also promotes sustainable agriculture practices.
- 2. Waste reduction and recycling:** The restaurant actively promotes waste reduction and recycling efforts. The Lavie Residency implements effective waste management practices, including composting organic waste, recycling packaging materials, and encouraging customers to bring reusable containers. By minimizing waste sent to landfills, the restaurant reduces its environmental impact and contributes to a circular economy.
- 3. Energy efficiency:** The Lavie Residency has invested in energy-efficient equipment and appliances throughout its operations. By utilizing energy-saving technologies such as LED lighting, smart thermostats, and efficient kitchen appliances, the restaurant reduces its energy consumption and lowers greenhouse gas emissions.
- 4. Water conservation:** Water conservation is a priority for The Lavie Residency. The restaurant implements water-saving measures such as low-flow faucets, water-efficient dishwashing systems, and regular maintenance to prevent leaks. These initiatives not only reduce water consumption but also contribute to preserving local water resources.
- 5. Community engagement and education:** The Lavie Residency actively engages with the local community and educates customers about sustainable practices. The restaurant hosts workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns on topics such as sustainable food choices, waste reduction, and environmental conservation. By fostering community involvement and promoting sustainable behavior, The Lavie

Residency encourages guests to adopt environmentally friendly habits beyond their dining experience.

6. **Collaboration with sustainable partners:** The restaurant collaborates with like-minded sustainable partners to further enhance its impact. This includes partnering with eco-friendly suppliers, participating in local sustainability initiatives, and supporting organizations dedicated to environmental conservation and social responsibility. By fostering these partnerships, The Lavie Residency contributes to a broader sustainable tourism ecosystem.

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

In the pursuit of sustainable tourism, The Lavie Residency faces various challenges and seeks to address them with innovative solutions. These challenges include

1. **Environmental impact:** The tourism industry can have a significant environmental impact, including carbon emissions, waste generation, and strain on local resources. The Lavie Residency recognizes the need to mitigate these impacts and aims to implement practices that minimize its ecological footprint.
2. **Community engagement:** Engaging and involving the local community is crucial for sustainable tourism. The Lavie Residency aims to build strong relationships with the local community by supporting local businesses, respecting cultural heritage, and actively participating in community initiatives.
3. **Changing consumer demands:** Consumer preferences and expectations are evolving, with an increasing demand for sustainable and responsible tourism experiences. The Lavie Residency recognizes the need to adapt to these changing demands and continually innovate to meet the expectations of environmentally conscious consumers.
4. **Balancing sustainability and profitability:** Implementing sustainable practices often incurs additional costs, which can challenge the profitability of the business. The Lavie Residency strives to find a balance between sustainability and profitability by optimizing operational efficiencies, exploring cost-saving initiatives, and educating customers about the value of sustainable practices.

To address these challenges, The Lavie Residency adopts innovative strategies and approaches. These initiatives will be discussed further in the subsequent sections, providing insights into the restaurant's internal analysis, activities, stakeholders, target markets, and partnerships in relation to sustainable tourism.

2.2 External analysis

To further drive sustainable tourism, The Lavie Residency conducts an external analysis to understand the broader industry trends, customer preferences, and stakeholder expectations. This analysis helps the restaurant identify opportunities for innovation and collaboration. Key aspects of the external analysis include:

1. **Market trends:** The Lavie Residency stays informed about market trends and shifts in consumer preferences towards sustainable tourism. This includes monitoring consumer demand for eco-friendly practices, local sourcing, and ethical business operations. By keeping abreast of these trends, the restaurant can adapt its offerings and marketing strategies accordingly.
2. **Competitive landscape:** The restaurant assesses the competitive landscape to understand how other businesses in the tourism industry are implementing sustainable practices. This analysis helps identify areas where The Lavie Residency can differentiate itself and offer unique sustainable experiences to attract environmentally conscious customers.
3. **Stakeholder expectations:** The restaurant recognizes the importance of meeting the expectations of its stakeholders, including customers, employees, local communities, and regulatory bodies. By engaging in dialogue and understanding their perspectives, The Lavie Residency can align its sustainable initiatives with stakeholder expectations and build strong relationships.
4. **Collaboration opportunities:** The Lavie Residency explores collaboration opportunities with other businesses, organizations, and government agencies that share similar sustainability goals. This may include partnerships for waste management, energy conservation, or promoting local tourism initiatives. Collaborative efforts allow the restaurant to leverage collective resources and expertise to drive sustainable tourism in the broader ecosystem.
5. **Policy and regulations:** The restaurant stays informed about relevant policies and regulations related to sustainable tourism. This includes environmental regulations, waste management guidelines, and incentives for eco-friendly practices. By adhering to these regulations and staying ahead of emerging policies, The Lavie Residency ensures compliance and demonstrates its commitment to sustainable operations.

Through an external analysis, The Lavie Residency gains insights into market trends, competitive landscape, stakeholder expectations, collaboration opportunities, and policy frameworks. This analysis informs the restaurant's strategic decisions and enables it to position itself as a leader in sustainable tourism, meeting the evolving needs of customers and stakeholders.

2.3 Internal analysis

To drive sustainable tourism, The Lavie Residency conducts an internal analysis to assess its current practices and identify areas for improvement. This analysis encompasses various aspects, including:

1. **Energy efficiency:** The restaurant evaluates its energy consumption and explores opportunities to enhance energy efficiency. This includes using energy-efficient appliances, installing LED lighting, and implementing smart heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems to optimize energy usage and reduce carbon emissions.
2. **Water conservation:** The Lavie Residency places a strong emphasis on water conservation. It implements water-saving measures such as low-flow faucets, water-efficient dishwashing systems, and rainwater harvesting. Additionally, staff members are trained to be mindful of water usage and promote conservation practices throughout the restaurant.
3. **Waste management:** The restaurant assesses its waste management practices to minimize waste generation and maximize recycling efforts. This involves properly sorting and disposing of waste, encouraging staff to reduce food waste through portion control and careful inventory management, and partnering with local composting facilities to compost organic waste.
4. **Sustainable procurement:** The Lavie Residency evaluates its procurement processes to prioritize sustainable and eco-friendly products. This includes sourcing ingredients from local suppliers to support the local economy and reduce transportation emissions. The restaurant also considers certifications such as organic, fair-trade, and responsibly sourced labels when selecting ingredients and products.
5. **Staff training and engagement:** The restaurant recognizes the importance of staff training and engagement in promoting sustainable practices. It conducts regular training sessions to educate employees about sustainable tourism principles and empowers them to implement these practices in their daily operations. This includes training on energy and water conservation, waste management, and sustainable procurement.

By conducting an internal analysis and implementing measures to enhance energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, sustainable procurement, and staff training, The Lavie Residency ensures that sustainability is integrated into its core operations. These efforts contribute to the overall goal of promoting sustainable tourism and minimizing the environmental impact of the business.

2.4 Activities

The Lavie Residency undertakes a variety of activities to promote and implement sustainable practices within its operations. These activities contribute to the overall goal of minimizing environmental impact and fostering a sustainable tourism experience. Key activities include:

- 1. Sustainable sourcing:** The restaurant prioritizes sourcing local, organic, and sustainable ingredients for its menu. This includes partnering with local farmers and suppliers who follow environmentally friendly farming practices. By sourcing locally, The Lavie Residency reduces its carbon footprint associated with transportation and supports the local economy.
- 2. Waste management:** The restaurant implements comprehensive waste management practices to minimize waste generation and maximize recycling and composting. It emphasizes proper segregation of waste at the source and collaborates with waste management agencies to ensure responsible disposal and recycling of waste materials.
- 3. Energy conservation:** The Lavie Residency adopts energy-efficient measures to reduce energy consumption. This includes using energy-efficient appliances, LED lighting, and implementing smart energy management systems. The restaurant also explores the use of renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, to further reduce its reliance on non-renewable energy.
- 4. Water conservation:** The restaurant implements water conservation measures, such as low-flow faucets and toilets, water-efficient dishwashing systems, and rainwater harvesting. The Lavie Residency raises awareness among staff and customers about the importance of conserving water resources and encourages responsible water usage.
- 5. Sustainable transportation:** The restaurant encourages its staff and customers to use sustainable modes of transportation, such as cycling, walking, or public transportation, to reduce carbon emissions associated with commuting. The Lavie Residency provides facilities like bike racks and promotes local transportation options to support eco-friendly mobility.
- 6. Education and awareness:** The restaurant conducts training programs and workshops for its staff to enhance their understanding of sustainable practices and their role in implementing them. The Lavie Residency also educates its customers through informative materials, such as menu cards or brochures, about its sustainability initiatives, encouraging them to make informed choices and participate in sustainable tourism practices.

By undertaking these activities, The Lavie Residency demonstrates its commitment to sustainable tourism and inspires its staff, customers, and the broader community to adopt environmentally responsible behaviours.

2.5 Stakeholders

In the context of sustainable tourism, The Lavie Residency recognizes the importance of engaging and collaborating with various stakeholders who have a vested interest in the restaurant's activities and impacts. These stakeholders play a crucial role in shaping and supporting the sustainable practices of the business. The key stakeholders of The Lavie Residency include:

- 1. Customers:** Customers are a vital stakeholder group for The Lavie Residency. They have the power to choose sustainable options and support businesses that prioritize environmental and social responsibility. The restaurant aims to provide a memorable dining experience for its customers while also educating and inspiring them to make sustainable choices.
- 2. Local community:** The local community, including residents, businesses, and organizations in the vicinity of The Lavie Residency, is an important stakeholder. The restaurant recognizes the value of community engagement and strives to build strong relationships, contribute to local development, and support community initiatives. By promoting sustainable practices, the restaurant aims to have a positive impact on the community's well-being and quality of life.
- 3. Employees:** The staff members of The Lavie Residency are vital stakeholders who play a significant role in implementing and maintaining sustainable practices. The restaurant ensures that employees are trained on sustainable practices, fostering a culture of environmental responsibility and social awareness. The well-being and satisfaction of the employees are also important considerations for the restaurant, as it believes that engaged and motivated staff contribute to a positive and sustainable workenvironment.
- 4. Suppliers:** The Lavie Residency collaborates with various suppliers, including local farmers, food distributors, and vendors. These suppliers are important stakeholders who provide the restaurant with ingredients, materials, and services. The restaurant seeks to establish strong relationships with suppliers who share its values and commitment to sustainability, supporting local producers and promoting sustainable sourcing practices.
- 5. Government and regulatory bodies:** The restaurant operates within a regulatory framework governed by local, regional, and national authorities. The Lavie Residency ensures compliance with relevant laws and regulations related to food

safety, waste management, energy efficiency, and other sustainability aspects. The restaurant also engages with government agencies and industry associations to stay updated on best practices and advocate for policies that promote sustainable tourism.

Effective engagement with stakeholders is crucial for The Lavie Residency to ensure that its sustainable practices align with stakeholder expectations and address their concerns. By considering and involving the interests and perspectives of these stakeholders, the restaurant can strengthen its commitment to sustainability and create shared value for all involved parties.

2.6 Target markets and beneficiaries

The Lavie Residency's target markets and beneficiaries include:

1. **Conscious travellers:** The restaurant appeals to travellers who prioritize sustainable and responsible choices during their journeys. These individuals seek authentic and eco-friendly dining experiences.
2. **Food enthusiasts:** The Lavie Residency caters to food lovers who appreciate high-quality, locally sourced ingredients, and innovative culinary creations that reflect the local culture.
3. **Local community:** The restaurant benefits the local community by supporting local farmers and suppliers, creating employment opportunities, and contributing to the local economy.
4. **Industry and competitors:** The Lavie Residency sets an example for other businesses in the hospitality industry, inspiring them to adopt sustainable practices and contribute to a more responsible tourism sector.

By targeting these markets and benefiting various stakeholders, The Lavie Residency aims to create a positive impact on both the local community and the wider tourism industry.

2.7 Partners

The Lavie Residency collaborates with various partners to enhance its sustainable tourism initiatives and expand its reach. These partners include:

1. **Local farmers and suppliers:** The restaurant sources fresh, locally grown ingredients from farmers and suppliers who share their commitment to sustainability. By partnering with local producers, The Lavie Residency supports the local economy and reduces its environmental footprint.
2. **Non-governmental organizations (NGOs):** The Lavie Residency works closely with environmental and community-focused NGOs to exchange knowledge, receive guidance on sustainable practices, and contribute to local initiatives. These

partnerships help the restaurant stay informed about the latest trends and best practices in sustainable tourism.

3. **Tourism associations and networks:** The restaurant actively participates in tourism associations and networks that promote sustainable tourism practices. By joining forces with like-minded organizations, The Lavie Residency strengthens its voice and influence in advocating for sustainable tourism and attracting conscious travelers.
4. **Hospitality industry suppliers:** The Lavie Residency partners with suppliers of eco-friendly and sustainable products, such as biodegradable packaging, energy-efficient appliances, and environmentally friendly cleaning supplies. These partnerships help the restaurant reduce its environmental impact and provide a more sustainable dining experience.

By fostering partnerships with these entities, The Lavie Residency strengthens its commitment to sustainable tourism and expands its network of like-minded organizations working towards a common goal.

2.8 Finances

Regarding the finances of The Lavie Residency's sustainable tourism initiatives:

1. **Investment in sustainability:** The restaurant allocates funds to implement energy-efficient equipment, renewable energy systems, and waste management solutions. These upfront investments lead to long-term savings and environmental benefits.
2. **Cost optimization:** The Lavie Residency reduces expenses by minimizing food waste, improving operational efficiency, and negotiating favorable contracts with suppliers. This ensures effective resource allocation for sustainability goals.
3. **Pricing strategy:** Menu prices reflect the cost of sustainable sourcing and eco-friendly practices. Adjustments may be made to justify the value of sustainability to customers.
4. **Revenue generation:** The restaurant's primary revenue comes from food and beverage sales. By attracting customers who appreciate sustainable offerings, it generates revenue and builds customer loyalty.
5. **Grants and funding:** The Lavie Residency actively seeks grants, sponsorships, and funding for sustainable tourism projects and partnerships, accelerating progress in sustainability.

The financial aspect of The Lavie Residency's sustainable tourism efforts involves careful planning, cost optimization, strategic pricing, and seeking external funding opportunities. This allows the restaurant to invest in sustainability while maintaining financial stability.

2.9 Human resources

In terms of human resources, The Lavie Residency's sustainable tourism initiatives involve:

1. **Skilled workforce:** The restaurant prioritizes hiring and retaining talented individuals who align with the organization's values and sustainability goals. This includes chefs, servers, and support staff who are trained in sustainable practices.
2. **Training and development:** The Lavie Residency provides regular training programs to educate employees about sustainable practices, waste reduction, energy conservation, and the importance of eco-friendly initiatives. This ensures that all staff members are actively involved in promoting sustainability.
3. **Employee engagement:** The restaurant fosters a culture of sustainability by encouraging employee engagement and participation in sustainability-related activities. This may include idea generation, feedback sessions, and recognition of individual contributions to sustainable practices.
4. **Work-life balance:** The Lavie Residency values work-life balance and implements policies that promote employee well-being. This includes flexible scheduling, employee benefits, and a supportive work environment that encourages employee satisfaction and productivity.
5. **Health and safety:** The restaurant prioritizes the health and safety of its employees by implementing strict hygiene and safety protocols. This includes proper sanitation practices, training on food safety, and compliance with occupational health and safety regulations.

The Lavie Residency recognizes that its employees play a vital role in implementing sustainable practices and delivering a positive guest experience. By investing in their skills, engagement, and well-being, the restaurant creates a motivated and responsible workforce committed to sustainable tourism practices.

2.10 Marketing and communication activities

The Lavie Residency employs various marketing and communication strategies to promote its sustainable tourism initiatives and attract customers who value eco-friendly practices. These activities include:

1. **Branding and messaging:** The restaurant ensures that its branding and messaging reflect its commitment to sustainability. This includes incorporating eco-friendly symbols, highlighting locally sourced ingredients, and emphasizing the restaurant's dedication to reducing its environmental impact.
2. **Digital marketing:** The Lavie Residency utilizes digital platforms such as its website, social media channels, and online advertisements to reach a wider audience.

It showcases its sustainable practices, menu offerings, and unique dining experiences through visually appealing content and engaging storytelling.

3. **Community engagement:** The restaurant actively engages with the local community to create awareness about its sustainable tourism initiatives. It participates in community events, sponsors local environmental projects, and collaborates with like-minded organizations to promote sustainable practices collectively.
4. **Customer education:** The Lavie Residency educates its customers about the importance of sustainable tourism through in-store displays, menu descriptions, and dedicated informational materials. It shares information about its sourcing practices, waste reduction efforts, and energy-saving initiatives to raise awareness and encourage conscious consumer choices.
5. **Collaborations and partnerships:** The restaurant collaborates with eco-friendly organizations, sustainability influencers, and local suppliers to amplify its marketing efforts. By partnering with like-minded entities, it expands its reach and credibility within the sustainable tourism community.
6. **Customer feedback and reviews:** The Lavie Residency actively encourages customer feedback and reviews, both online and offline. It values customer opinions and uses feedback to improve its sustainable practices and enhance the overall dining experience.

Through its marketing and communication activities, The Lavie Residency aims to position itself as a leader in sustainable tourism. It strives to attract customers who appreciate its eco-conscious approach, ultimately contributing to the growth and success of the restaurant.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for target markets

The Lavie Residency's commitment to sustainable tourism has a positive impact on its target markets, which include both local customers and tourists. The impact on target markets can be seen in the following ways:

1. **Enhanced dining experience:** Customers who value sustainability are attracted to The Lavie Residency's eco-friendly practices and enjoy a unique dining experience. The restaurant's focus on locally sourced ingredients, organic options, and eco-friendly packaging adds value to their dining experience.
2. **Health and well-being:** The Lavie Residency's emphasis on using fresh and nutritious ingredients benefits the health and well-being of its customers. The restaurant offers a range of healthy menu options, accommodating various dietary preferences and requirements.

- 3. Cultural preservation:** The Lavie Residency promotes Nepali culture by offering traditional Nepali cuisine, preserving authentic flavors and culinary traditions. This contributes to the cultural experience for both local customers and tourists, allowing them to explore and appreciate the local gastronomy.

3.2 Impact for stakeholders

The Lavie Residency's sustainable tourism practices also have a positive impact on its stakeholders, which include employees, suppliers, and the local community. The impact on stakeholders can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Employee satisfaction:** The Lavie Residency's commitment to sustainability creates a positive work environment and fosters employee satisfaction. Staff members take pride in working for an organization that values environmental responsibility, which can enhance productivity and retention.
- 2. Supplier relationships:** The restaurant's focus on locally sourced ingredients creates partnerships with local farmers, producers, and suppliers. This supports the local economy and builds strong relationships within the community.
- 3. Community engagement:** The Lavie Residency actively engages with the local community by supporting local initiatives, participating in community events, and contributing to environmental projects. This involvement fosters positive relationships and enhances the restaurant's reputation as a responsible corporate citizen.

3.3 Impact for the company

The Lavie Residency's sustainable tourism practices also have a direct impact on the company itself. The impact on the company can be outlined as follows:

- 1. Differentiation and competitive advantage:** The restaurant's commitment to sustainability sets it apart from competitors and provides a unique selling proposition. This differentiation attracts environmentally conscious customers who are willing to support businesses that align with their values.
- 2. Long-term financial sustainability:** The Lavie Residency's sustainable practices, such as waste reduction, energy-saving measures, and efficient resource management, contribute to long-term financial sustainability. By minimizing costs and optimizing resources, the restaurant can improve profitability and resilience in a competitive market.
- 3. Reputation and brand image:** The restaurant's sustainable tourism initiatives build a positive reputation and enhance its brand image. Customers perceive The Lavie Residency as an environmentally responsible establishment, which can attract new customers and foster loyalty among existing ones.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 Reflection

The Lavie Residency's journey towards sustainable tourism has been a transformative experience. Through its commitment to sustainability, the restaurant has created a unique dining experience that resonates with customers who value eco-conscious practices.

4.2 Possibility of replication

The success of The Lavie Residency in implementing sustainable tourism practices showcases the possibility of replication in the wider hospitality industry. Other restaurants and businesses can learn from its innovative approaches and adapt them to their own operations, contributing to a more sustainable future for the tourism sector.

CASE STUDY 25

Best Heritage Tours

Sushant Bajracharya

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Nepal, one of the attractive destinations rich in cultural and natural heritage, and it has full potential of heritage tourism which can play a significant role in country's economy through its promotion and preservation.

Heritage tourism focuses on experiencing the history, culture, and heritage of a destination, and its management and preservation is must with the practice of sustainable tourism. As heritage tourism has grown in popularity, it has become essential to ensure sustainability in heritage tourism.

With the objective of promoting sustainability in heritage tourism a tour company named Best Heritage Tours have been playing important role with the group of experienced, friendly, and knowledgeable guides are passionate about sharing the rich cultural and historical heritage of Nepal with visitors since the day it's starting.

In exploring the ancient temples, palaces, and monuments of Kathmandu, or trekking through the majestic Himalayas, they have a range of tours and activities such as mountain biking, jungle tours, Nepal Buddhist tour, photography tour, homestays and heritage trails that can be tailored according to the tourist's interests and preferences to ensure the trip is unforgettable.

Best heritage tours are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism practices because the growing importance of sustainable tourism practices and the need for tourism operators to adopt responsible practices to preserve cultural and natural heritage for future generations. It has also implemented a range of measures to reduce its environmental impact, support local communities, and promote the preservation and conservation of the destination's cultural and natural heritage.

To sum up, Sustainable tourism has become an increasingly important issue in heritage tourism due to concerns over the environmental, social, and economic impacts of tourism on local communities and destinations. Heritage tourism helps to preserve cultural and historical sites, contribute to economic development, foster cultural exchange, and provide educational and personal enrichment opportunities for tourists. As a result, Best Heritage Tours has been adopting sustainable practices to minimize their negative impact and promote responsible tourism.

1.2 Vision and Mission

With the tagline of “Best, Comfort and luxury Tour Operator”, Best Heritage Tours is a leading sustainable heritage tour company, providing guests with exceptional comfort and luxury services while preserving and promoting the cultural and natural heritage in Nepal, Bhutan, and Tibet.

It’s been providing guests with the best possible heritage sightseeing experience in Nepal while prioritizing sustainability and responsible tourism practices where they conduct their tours. They have been committed to promoting the conservation and preservation of cultural and natural heritage sites, supporting local communities to enhance their living standard, and providing exceptional comfort and luxury to their guests.

1.3 Products/services

Best Heritage Tours organizes both traditional heritage tours and adventure tours - for individual travelers and for groups. Along with heritage sightseeing tours, this company also offers adventure tours such as biking, and trekking to experience the natural beauty of the region. It also provides photography tours for those who are interested in capturing the stunning landscapes and cultural heritage of the region. It provides homestays in traditional Nepalese homes, exploring the Buddhist heritage of Nepal and customized heritage trails based on the interests and preferences of their guests. Overall, this company offers a wide range of products and services to ensure that their guests have an unforgettable experience while prioritizing sustainability and responsible tourism practices.

1.4 Target market(s)

The target group of the best heritage tours ranges typically from individuals to groups who are interested in exploring the historical, cultural, and adventurous aspects of a particular destination. To obtain the target market this company offers a variety of tour packages to diversified groups from individual culture seekers to family travelers. Best heritage tours mainly aimed at group travelers. It organizes tour packages and launches it in the possible market area. Some target market may include:

Senior travelers: elder groups who are retired, have more time and want to know diverse cultures, and traditions around the world.

Educational groups: students residing abroad who are interested in learning about the history and culture of different destinations can also be one of the target groups.

Family travelers: families who are traveling with their children and want to expose them to new different cultures and traditions and broaden their knowledge to appreciate the world is a potential target groups for this company.

Overall, this company's target market is those who have an interest in learning about the past, experiencing different cultures, and exploring the natural beauty of a destination.

1.5 Organization and management

Best Heritage Tours is a sustainable heritage tour company based in Kathmandu, Nepal, with operations in Bhutan and Tibet. The company was established with the aim of providing exceptional comfort and luxury services while promoting and preserving the cultural and natural heritage of these destinations.

Organizational structure: Best Heritage Tours has a hierarchical organizational structure, with the Managing Director at the top of the hierarchy, followed by the Senior Manager and Department Managers, and then the tour guides and other employees. The company has different departments for Operations, Sales and Marketing, Accounting and Finance, and Customer Service.

Management team: The management team of Best Heritage Tours consists of experienced professionals in the tourism industry. The Managing Director oversees the overall operations of the company and is responsible for the development of sustainable tourism practices. The Senior Manager oversees the Sales and Marketing department and ensures that the company's products and services meet customer needs. The Department Managers oversee their respective departments and work with their teams to ensure that operations run smoothly and efficiently.

Tour guides: Best Heritage Tours employs a team of experienced, friendly, and knowledgeable tour guides who are passionate about sharing the rich cultural and historical heritage of Nepal, Bhutan, and Tibet with visitors. The company provides regular training to its tour guides to ensure that they are up-to-date with the latest sustainable tourism practices and can provide guests with an exceptional experience.

Customer service: Best Heritage Tours places a strong emphasis on customer service, and the company's customer service representatives are available to assist guests with any queries or concerns they may have before, during, or after their trip. The company has a customer feedback system in place to ensure that it continually improves its products and services to meet customer expectations.

In conclusion, Best Heritage Tours has a well-structured and experienced management team that places a strong emphasis on sustainable tourism practices and customer service. The company's tour guides are knowledgeable and passionate about

sharing the cultural and historical heritage of Nepal, Bhutan, and Tibet, ensuring that guests have an exceptional and memorable experience.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Cost structure: Best Heritage Tours incurs various costs to operate its business and provide its services. Some of the main costs include:

Operating costs: This includes the cost of office space, equipment, and supplies needed to run the day-to-day operations of the business.

Employee salaries and benefits: This includes the cost of hiring and retaining employees, including salaries, benefits, and other related expenses.

Marketing and advertising: This includes the cost of promoting the company's services through various marketing channels, such as print and digital advertising, social media, and email marketing.

Transportation and accommodation: This includes the cost of transportation and accommodation for guests during their tours, as well as the cost of transportation and accommodation for the company's staff.

Tour guide fees: This includes the cost of hiring and training knowledgeable and experienced tour guides who can provide guests with a high-quality experience.

Revenue streams: Best Heritage Tours generates revenue through various channels, including:

Tour packages: The company generates revenue by offering a variety of tour packages to its guests. These packages may include accommodations, transportation, meals, and other activities.

Customized tours: The company also generates revenue by offering customized tours to guests who want to tailor their experience to their specific interests and preferences.

Photography tours: Best Heritage Tours offers specialized photography tours to guests who are interested in capturing the stunning landscapes and cultural heritage of the region. **Adventure Tours:** The company also offers adventure tours such as mountain biking, trekking, and jungle tours to those who want to experience the natural beauty of the region. **Homestays:** Best Heritage Tours generates revenue by offering traditional homestay experiences to guests who want to experience the local culture and traditions of the region. **Referral and Repeat Business:** The company also generates revenue through referral and repeat business. Satisfied customers who have had a positive experience with the company are more likely to refer others and return for future tours.

1.7 Other information

Awards and accolades: Best Heritage Tours has won several awards and accolades for their exceptional services and sustainable tourism practices. In 2020, they were awarded the TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Award, recognizing them as one of the best tour operators in Nepal. They have also been recognized for their commitment to sustainable tourism by organizations such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

Partnerships and collaborations: Best Heritage Tours has established partnerships and collaborations with several organizations and businesses in the tourism industry to enhance their services and promote sustainable tourism. They work closely with local communities, conservation organizations, and other tourism operators to promote responsible tourism practices and support the preservation of cultural and natural heritage sites.

Social responsibility: Best Heritage Tours is committed to social responsibility and community development. They support local communities by providing employment opportunities and supporting local businesses. They also contribute to community development projects such as education and healthcare initiatives.

Technology and innovation: Best Heritage Tours leverages technology and innovation to enhance their services and improve the guest experience. They use online booking platforms and digital marketing strategies to reach a wider audience and provide a seamless booking process. They also use advanced technologies such as virtual reality and 360-degree imaging to enhance the guest experience and promote their destination.

Safety and security: Best Heritage Tours places a high priority on the safety and security of their guests. They provide comprehensive safety training to their staff and adhere to strict safety protocols during their tours and activities. They also have emergency response plans in place to ensure the safety and well-being of their guests in the event of an emergency.

Overall, Best Heritage Tours is a leading sustainable heritage tour company in Nepal that provides exceptional comfort and luxury services while promoting and preserving the cultural and natural heritage of the region. They are committed to sustainable tourism practices, social responsibility, and community development, and leverage technology and innovation to enhance their services and improve the guest experience.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

The passage is about a sustainable heritage tour company in Nepal, named Best Heritage Tours. It describes how the company is committed to sustainable and

responsible tourism practices, promoting the preservation and conservation of the destination's cultural and natural heritage. It provides a wide range of products and services to ensure that their guests have an unforgettable experience while prioritizing sustainability and responsible tourism practices. The target market of the company ranges typically from individuals to groups who are interested in exploring the historical, cultural, and adventurous aspects of a particular destination. The organizational structure of the company is hierarchical, with the Managing Director at the top of the hierarchy, followed by the Senior Manager and Department Managers, and then the tour guides and other employees. The company employs experienced, friendly, and knowledgeable tour guides who are passionate about sharing the rich cultural and historical heritage of Nepal, Bhutan, and Tibet with visitors.

2.2 The business/project idea

Overall, Best Heritage Tours is a sustainable heritage tour company based in Kathmandu, Nepal, providing exceptional comfort and luxury services while promoting and preserving the cultural and natural heritage of Nepal, Bhutan, and Tibet. The company offers a wide range of products and services, including traditional heritage tours, adventure tours, photography tours, homestays, and customized heritage trails, all while prioritizing sustainability and responsible tourism practices. Best Heritage Tours mainly targets group travelers, including senior travelers, educational groups, and family travelers. The company has a hierarchical organizational structure, with the Managing Director at the top of the hierarchy and experienced professionals in the tourism industry making up the management team. The company places a strong emphasis on customer service and sustainability, and regularly trains its tour guides in the latest sustainable tourism practices to provide an exceptional experience for its guests.

2.3 External analysis

There are several meso and macro trends and developments that influence sustainable tourism initiatives and businesses. Here are some of the most significant ones:

Climate change: Climate change is a major concern for the tourism industry as it impacts the natural resources that are integral to the industry. The industry is being urged to adopt sustainable practices and mitigate the impact of tourism on the environment.

Globalization: The growth of global trade has increased the flow of tourists across borders. The industry is adapting to new trends, such as the rise of the middle class in emerging markets, which has led to an increase in international travel.

Technological advances: Technology has played a critical role in the growth of the tourism industry. The use of the internet has made it easier for tourists to research and book travel, and social media has become a key tool for promoting destinations.

Social awareness: Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the impact that tourism has on the environment and local communities. There is a growing demand for sustainable tourism practices that minimize the negative impact of tourism on the environment and local communities.

Policy changes: Governments are introducing policies to regulate tourism and promote sustainability. For example, some destinations have introduced tourist taxes to fund environmental and cultural preservation projects.

Changing consumer preferences: Consumers are increasingly seeking out authentic and sustainable travel experiences. There is growing demand for eco-tourism, responsible tourism, and voluntourism, among other sustainable tourism practices.

Economic factors: Economic factors such as income levels, currency exchange rates, and employment rates can impact tourism. Sustainable tourism practices can help to create jobs and stimulate economic growth while minimizing the negative impacts on the environment and local communities.

Overall, sustainable tourism initiatives and businesses need to be aware of these meso and macro trends and developments to be successful and meet the needs and demands of consumers and governments.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- The initiative/business focuses on sustainable tourism, which is a growing trend and has increasing demand among travelers.
- The initiative/business can benefit from positive publicity and a good reputation for being environmentally responsible and socially conscious.
- The initiative/business can attract customers who value sustainable and responsible travel, which can lead to customer loyalty and repeat business.
- The initiative/business can benefit from cost savings by implementing environmentally sustainable practices, such as energy-efficient equipment and waste reduction strategies.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

- The initiative/business may face higher initial costs to implement sustainable practices and technologies, which can be a barrier to entry.

- The initiative/business may face competition from larger companies that can afford to invest more in sustainable tourism initiatives and have greater resources to implement them.
- The initiative/business may face challenges in communicating the value proposition of sustainable tourism to customers who are not as familiar with or interested in sustainability.
- The initiative/business may face regulatory hurdles or limitations on certain sustainable practices, depending on the region or location of the business.

2.5 Activities

The main activities that are/were needed to implement a new initiative/business on sustainable tourism can include:

Research and analysis: Conducting extensive research and analysis of the tourism industry, identifying gaps and opportunities for sustainable practices, and gathering data on consumer behavior and preferences.

Development of sustainable tourism policies: Developing and implementing sustainable tourism policies, guidelines, and regulations that encourage responsible practices by businesses and visitors.

Collaboration with stakeholders: Building relationships and collaborating with various stakeholders, such as local communities, government agencies, tourism operators, and industry associations, to ensure their involvement and support.

Education and awareness: Creating educational programs and campaigns to raise awareness among tourists and local communities about sustainable tourism practices and their benefits.

Assessment and certification: Establishing certification programs that assess and certify tourism businesses and destinations for their sustainable practices and environmental impact.

Sustainable infrastructure development: Investing in the development of sustainable infrastructure, such as renewable energy, waste management, and water conservation systems, to reduce the negative impact of tourism on the environment.

Marketing and promotion: Developing and implementing marketing and promotion strategies that emphasize the sustainable aspects of the tourism business, highlighting its unique value proposition and attracting conscious travelers.

Continuous improvement: Implementing continuous improvement strategies that monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the sustainable tourism initiatives, and adapt to changing market conditions, technological advancements, and customer feedback.

Overall, the implementation of a sustainable tourism initiative requires a holistic approach that integrates environmental, social, and economic sustainability considerations into every aspect of the business.

2.6 Stakeholders

The implementation of a new initiative/business on sustainable tourism involves a wide range of stakeholders who play different roles in making the project successful. The following are some of the stakeholders who are/were involved in the implementation of the initiative:

Investors: Investors play a crucial role in the implementation of the new initiative/business on sustainable tourism. They provide financial support and resources needed to make the project successful.

Local community: The local community is an essential stakeholder in the implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives. They are the ones who will be directly impacted by the project, and their support is necessary for the success of the project.

Tourism industry: The tourism industry, including tour operators, hotels, and other tourism-related businesses, is an important stakeholder in the implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives. They play a vital role in promoting and implementing sustainable tourism practices.

Government agencies: Government agencies, including tourism boards and environmental departments, are critical stakeholders in the implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives. They provide regulatory and policy support that helps promote sustainable tourism practices.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs): NGOs are important stakeholders in the implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives. They help raise awareness about sustainable tourism practices and work with local communities and businesses to promote sustainable tourism.

Academia: Academia plays a crucial role in the implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives by providing research and knowledge about sustainable tourism practices. They also help develop training programs for tourism businesses and communities.

Visitors and tourists: Visitors and tourists are essential stakeholders in the implementation of sustainable tourism initiatives. They have a direct impact on the success of the project by supporting sustainable tourism practices and promoting responsible tourism behavior.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The following targets, were considered (as an example targets have been taken from the following document, which is also useful for further details <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/cycling-tourism/market-potential>): The beneficiaries of the new initiative/business on sustainable tourism will include various stakeholders, including:

Tourists: The tourists will benefit from the initiative by enjoying eco-friendly and responsible tourism experiences that minimize negative impacts on the environment and local communities.

Local communities: The local communities will benefit from the initiative by having access to new job opportunities, increased economic benefits, and better infrastructure.

Environment: The initiative will help to protect and preserve the environment, including natural habitats, wildlife, and biodiversity, which will have a positive impact on the planet as a whole.

Tourism industry: The initiative will help to improve the reputation of the tourism industry, leading to increased customer loyalty, brand recognition, and profitability.

Government: The government will benefit from the initiative by increasing tax revenue, reducing social and environmental costs associated with tourism, and improving the overall quality of life for citizens.

2.8 Partners

Local communities: Working with local communities is essential for sustainable tourism initiatives. This partnership helps to ensure that the local people are involved in decision-making and can benefit from tourism activities.

Government agencies: Government agencies can provide funding, regulatory support, and policy guidance for sustainable tourism initiatives.

Non-profit organizations: Non-profit organizations that work on environmental conservation or community development can provide technical assistance, training, and networking opportunities for the sustainable tourism initiative.

Private sector: Private sector businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, and transportation companies, can partner with the sustainable tourism initiative to offer sustainable products and services.

Academic institutions: Academic institutions can provide research and analysis on sustainable tourism practices, as well as training and education for the sustainable tourism initiative's staff and partners.

The specific partners will depend on the goals and needs of the sustainable tourism initiative, as well as the local context and resources available.

2.9 Finances

However, here are some common ways that sustainable tourism initiatives can be financed:

Private investment: Private investors can provide funding for sustainable tourism projects in exchange for a share of the profits or other financial incentives.

Crowdfunding: Crowdfunding platforms can be used to raise funds from a large number of people who are interested in supporting sustainable tourism initiatives.

Government grants: Government grants are often available for sustainable tourism initiatives, particularly those that align with the government's tourism development goals.

Loans: Loans from banks or other financial institutions can be used to finance sustainable tourism projects, although this option may come with interest payments and repayment schedules.

Donations: Charitable donations from individuals or organizations can be used to support sustainable tourism initiatives.

Partnerships: Partnerships with other organizations or businesses can provide funding or in-kind support for sustainable tourism initiatives.

Sustainable tourism certification programs: Some sustainable tourism certification programs, such as those offered by Green Globe and Rainforest Alliance, provide funding or other resources to certified businesses or projects.

It's important to note that financing for sustainable tourism initiatives can be complex and require careful planning and management. Many sustainable tourism initiatives also rely on a combination of funding sources to cover their costs.

2.10 Human resources

The implementation of a new initiative/business on sustainable tourism typically requires a variety of human resources to support its success. These may include:

Project managers: Individuals who can oversee the entire initiative, ensuring that all project goals are met within the allocated budget and timeline.

Sustainability experts: Professionals with expertise in sustainability practices and principles who can provide guidance on how to make the business more sustainable.

Marketing specialists: Personnel who can develop and execute marketing strategies to promote the sustainable tourism business, attract customers and raise awareness of the brand.

Community outreach specialists: Individuals who can engage with local communities, build partnerships and collaborate with other organizations to create shared value and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Tour guides: Professionals who can offer tours, educate tourists on sustainable practices, and create an immersive and educational experience for visitors.

Trained staff: Employees who are trained to implement sustainable practices throughout the business, such as energy conservation, waste reduction, and ethical sourcing.

IT specialists: Experts who can create and maintain a user-friendly website, mobile app, and other digital platforms to market the business and provide convenient access to information and services for customers.

The specific roles and skills required for the implementation of a new initiative/business on sustainable tourism will depend on the scope of the project, the size of the organization and the available resources.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

The communication channels used to inform the target market(s) and stakeholders on sustainable tourism can vary depending on the specific initiative/business and its goals, as well as the preferences of the target audience. However, some common communication channels that are often used for sustainable tourism initiatives include:

Social media: Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn can be used to share information and updates about the initiative/business, as well as to engage with stakeholders and build a community around the cause of sustainable tourism.

Website: A dedicated website for the initiative/business can serve as a central hub of information, where interested parties can learn more about the initiative/business, its goals, and its progress.

Email: Email can be used to send regular updates and newsletters to stakeholders, as well as to invite them to events or other activities related to the initiative/business.

Events: Events such as conferences, workshops, and seminars can be used to engage with stakeholders and share information about the initiative/business.

Press releases and media outreach: Press releases and media outreach can be used to generate media coverage of the initiative/business, which can help to raise awareness and build support.

Partnerships: Partnering with other organizations or businesses that share the same values and goals can help to amplify the message of the initiative/business and reach a wider audience.

Overall, it is important to use a mix of communication channels in order to reach the target market(s) and stakeholders effectively and efficiently.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

The impact for customers of the new initiative/business on sustainable tourism can be significant. Customers are increasingly concerned about the impact of their travel on the environment and local communities. By offering sustainable tourism options, the initiative/business can provide customers with a way to travel and experience new destinations while minimizing their impact on the environment and supporting local communities. The initiative/business on sustainable tourism can offer customers a range of benefits, such as:

Authentic experiences: Sustainable tourism can provide customers with opportunities to experience local cultures and traditions in an authentic way. This can enhance the overall travel experience and create lasting memories.

Environmental conservation: Sustainable tourism initiatives can help to protect and preserve natural resources, such as wildlife, forests, and waterways. Customers can feel good knowing that their travel choices are contributing to the conservation of these resources for future generations.

Community support: Sustainable tourism can also support local communities by creating jobs and economic opportunities. Customers can feel good knowing that their travel dollars are going to support local businesses and improve the lives of local people.

Education: Sustainable tourism initiatives can also provide customers with educational opportunities to learn about the environment, local cultures, and conservation efforts. This can enhance the travel experience and promote greater awareness and understanding of sustainable tourism practices.

Overall, the impact of the new initiative/business on sustainable tourism for customers can be significant, offering a range of benefits that go beyond traditional travel experiences.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

The impact for the stakeholders of a new initiative/business on sustainable tourism can be significant, depending on their level of involvement and interest in the

project. For example, local communities may benefit from increased economic opportunities and improved infrastructure, which can lead to higher standards of living and more stable employment. Additionally, stakeholders such as governments, NGOs, and environmental groups may see positive impacts from the initiative, as it helps to promote sustainable tourism practices and protect natural resources.

On the other hand, some stakeholders may be negatively impacted if the initiative is not implemented in a responsible manner. For example, if the initiative involves the development of new infrastructure or increased tourism activity in environmentally sensitive areas, it could lead to degradation of ecosystems and harm local communities.

Overall, it is important for stakeholders to be engaged throughout the implementation process to ensure that their concerns are addressed and the initiative is implemented in a responsible and sustainable manner.

3.3 Impact for the environment

The impact on the environment can be significant with the implementation of a sustainable tourism initiative. By promoting sustainable practices, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and minimizing water usage, the initiative can help to reduce the negative impact of tourism on the environment. Additionally, the initiative may encourage tourists to engage in eco-friendly activities and support conservation efforts, such as reforestation, beach cleanups, and wildlife conservation.

Moreover, the initiative may lead to the protection of local ecosystems, such as coral reefs, forests, and wetlands, and contribute to the preservation of endangered species. The reduction in carbon emissions through sustainable transport, energy-efficient practices, and the use of renewable energy sources can also help to mitigate the negative impact of tourism on climate change. Overall, the new initiative/business on sustainable tourism can have a positive impact on the environment by promoting responsible and sustainable tourism practices.

3.4 Impact for the company

Sustainability can also bring financial benefits to the organization in the long run, such as cost savings through energy efficiency and waste reduction, and increased revenue from customers who are willing to pay more for sustainable products and services. Additionally, the organization can attract and retain employees who are motivated by the company's commitment to sustainability.

However, implementing a sustainable tourism initiative can also require a significant investment of time and resources, including training employees, changing

processes, and investing in new technologies. The organization may also face challenges in implementing sustainable practices due to the complex nature of the tourism industry and the need for collaboration with various stakeholders.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The organization may see a shift in its brand perception, with customers and stakeholders recognizing it as a leader in sustainable tourism practices. This can result in increased customer loyalty, positive media coverage, and improved relationships with partners and suppliers.

Additionally, the organization may need to invest in new technologies, training, and resources to support sustainable tourism practices. While this can be costly in the short term, it can lead to long-term benefits such as reduced operating costs, increased efficiency, and improved sustainability performance.

Furthermore, the organization may see an increase in demand for sustainable tourism products and services, which can create new business opportunities and revenue streams. However, it's important to note that the impact will depend on the specific initiative/business and the organization's ability to effectively implement and communicate its sustainable tourism practices.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Based on the information provided, here are some insights on what worked well and what could be improved in the process of implementing the new initiative/business on sustainable tourism:

What worked well: The development of partnerships with various stakeholders, including local communities, NGOs, and government agencies, helped to ensure buy-in and support for the initiative. The focus on sustainable tourism practices helped to differentiate the organization from competitors and attract customers who are interested in environmentally responsible travel. The organization's efforts to train staff and engage in ongoing monitoring and evaluation of sustainability practices helped to embed sustainability into the company culture.

What could be improved: The financing of the initiative/business could have been more transparent and better communicated to stakeholders. The communication strategy could have been more comprehensive, with a greater focus on engaging with customers and educating them about sustainable tourism practices. The organization could have done more to measure and report on the impact of its sustainability

initiatives, in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of its efforts and build credibility with stakeholders.

4.2 Possibility of replication

The possibility of replicating a new initiative/business on sustainable tourism depends on several factors such as the uniqueness of the initiative, the availability of resources, the regulatory framework, the willingness of stakeholders to participate, and the level of support from the local community and government.

If the initiative is unique and has demonstrated positive impacts on the environment, society, and the economy, it may be replicated in other destinations with similar characteristics. The availability of resources such as funding, human resources, and technology is crucial for the success of the replication process. In addition, a supportive regulatory framework that promotes sustainable tourism practices can facilitate the replication process.

The willingness of stakeholders to participate is also essential. It is important to involve local communities, businesses, and government agencies in the replication process to ensure that the initiative is adapted to the local context and needs. Finally, the level of support from the local community and government can influence the success of the replication process. If the community and government are supportive of the initiative, it may be easier to overcome any challenges that may arise during the replication process. Overall, while replication is possible, it requires careful planning and consideration of various factors to ensure that the initiative is successfully adapted to the new destination.

CASE STUDY 26

Heritage Kandalama Where Sustainability Blooms

M.Y. Sasanki and R.S.S.W. Arachchi

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Heritage Kandalama is a five-star hotel located in Dambulla, a town in the central province of Sri Lanka. The hotel is situated in a beautiful location surrounded by lush greenery and has stunning views of the Sigiriya Rock Fortress and the Kandalama Lake. It is widely considered one of the most unique and eco-friendly hotels in Sri Lanka.

The hotel was designed by Sri Lankan architect, Geoffrey Bawa, and opened in 1994. Bawa's vision was to create a hotel that would blend in with the natural surroundings and become a part of the landscape. To achieve this, he incorporated many unique features, such as the hotel's use of natural materials, its minimalist design, and its seamless integration with the surrounding environment.

Heritage Kandalama is part of the Aitken Spence Hotels group, one of the leading hotel chains in Sri Lanka. The hotel has won numerous awards for its sustainability initiatives, including the Green Globe certification, which recognizes its commitment to environmental conservation and responsible tourism.

In terms of the context in which Heritage Kandalama is operating and developing, Sri Lanka is a developing country in South Asia with a growing tourism sector. The country's tourism industry has been steadily growing over the past decade, with over 2.4 million tourists visiting the country in 2019.

The central province, where Heritage Kandalama is located, is one of the major tourist destinations in Sri Lanka, known for its ancient historical sites, beautiful scenery, and cultural attractions.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: To be the global leader in sustainable tourism which attracts intelligent stakeholders to experience high-quality eco-luxury products and services.

Mission: To delight all stakeholders by practising world-class business ethics and values while continually improving business viability through the development of the human asset.

1.3 Products/services

1. **Accommodation:** The hotel offers a variety of guest rooms and suites, each with a unique design and décor, and featuring amenities such as air conditioning, free Wi-Fi, and en-suite bathrooms. (Superior Room, Panoramic Room, Luxury Room, Luxury Panoramic Room, Deluxe Room, Suite, Luxury Suite, Royal Suite)
2. **Dining:** The hotel has several dining options, including the Kanchana Restaurant, which offers Sri Lankan and international cuisine, the Kaludiya Restaurant, which specializes in seafood, and the Ritigala Pauwva Bar, which offers drinks and snacks in a relaxed atmosphere. (Kanchana Bar, Café Kanchan, Exclusive Dining Options.)
3. **Spa:** The hotel's Six Senses Spa offers a range of treatments and therapies, including massages, facials, and body scrubs, using natural and organic products.
4. **Leisure activities:** Guests can enjoy a range of activities at the hotel, including swimming in the pool, exploring the hotel's nature trails, visiting the hotel's butterfly garden, and participating in cultural activities such as cooking classes, temple visits, and village tours.
5. **Business facilities:** The hotel also provides conference and meeting facilities, including a ballroom, meeting rooms, and audio-visual equipment.
6. **Weddings and events:** The hotel offers a variety of venues and packages for weddings, parties, and other events, including outdoor terraces, banquet halls, and gardens.
7. **Other experiences** Cave excavations, Mountain Bike Tour, Jungle Trekking – Kandalama Rock, Hot Air Balloon Rides, Jungle Trekking – Puranagama (Ancient Village), Bird Watching, Eco Park, Polonnaruwa, Dambulla, Anuradhapura, Minneriya / Kaudulla National Park, Sigiriya

In addition to the general services offered by the Kandalama, the hotel continued to preserve the rich flora and fauna that surrounds it maintaining 211 acres of land adjacent to the thoughtfully designed hotel building as a conservation forest creating a rich base habitats endemic to the area. The hotel building takes up only 8 acres of the 200-acre property which are used to research purposes as well as guided nature tours for guests. It includes an eco-park that acts as a wildlife orphanage and rehabilitation centre for injured animals, compost fertilizer pits, solid waste recycling plants, wastewater recycling and a herbal garden. Further, the hotel is carrying out a community tree-planting campaign also.

Apart from that, Hotel is having a training school which provides technical training for hotel employees and graduates. After completion of the training, they have an opportunity to work in the hotel chain

1.4 Target market(s)

1. **Eco-tourists:** The hotel's commitment to sustainability and environmental conservation makes it an attractive destination for eco-tourists who are interested in experiencing Sri Lanka's natural beauty while minimizing their environmental impact.
2. **Cultural tourists:** The hotel's location in the heart of Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle and its proximity to historical and cultural sites such as Sigiriya and Dambulla make it an ideal destination for cultural tourists who are interested in exploring Sri Lanka's rich history and heritage.
3. **Luxury travellers:** The hotel's high-end amenities, personalized service, and unique design make it an attractive destination for luxury travellers who are looking for a high-quality and memorable experience.
4. **Weddings and events:** The hotel's beautiful natural surroundings, elegant venues, and experienced event planning staff make it a popular choice for weddings, parties, and other special events.
5. **Experienced-Based Tourists:** Travelers who are seeking an authentic and lie time experience in nature and culture

Overall, Heritance Kandalama Hotel in Dambulla targets a diverse range of market segments, but all of its offerings are united by a commitment to sustainability, cultural authenticity, and exceptional service.

1.5 Organization and management

The hotel is managed by the Aitken Spence Corporate head office situated in Colombo. The organizational structure is typically hierarchical, with a General Manager at the top, followed by various department heads and supervisors. The structure can be divided into two main areas: Front of the House (FOH) and Back of the House (BOH). The Kandalama Hotel is an Aitken Spence Hotel. Therefore, it is overlooked by the Chairman, Managing Director, Board of Directors and the Corporate Management Team.

1. **General manager:** The General Manager is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the hotel's operations and ensuring that the hotel runs smoothly and efficiently.
2. **Sales and marketing:** This department is responsible for promoting the hotel and attracting guests through various marketing channels.
3. **Front office:** This department is responsible for guest services, including check-in, check-out, concierge services, and handling guest inquiries and complaints.
4. **Housekeeping:** This department is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and upkeep of the guest rooms and public areas of the hotel.

5. **Food and beverage:** This department is responsible for all aspects of the hotel's food and beverage operations, including restaurants, bars, and banquets.
6. **Accounting and finance:** This department is responsible for managing the hotel's financial operations, including budgeting, payroll, and accounting.
7. **Human resources:** This department is responsible for recruiting, training, and managing the hotel's employees.

1.6 Revenue streams

The turnover is mainly based on the sale of accommodation and activities as packages to intermediaries and final consumers.

- Room Revenue- Room and accommodation
- Food and beverage - Kanchana Restaurants, Kaludiya Restaurant, Kanchana Lounge, Kanchana Bar, Café Kachchan
 - Kanchana Restaurant is the main buffet-style restaurant at Heritage Kandalama. It serves a wide variety of international and local cuisines and earns from that. Guests are capable of having an extensive buffet spread that includes a diverse range of dishes for various tastes and preferences. This boasts a stunning view of Kandalama Lake. Live cooking stations where chefs prepare certain dishes in front of guests also add a unique experience.
 - Kaludiya Restaurant
- Excursions – Sustainable tourism executions (Community-based experience/ village tours/ nature trails/Special interest tourism activities etc.
- Promoting the culture and tours - Heritage Kandalama is based in the cultural triangle, which is next to UNESCO World Heritage sites, the Dambulla Cave Temple, as well as the Sigiriya Rock Fortress.
- Ancillary Services: Hotels may offer additional services such as spa facilities, fitness centres, laundry services, parking facilities, and transportation services.

1.7 Other information

There are sustainable practices in its operations, including Water Conservation, Energy Efficiency, Waste Reduction, Local Sourcing and Community Engagement. Heritage Kandalama Hotel has received numerous awards and certifications, including the Travel Life Gold Certification, Green Globe Certification, ISO 2200: 2018 certification, ISO 14000: 2015 certification, ISO 50001: 2011 Certification, LEED certification and the National Energy Efficiency Award.

In 2023, Kandalama won the leading designer hotel and eco-friendly resort in South Asia Travel Awards and Travelers Choice and Review award. Kandalama is the first LEED-Certified green hotel in Asia (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified by United States Green Building Council)

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

- Developing a strong sustainable tourism value proposition for guests. To achieve that the hotel is trying to embed sustainability into all the processes and expects to enhance productivity and returns.
- Cost of Energy (The hotel considers it as an investment)
- **Initial investment:** Implementing sustainable practices often requires upfront investments in technologies, infrastructure, and staff training
- Concerns of the community when building a new property.
- **Operational changes:** such as energy-efficient lighting systems, water-saving fixtures, waste management systems, and eco-friendly cleaning products.
- **Staff training and engagement:** Engaging and training staff members to adopt sustainable practices and modify their behaviour is crucial.
- **Regulatory compliance:** Hotels need to comply with various local and international regulations related to sustainability, such as waste management, water usage, energy efficiency, and environmental protection.

2.2 The business/project idea

Expand certain agriculture-based products, and more organic-based products within the properties. The main target is promoting organic food among tourists

- Organic fruits and vegetables: The hotel may source a range of organic fruits and vegetables from local farmers or their organic gardens. These could include items like organic greens, herbs, seasonal fruits, and vegetables.
- Herbs and spices: Heritage Kandalama may utilize a variety of organic herbs and spices to enhance the flavours of their dishes.
- Organic tea: Sri Lanka is renowned for its tea production, and the hotel may offer a selection of organic and sustainably sourced teas. Guests can enjoy a range of organic tea options, such as black tea, green tea, or herbal infusions.

- Rice and grains: To support local farmers and promote organic agriculture, Heritage Kandalama may source organic rice and grains. Guests can enjoy dishes made with organic varieties, such as brown rice or heirloom grains.

Experience Based tourism with sustainable practices

- Under this project idea, Kandalama develops short excursions to the community areas and villages and gives the authentic rural life experience in Sri Lanka. Many activities are promoted such as cycling to village areas and observing their lifestyles, awareness of cultural activities and values, Authentic food and agricultural experiences, nature walks, bird watching and water-based activities. Herbs and Spices: Heritage Kandalama may utilize a variety of organic herbs and spices.

Building orientation and natural lighting windows

- The architectural layout of the hotel maximizes the amount of available natural light. Orient the structure to receive as much sunshine as possible throughout the day. Windows, skylights, and light wells can help direct natural light into various areas of the hotel by being strategically placed. The hotel's surroundings' landscaping also helps to improve natural lighting. To offer shade in outdoor areas and reduce excessive heat buildup, the hotel uses trees strategically.

Natural rock pool

- Here they use natural rock elements for pool edging instead of energy-intensive materials like concrete or metal. Rocks can blend in with the natural environment and provide a more sustainable and visually appealing solution to the guests.
- Designing water swimming pools with natural rock elements can contribute to sustainability in several ways. Having eco-friendly swimming pools with natural rock offers a guest an authentic experience like natural filtration systems.

Only have wild trees, native trees and a hotel covered by creepers called "Kalawel"

- Hotels with creepers, commonly referred to as living walls or green walls, provide many benefits like improving air quality, aesthetic appeal, heat reduction, stress reduction and enhancing overall guest experience using sustainability concepts.

Biomass Gasification plant system

- Through the gasifier (WBG:300 Model) the amount of hot water which the hotel needed can be supplied. The capacity of this system is 900kWth and the wood consumption is 225kg/hr.
- The purpose of this system is to reduction of the usage of non-regeneration fuel like diesel.

2.3 External analysis

Before sustainability was even a major term or a trend in the tourism and hospitality industry, Kandalama Heritage was one of the pioneers to be able to do it.

2.3.1 Micro trends

- **Increasing Consumer Demand:** This development offers Heritage Kandalama the chance to draw eco-aware tourists who value sustainability in their vacation decisions.
- **Increase in Eco-Tourism:** Heritage Kandalama can make use of its eco-friendly practices and distinctive setting to establish itself as a sought-after eco-tourism destination.
- **Providing more experiential travel to the guest.**

2.3.2 Macro trends

- **Awareness of climate change** as climate change becomes more widely recognized, sustainability and lowering carbon footprints are given more importance. Heritage Kandalama will gain from promoting its green activities and attempts to have a minimal impact on the environment.
- **Regulatory environment:** To prevent fines and reputational hazards, Heritage Kandalama should keep up with pertinent rules and assure compliance.
- **Collaboration and partnerships** are two ways that Heritage Kandalama may strengthen its sustainability initiatives and generate value for all parties involved.
- **Technology and innovation:** Opportunities to improve sustainable practices and visitor experiences are presented by technological advancements.
- Heritage Kandalama works on these trends and advancements as opportunities. However, there are a few areas, they consider as threats and work on minimizing the impact of it. They are geo-political instability, effects of climate change, increase in competition etc.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- **Eco-friendly Construction and Design:** Heritage The creative architecture of Kandalama is recognized for blending in perfectly with the surrounding landscape. A small ecological impact, the use of natural materials, and energy-efficient systems are just a few of the sustainable features incorporated into the hotel's design.
- **The rocky ridge, that rises behind the hotel forms the most amazing natural cave.**

- Much of the hotel reflects traditional architecture, wide spacious halls and high ceiling remind you of an ancient palace.
- From the distance even the pools merge with the water of Kandalama Tank. Here, it is never quite sure where the hotel end and the natural landscape begins.
- Environmental Conservation Initiatives: The hotel is strongly committed to sustainability and environmental protection. It actively participates in programs aimed at protecting biodiversity, conserving water, and managing garbage.
- Heritage Kandalama participates in several community development initiatives, aiding the surrounding areas by providing possibilities for education, skill development, and revenue generation.
- Awards & Recognition: For its sustainable initiatives, the hotel has won various awards and certificates.
- Heritage Kandalama places a strong emphasis on using locally sourced goods and supporting regional farmers, artisans, and enterprises. This helps to preserve regional customs and culture while also lowering the hotel's carbon footprint.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

- Need for constant refurbishment and upkeep of the property: This results in a high-cost involvement annually
- Energy Use: Heritage Kandalama tries to reduce its energy use, but because of its size and operational needs, it may still use a lot of energy.
- Shortage of workforce due to migration: This creates immense pressure on HR and the continuation of service standards.
- Seasonal Variations: Heritage Kandalama's operations and occupancy rates may change according to the season.

2.5 Activities

- Kandalama is always trying to incorporate the triple bottom line into the corporate strategy of the hotel. It integrates the sustainability pillars of environmental management, business ethics, Human resources and supply chain and community development with the sustainable development goals (Goals 6,7,8, 12. 13. 14 and 17)
- Clear objectives, timetables, and targets are included in the sustainability policy and strategy when implementing sustainable practices.
- Stakeholder Communication: Inform guests, neighbourhood residents, business associates, and industry peers about the hotel's efforts to promote sustainable tourism.

- Heritage Kandalama participates in forestry initiatives to rehabilitate degraded regions and build wildlife corridors. To increase biodiversity and offer habitats for regional wildlife, they plant native tree species.
- Heritage Kandalama has undertaken several energy and water-saving strategies to lessen its environmental effect. This entails using water-saving technologies like rainwater collection, LED lighting, and energy-efficient appliances.
- The hotel takes steps to prevent the spread of invasive plant species that could endanger the native flora and disrupt the balance of the ecosystem.
- Engage staff members in sustainability activities and promote a culture of social and environmental responsibility.
- Allocate wastage into categories and the money earned from waste management goes to the CSR fund. Stationaries are supplied to the community children who are studying using the CSR fund. Monthly through wastage management, the hotel earns nearly 100 000 LKR.
- Environmental conservation: Consistently keep an eye on how resources are being used and put policies in place to cut down on waste production and energy use.
- Community Involvement and Support: Work with regional groups to advance sustainable tourism initiatives and to support their growth.
- Guest Education and Engagement: Inform visitors about the hotel's environmental initiatives and invite them to get involved.
- Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor and report on the advancement of sustainability objectives.

2.6 Stakeholders

Hotel management: The hotel management group is in charge of developing the vision and strategy for sustainable tourism, allocating resources, and making sure that sustainability objectives are consistent with the overall aims of the company.

Staff & employees: They actively take part in training initiatives and implement sustainable business practices. The hotel ensures employees' career progress and sustainable tourism know-how through online and offline training.

Guests: They support and promote the hotel's sustainability initiatives by choosing to stay at Heritage Kandalama. The hotel addresses the customer's confidence and assures the product and service. They collect the guests' views through feedback forms, channel partners, online reviews, social media etc.

Local communities: Heritage Kandalama interacts with surrounding communities by promoting employment possibilities, assisting neighbourhood businesses, and funding initiatives for community improvement.

Shareholders: The hotel maintains fair and transparent communication with all the shareholders about its new initiatives and sustainable practices.

Suppliers: Heritage Kandalama collaborates with businesses that offer locally and sustainably sourced goods including organic food, eco-friendly amenities, and eco-friendly building materials. (Tuk-Tuk drivers, vegetable and egg vendors, and meat vendors.)

Government and regulatory bodies: Governmental agencies and regulatory groups establish policies and rules about environmentally friendly travel. Industry associations, non-governmental organizations, investors, and shareholders may support and promote sustainable practices that are in line with the hotel's obligations on both an economic and environmental level.

Media and online platforms: Information about Heritage Kandalama's sustainability initiatives is widely disseminated through media outlets, travel periodicals, and online platforms.

2.7 Target market(s) and Beneficiaries

Travellers who are concerned about the environment and are looking for a distinctive and sustainable hospitality experience make up the majority of Hotel Heritage Kandalama's target market. This comprises people and organizations who value the hotel's dedication to eco-friendly operations, architectural wonder, the surrounding environment, and cultural heritage. The target audience can include eco-tourists, luxury vacationers, and nature lovers.

- **Eco tourists and experience-based tourists:** The target market for Kandalama is almost everyone. It favours visitors who are more eco-friendly or eco-conscious. Those who are expecting to experience unique Sri Lankan culture and eco-tourism practices in a comfortable environment will be benefited from the activities offered by the Kandalama
- **Community-based experience with local communities:** Both community tourists will be benefited from the cultural and village-based experience. This will enhance the community's relationship with the property and create additional income sources for the community also.
- **Environment and biodiversity:** The hotel's conservation efforts and sustainable business practices enhance the local environment and biodiversity.

2.8 Partners

- **Business Partners:** Tour operators, Local travel agents, registered corporate clients and suppliers are having partnership agreements for the smooth and continuous operation of the business.
- **Local Communities:** To promote sustainable tourism, hotels frequently collaborate closely with neighbourhood businesses, farmers, and artisans.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** Hotels may collaborate with NGOs that focus on environmental protection, community development, or sustainability. The hotel works for animal welfare also.
- Many universities and Academic institutions
- Banks and investors.
- Hotels can take part in industry organisations and networks that are concerned with sustainable tourism.
- **Government Organizations:** Hotels may collaborate with regional tourism boards and government organizations that support eco-friendly travel strategies.
- Working with the following associations to enhance industry engagement (SLTDA, PATA, The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, The Hoteliers Association of Sri Lanka, Biodiversity Sri Lanka, Responsible Tourism Partnership etc)

2.9 Finances

- **Internal Funding:** Heritance Kandalama contributes a portion of its operating budget to the funding of eco-friendly travel initiatives.
- **Shareholders:** Shareholders' contribution from purchasing shares
- **Return on Investment (ROI):** Some sustainable tourism initiatives may result in long-term financial gains or cost reductions. For instance, spending money on energy-efficient technology can eventually result in lower utility expenses.
- The hotel creates a reserve or fund that is specially designated for funding eco-friendly tourism initiatives.
- **Partnerships and Sponsorships:** The hotel is looking to collaborate or sponsor outside businesses or groups who have a similar interest in sustainability.

2.10 Human resources

- **Sustainability Manager/Coordinator:** This position creates strategies, plans projects, and supervises the execution of sustainable tourism activities.
- **Specialist or Environmental Officer**

- Community engagement officer Creating partnerships and carrying out community development programs are the responsibilities of him
- Training and Education Specialist: To ensure that staff employees have the information and abilities necessary to successfully implement sustainable practices, training specialists can create and administer sustainability training programs.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

- Hotel Website: The hotel's official website is a pivotal platform to communicate information about sustainable tourism initiatives.
- Social Media: Heritage Kandalama may use popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn to share updates, photos, and videos related to sustainable tourism initiatives.
- Print media and brochures high-end magazines
- Blogs and Newsletters
- Tour operators
- Press Releases and Media Engagement:
- Sustainability Reports: The hotel can produce sustainability reports periodically, summarizing its sustainability performance, goals, and plans.
- Guest Communication: Word of mouth. Heritage Kandalama can directly communicate with guests during their stay, informing them about sustainable practices, initiatives, and how they can contribute

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact on the target market(s)

- Providing authentic, one-of-a-kind experiences that are in line with social and environmental principles enhances the guest experience.
- Tourists can learn about sustainable practices and become more informed.

3.2 Impact on the stakeholders

- Provide a positive work environment that aligns with employees' values, promoting job satisfaction and employee retention.
- Increased pride and engagement as well as skill improvement and training
- Tourists: Heritage Kandalama visitors enjoy a more environmentally responsible and sustainably minded stay, which can improve their overall experience. During their visit, they can get in touch with nature, learn about environmental protection,

and support sustainable activities. Because of its sustainable methods, Heritance Kandalama may be the hotel of choice for many travellers who value the environment.

- **Employees:** The hotel's green initiatives foster a productive work environment for its employees. They are pleased to be employed by a company that values environmental responsibility. Staff employees' job satisfaction and morale can be raised by training and participation in conservation efforts.
- **Local Community:** The local community benefits both economically and socially from Heritance Kandalama's involvement in the area through a variety of sustainable projects and initiatives. Community members take pleasure in the hotel's dedication to protecting the environment and regional culture.
- **Authorities in charge of environmental policy and regulation:** Heritance Kandalama's sustainable business practices are in line with them. The hotel sets a good example for ethical corporate conduct in the tourism industry, which may have a favourable impact on upcoming rules and requirements.

3.3 Impact on the environment

- **Conservation and Preservation:** The natural environment, including biodiversity, ecosystems, and natural resources, must be conserved and preserved.
- **Reduced Carbon Footprint:** The hotel has a reduced carbon footprint as a consequence of its dedication to energy efficiency, usage of renewable energy sources like solar power, and other green technologies. This reduces greenhouse gas emissions, aiding in the fight against climate change.
- **Conserved Water Resources:** Rainwater harvesting systems and water-saving practices at Heritance Kandalama have reduced water usage. This promotes sustainable water management and aids in the conservation of local water supplies.
- **Biodiversity Preserved:** The hotel's conservation initiatives, such as reforestation, habitat restoration, and animal protection, have helped to maintain the biodiversity of the neighbourhood.
- **Improved Air Quality:** By collecting carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen, the hotel's vast greenery and living walls contribute to better air quality, making the environment healthier and more enjoyable for both guests and staff.
- **Recycling and Waste Reduction:** The hotel's waste management program, which places a strong emphasis on recycling, composting, and trash reduction, has helped to cut down on the quantity of waste that is dumped in landfills, hence lowering environmental pollution.

- The 7R principle is used to manage the resources and reduce the generation of waste (Reject (Non-biodegradable items)/Reduce (Energy, water and non-biodegradable items)/Reuse (Linen and paper materials)/Recycling/Reclaim/ Replace/ Repair)

3.4 Impact on the company

- **Enhanced Reputation:** Heritance Kandalama's dedication to sustainability contributes to the development of a powerful and favourable brand image. The hotel gains a reputation as a responsible and environmentally concerned enterprise, drawing eco-tourists and environmentally conscious visitors.
- **Competitive Advantage:** Heritance Kandalama stands out from rivals in the hospitality sector thanks to its sustainable business methods. Being a leader in sustainable tourism can provide the hotel with a competitive edge and draw in a particular clientele of eco-aware tourists.
- **Customer Loyalty:** Visitors that prioritize environmental conservation and responsible travel are more likely to become Heritance Kandalama regulars. Due to the hotel's eco-friendly initiatives, guests have a favourable experience that encourages return trips and word-of-mouth recommendations.
- **Risk reduction:** Heritance Kandalama minimizes the legal and reputational risks connected with non-compliance with environmental standards by using sustainable practices that lessen its environmental effect.
- **Long-term viability:** Sustainable business strategies help ensure the company's long-term success. The hotel assures a sustainable future for both itself and the area it serves by protecting the environment and helping local people.
- **Talent Attraction and Retention:** People are more inclined to join and stay with an organization that shares their beliefs. The hotel's sustainability initiatives foster a healthy work atmosphere and can aid in luring and keeping competent workers that care about the environment.

3.5 Impact on the CoE

The CoE is having an opportunity to collaborate with the Kandalama Hotel and promote sustainable practices. There, the resource persons in the centre are getting an opportunity to provide sustainable tourism training and awareness among staff members, tourists and the community.

New internships and new jobs in partner companies: This project will provide more opportunities for SUSL tourism students to work with industry experts and get internships and employment opportunities.

Collaborations on communication or for the development of new products and services: Academia and industry relationship will be enhanced further and new collaborative activities to promote sustainable tourism can be developed.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Increased interest in sustainable tourism with travellers looking to minimize their environmental footprint has become a trend in the post-pandemic era. Sustainability extends not only to making a positive impact on the environment but also to cultures, economies and people. Ecotourism with travellers looking to combine their passions for travel with direct involvement in conservation and support of the local environment also seeing renewed interest. Millennials prefer spending more money on unique experiences than on material things. Therefore, the sustainable concept and practices developed by Kandalama Hotel is having more opportunities to grab the future market of tourism and increase its market position as the best eco-resort in the world.

CASE STUDY 27

Loris Conservation at Jetwing Vil Uyana

G.A.K. Hasanga and W.K.A.C. Gnanapala

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Jetwing Vil Uyana in Sigiriya, Sri Lanka, is a renowned eco-luxury resort celebrated for its rich history and unwavering dedication to wildlife conservation and sustainability. Leading the way in responsible tourism, it caters to travelers seeking authentic nature, wildlife, and heritage experiences. The resort's personalized service and strong sustainability principles reflect the growing demand for luxury and boutique accommodations. Jetwing Vil Uyana serves as a shining example in the evolving Sri Lankan tourism sector, seamlessly blending natural and cultural preservation with an exceptional guest experience. With its unique location and commitment to sustainability, it sets the standard for eco-luxury resorts, emphasizing wildlife conservation and responsible practices.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Jetwing Vil Uyana's vision: "to create a sustainable and harmonious environment where guests can experience the unique beauty of Sri Lanka's natural and cultural heritage."

The mission: "to provide an exceptional and authentic hospitality experience while minimizing its environmental impact and contributing positively to the local community."

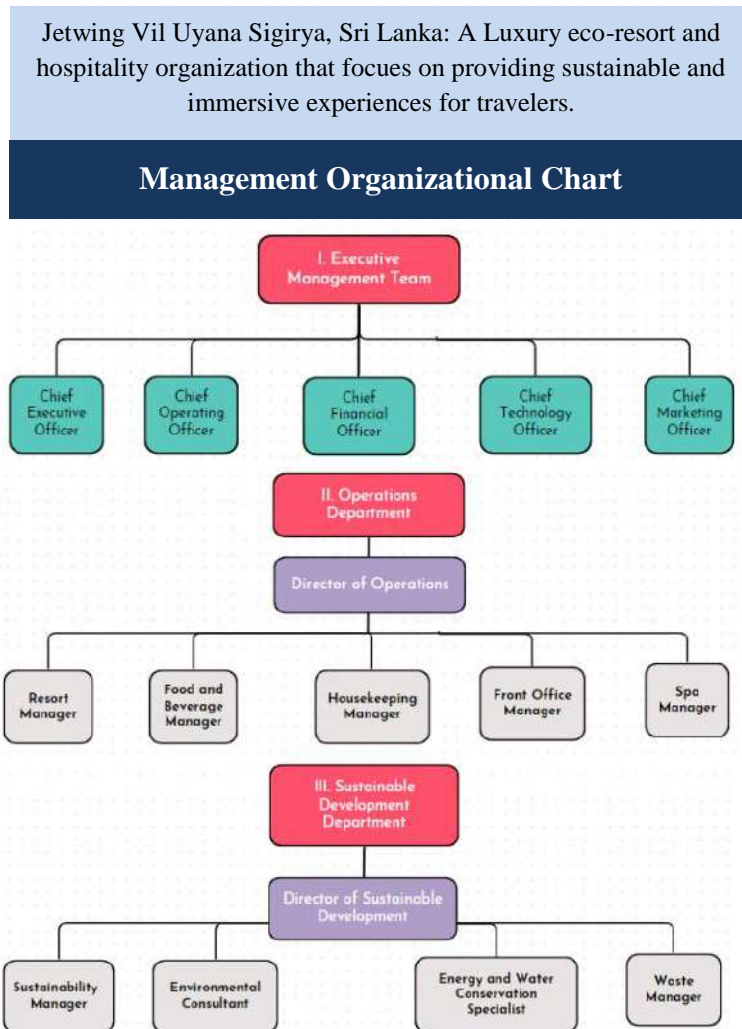
1.3 Products/services

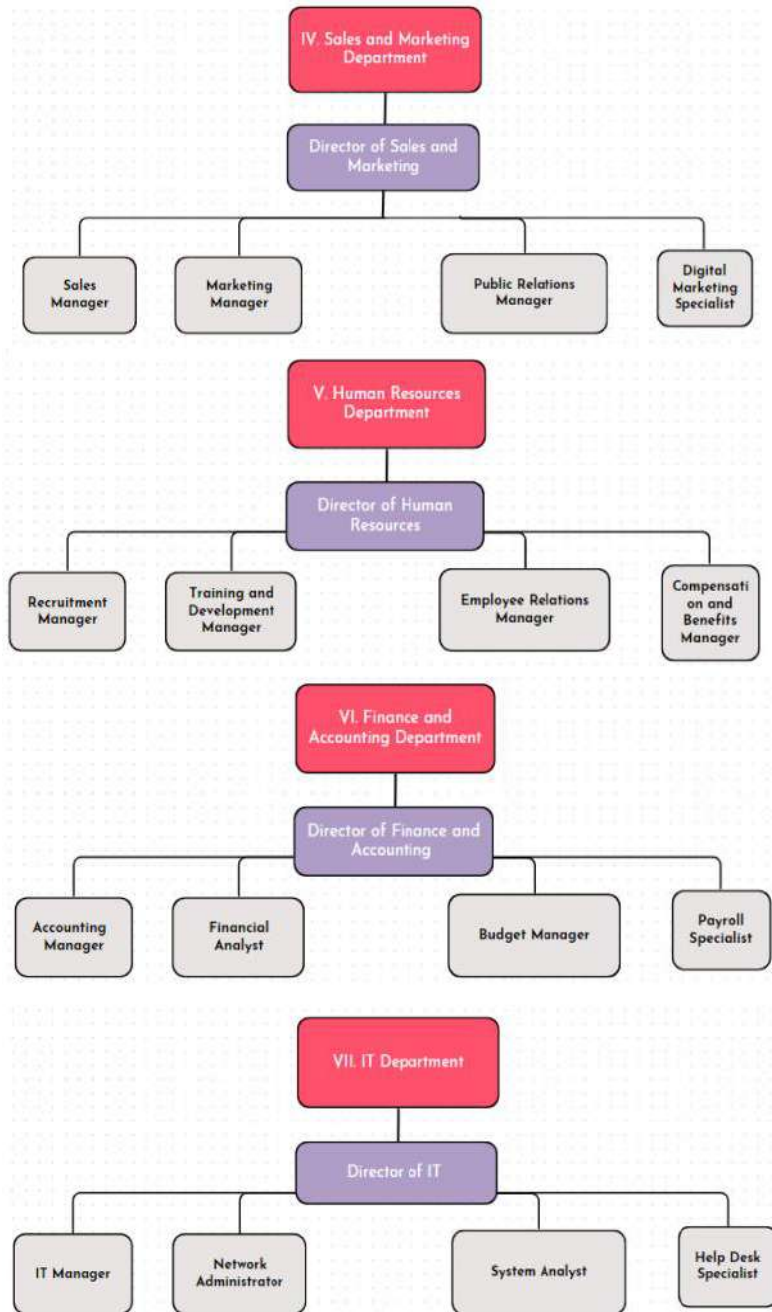
Jetwing Vil Uyana is a luxurious eco-resort designed for eco-conscious travelers seeking immersive experiences. With 72 carefully curated products and services, the resort offers diverse options. Accommodations include 36 rooms, categorized as standard and deluxe, inspired by six unique themes blending modern amenities with traditional Sri Lankan village ambiance. Guests can enjoy facilities like a spa, swimming pool, restaurant, and bar for relaxation and dining. The resort also offers activities such as wildlife safaris, birdwatching, and cultural site visits, allowing guests to explore the natural and cultural wonders of the surroundings.

1.4 Target market(s)

Jetwing Vil Uyana primarily targets eco-conscious travelers who value sustainability, luxury, and authentic experiences. The resort caters to nature lovers, wildlife enthusiasts, and cultural explorers, including international tourists and eco-conscious domestic travelers.

Figure 1: Management Organizational Chart





1.5 Organization and management

Jetwing Vil Uyana is a resort under Jetwing Hotels group. It has a clear structure with the group's strategic guidance and a dedicated management team for daily operations. The resort fosters a culture of sustainability and teamwork, inspiring staff to work together for eco-friendly guest experiences, emphasizing communication and collaboration.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

1.6.1 Cost structure

Jetwing Vil Uyana prioritizes cost efficiency through staffing, utilities, and maintenance while embracing sustainability with eco-friendly practices, energy efficiency, waste management, and unique architecture.

Operational costs: Operational expenses, encompassing personnel wages, utilities, upkeep, and daily operations, are meticulously managed. These expenses amount to approximately 45% of the resort's total budget.

Energy efficiency investments: Jetwing Vil Uyana's dedication to energy-efficient technologies results in a 25% reduction in energy costs annually. This commitment not only minimizes operational expenses but also resonates with its environmentally conscious ethos.

Sustainable practices: The resort's eco-friendly endeavours, such as waste management, organic farming, and water conservation, require an initial investment of 10% of the overall budget. These initiatives yield substantial long-term savings, with a cumulative decrease of 15% in operational expenses over five years.

Architectural and infrastructure investments: The distinctive architectural layout, featuring individual dwellings and man-made lakes, demands an initial capital outlay of 20% of the resort's budget. This unique design contributes significantly to the resort's allure and ecological footprint.

1.6.2 Revenue streams

Jetwing Vil Uyana, a luxury eco-resort nestled in a serene natural setting, generates revenue through accommodation, dining, spa services, and wellness offerings. It also offers transportation, guided tours, and excursions, enriching the guest experience while contributing to income. The resort serves as a venue for corporate events, hosting conferences and gatherings. These diverse revenue streams highlight its commitment to providing a comprehensive and unforgettable guest experience.

Accommodation: Jetwing Vil Uyana offers luxurious villas and dwellings set amidst a natural landscape. The revenue generated through room bookings forms a

significant portion of the resort's income. Notably, a substantial portion of the fiscal landscape derives from room reservations, constituting approximately 53% of the total revenue.

Dining: The resort features multiple restaurants that serve a range of cuisines, including local and international dishes. 25% of the overall revenue matrix is generated from guest dining experiences, spanning from à la carte dining to special gastronomic galas.

Spa and wellness: Demonstrating a staunch commitment to guest well-being, the resort extends an invitation to partake in serene spa interludes and rejuvenating wellness escapades. The fiscal embodiment of this wellness dedication comprises nearly 10% of the total revenue, emanating from an array of spa therapies and holistic wellness packages.

Additional services: Beyond these offerings, Jetwing Vil Uyana upholds its promise of elevating guest sojourns through ancillary amenities such as meticulously curated transportation arrangements, guided exploratory sojourns, and enticing excursions to proximate attractions. This comprehensive guest experience contributes an additional 5% to the overall revenue.

Corporate events and other functions: Notably resort's magnetic appeal transcends into the realm of corporate endeavours and celebratory events, with versatile venues adorning its repertoire. The bookings for conferences, meetings, and other special occasions contribute around 7% of the total revenue, showcasing the resort's adaptability to diverse guest requirements.

Here is the annual budget report.

Table 1: Annual Budget Report: Jetwing Vil Uyana Fact File for the year 2021 and 2022

Performance for the year ended 31 March		2022	2021
Revenue	LKR '000	1,288,040	556,856
Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation & amortisation (EBITDA)	LKR '000	378,515	(103,635)
Profit/(Loss) before tax (PBT)	LKR '000	(912,419)	(828,504)
Profit/(Loss) after tax (PAT)	LKR '000	(896,032)	(830,090)
Earnings/(Loss) per share	LKR	(1.76)	(1.63)
Financial Position as at 31 March			
Total Assets	LKR '000	10,636,941	9,932,545
Total Debt	LKR '000	6,066,685	5,304,709
Total Equity	LKR '000	3,876,141	4,124,127
No of Shares in Issue	No.'000s	502,189	502,189
Net Assets per Share	LKR	7.72	8.20
Gearing Ratio	%	61	56
Debt/Total Assets	%	57	53
Current Ratio		0.21:1	0.11:1
Quick Asset Ratio		0.18:1	0.09:1
Market/Shareholder information			
Market price per share as at 31 March	LKR	10.50	9.00
Market Capitalisation	LKR '000	5,272,980	4,519,697

1.7 Other information

Jetwing Vil Uyana, Sri Lanka, prioritizes sustainability and community support. They employ locals, source ingredients locally, and promote traditional Sri Lankan art. The resort champions environmental conservation, receiving awards for sustainable tourism practices. Offering luxury, sustainability, and cultural immersion, it stands out in Sri Lanka's tourism sector with its commitment to an authentic and eco-friendly experience.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Jetwing Vil Uyana, an eco-luxury resort in Sri Lanka, initiated the Loris Conservation Project to protect the endangered dry zone grey slender lorises and their habitat. They transformed a degraded chena into a thriving wetland, funded by a Loris Conservation Fund from guest experiences. The project resulted in 29 loris births, increased loris populations, and the return of other wildlife. This sustainable tourism model aligns with Jetwing Hotels' commitment to responsible hospitality and conservation.

2.2 The business/project idea

Jetwing Vil Uyana Loris Conservation Project: Advancing Sustainable Wildlife Tourism. The Jetwing Vil Uyana Loris Conservation Project in Sri Lanka is dedicated to sustainable wildlife tourism and protecting the endangered slender loris. They offer eco-friendly nocturnal tours, educate tourists and locals about loris conservation, and collaborate with villages for sustainable practices. Vil Uyana promotes eco-friendly initiatives, such as renewable energy and waste management, to minimize its ecological impact.

2.3 External analysis

As for the relevant meso and macro trends and developments influencing the initiative, there are several aspects to consider:

Growing eco-tourism trend: Growing global interest in eco-friendly travel has boosted initiatives like the Loris Conservation Project, as travelers increasingly prioritize responsible nature engagement.

Government support for conservation: Sri Lanka's focus on sustainable tourism and wildlife conservation fosters initiatives like the Loris Conservation Project, supporting eco-friendly businesses.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) impact: The Loris Conservation Project positions Jetwing Vil Uyana as an environmentally conscious and socially responsible resort, which can attract eco-conscious travelers and stakeholders.

Wildlife conservation initiatives: The Loris Conservation Project aligns with the rise of wildlife conservation initiatives globally and regionally which indicates an increasing recognition of the importance of preserving biodiversity.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- Significant success in promoting the conservation of dry zone grey slender lorises.
- Commitment to Conservation by declaring a portion of the resort as a Loris Conservation Site and halting construction plans for additional dwellings.
- Nightly Loris Trail offers unique, engaging tours for guests to spot slender lorises, enhancing experiences and promoting wildlife awareness and protection.
- The establishment of the Loris Conservation Fund, supplemented by the night trail, has provided financial support for research, awareness, and conservation efforts.
- Positive Media Recognition from renowned media organizations like BBC Wild and National Geographic.
- Natural Habitat for other Wildlife species like fishing cats, otters, and rusty-spotted cats which demonstrates the positive cascading effects of the conservation project.
- Strong Leadership
- Educated, experienced and motivated staff.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

- Jetwing Vil Uyana's successful conservation efforts for slender lorises should extend beyond its property to benefit broader Sri Lankan conservation. The Loris Conservation Fund relies on tourist participation in the Loris Trail, making it susceptible to fluctuations in guest numbers. Expanding research to other local wildlife could offer valuable insights for conservation efforts.

2.5 Activities

- Habitat Restoration and Preservation to create a suitable environment for the loris population. This includes reforestation and conserving native vegetation, ensuring the loris has adequate food sources and shelter to thrive.
- Supported scientific research and monitoring programs to better understand the behavior and ecology of the loris.

- Conducting community Outreach and Educational programs to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the loris and its habitat which fosters a sense of stewardship and encourages sustainable practices among residents.
- Sustainable Tourism Practices like energy-efficient measures, waste reduction, and promoting responsible guest behavior to avoid disturbing wildlife, including the loris.
- Establishing wildlife corridors that connect fragmented habitats, allowing the loris and other wildlife to move freely between different areas. This initiative aids in maintaining genetic diversity and population sustainability.
- Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation to provide necessary care and support for injured or distressed lorises, making sure that affected lorises receive appropriate treatment and can be released back into the wild if possible.

2.6 Stakeholders

The Loris Conservation Initiative at Jetwing Vil Uyana involves a diverse range of stakeholders with varying levels of interest and influence. The local community is highly interested and influential due to economic benefits. Environmental NGOs offer conservation expertise. Tourists indirectly influence the initiative through eco-friendly preferences. Government authorities shape policies. Resort management and staff control daily operations. Wildlife researchers are interested but have low influence. Media has a moderate role. Local businesses, competitors, investors, and shareholders have varying degrees of interest and influence on sustainability efforts.

Local community: The Jetwing Vil Uyana community actively supports loris conservation through sustainable tourism, enhancing the project's impact by promoting eco-friendly practices, benefiting both their livelihoods and wildlife preservation.

Environmental NGOs: Prominent environmental NGOs like Wildlife Conservation Society, Conservation International, and World Wildlife Fund actively support Jetwing Vil Uyana's loris conservation and sustainable tourism efforts, utilizing their expertise, research, and advocacy to influence responsible travel practices.

Tourists: Tourists at Jetwing Vil Uyana are crucial for loris conservation. Their eco-friendly choices, such as wildlife tours and supporting local conservation, drive sustainability efforts at the resort, ensuring its commitment to wildlife preservation.

Government authorities (local and national): Local and national government authorities are moderately interested in loris conservation. They influence policy, regulations, and support for sustainable tourism, crucial for Jetwing Vil Uyana's success in conserving lorises and promoting ecological preservation and sustainable tourism.

Management and staff: The resort prioritizes loris conservation and sustainable tourism, incorporating eco-friendly practices like waste management, energy conservation, and wildlife protection. They educate guests on responsible nature interactions, harmonizing luxury with ecological mindfulness for conservation success.

Wildlife researchers and biologists: Wildlife researchers and biologists at Jetwing Vil Uyana drive loris conservation through behavioural studies, habitat assessments, and data collection. Their expertise informs conservation strategies and sustainable tourism, despite limited involvement in resort operations.

Media and press: Media and press are interested in highlighting sustainable tourism initiatives, such as the loris conservation project, as it aligns with growing public concern for environmental sustainability and wildlife conservation. They aim to raise awareness about responsible tourism and influence perceptions in the hospitality industry.

Local businesses: Local businesses near Jetwing Vil Uyana can benefit by partnering with the resort for loris conservation. This collaboration can attract eco-conscious tourists and support sustainability goals, creating a win-win situation.

Competing resorts: Competing resorts like Resort Oasis and Serene Retreat are moderately interested in monitoring Jetwing Vil Uyana's loris conservation project but primarily prioritize their own sustainability initiatives, community engagement, and market competitiveness, exerting minimal influence on Jetwing's loris conservation efforts.

Investors/shareholders: Investors and shareholders play a crucial role in supporting Jetwing Vil Uyana's prosperity and commitment to sustainable tourism. Led by Chairman Mr. N.J.H.M. Cooray, their decisions significantly impact the resort's direction. The Board of Directors and Executive Directors, including Ms. N.T.M.S. Cooray, shape the organization's trajectory. Non-Executive Directors like Mr. G. Rocchi, and Non-Executive Independent Directors, including Mr. N. Wadugodapitiya, Ms. K. Reddy, Mr. L. Porter, Dr. V. Kannangara, and Mr. S. D. Amalean, along with key figures like former naturalist Mr. Chaminda Jayasekara and current Experiences and Sustainability Lead Mr. Yesitha Rodrigo, contribute to the resort's success by both their interest and financial decisions, driving its sustainable tourism initiatives.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Jetwing Vil Uyana's sustainable tourism benefits local communities through loris protection, ecological balance, and livelihood support. Educational efforts and partnerships raise awareness and promote responsible tourism for Sri Lanka's sustainability.

Local communities: The initiative at Jetwing Vil Uyana promotes sustainable wildlife tourism to protect the loris population and their habitat, benefiting the region's ecology. Collaborating with nearby communities like Sigiriya, Kandalama, Kimbissa, it aims to generate employment, support local businesses, and empower residents through various social and economic initiatives.

Loris population: Jetwing Vil Uyana is dedicated to conserving endangered lorises by minimizing disruptions, educating visitors, and increasing awareness. Their efforts aim to protect lorises' habitats and boost their survival and breeding prospects.

Tourists and nature enthusiasts: Tourists and nature enthusiasts who are interested will have the opportunity to witness lorises in their natural habitat through guided eco-tours, allowing for an immersive and educational experience. This includes interactive educational programs, giving visitors a deeper understanding of the importance of conservation and sustainable practices.

Conservation organizations: By partnering with established conservation groups, Jetwing Vil Uyana can access expertise, resources, and support while these organizations will benefit by extending their conservation efforts to new areas and working with a reputable eco-luxury resort committed to responsible tourism.

Local and national bodies: Jetwing Vil Uyana's sustainable wildlife tourism practices extend beyond their resort boundaries, serving as an inspiration for the hospitality industry and supporting wildlife research and conservation efforts. This model has the potential to influence local and national bodies like the Sri Lankan Ministry of Tourism and SLTDA, encouraging the development of comprehensive policies for ecosystem protection. Ultimately, this collective effort benefits local wildlife, habitats, and the Sri Lankan economy, enhancing the country's global reputation as a conscientious and sustainable tourism destination.

2.8 Partners

Jetwing Vil Uyana's commitment to sustainable tourism is fortified through strategic partnerships with key entities. Collaborating closely with the following partners, the resort gains invaluable expertise in loris conservation, ensuring alignment with international standards. Further the resort will be able to harmonize with national policies, reinforcing habitat restoration and community awareness.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN): The IUCN provides expertise and guidance on loris conservation strategies, research, and best practices. Their collaboration ensures that the resort's initiatives align with international conservation standards and contribute effectively to the preservation of the loris species.

The Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWLC) - Sri Lanka: responsible for wildlife management and conservation in the country: By partnering with the DWLC, the resort ensures that its conservation efforts are in line with national policies and regulations to protect the native loris population, including habitat restoration, community awareness programs, and monitoring efforts.

Local Universities and Research Institutions: To enhance their knowledge and understanding of loris behavior and ecology, Jetwing Vil Uyana forms partnerships with local universities like Sri Jayawardhanapura University and research institutions like Institution of Development Studies in Sussex University, Indian institute for Human Settlement specializing in wildlife conservation. Through joint research projects, they gather valuable data on the lorises in the area, helping to inform conservation strategies and monitor the impact of their efforts.

Wildlife Conservation Organizations with expertise in primate conservation and Loris's protection: Partnerships with adept wildlife conservation organizations specializing in primate conservation and loris protection, such as the Wildlife Preservation Society and Primate Guardians, yield essential funding, capacity enhancement, and the exchange of optimal methodologies. These collaborations not only bolster the resort's initiatives but also amplify the scope of conservation endeavours throughout the wider region.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs): Jetwing Vil Uyana engages in meaningful collaborations with several Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) dedicated to cultivating awareness about loris conservation among residents. These partnerships include organizations such as "Loris Guardians," "Nature Savers Community," and "Eco Heritage Connect." By working together, these CBOs amplify the message of loris conservation's significance, foster eco-friendly livelihood opportunities, and empower communities to play an active and integral role in preserving their natural heritage.

Sustainable Tourism Initiatives: These Sustainable Tourism Initiatives embody a powerful collaborative effort, uniting diverse stakeholders to champion responsible and environmentally conscious tourism practices. Through this collective endeavour, a profound ripple effect of positive change is set in motion. By fostering an understanding among tourists about the crucial need for loris conservation, these initiatives serve as educational platforms that inspire a deeper connection with the local ecosystems. This movement in Sri Lanka focuses on preserving its rich biodiversity through sustainable travel and ethical guidelines. Travelers play a crucial role in conservation by choosing responsible options and gaining insights into the delicate ecosystem. Supporting local businesses with sustainable practices helps boost the

economy while minimizing ecological harm. Community involvement, exemplified by collaboration between villages like Sigiriya, Kandalama, and Kimbissa with Jetwing Vil Uyana, promotes empowerment and economic growth. These initiatives create an interconnected network that harmonizes tourism, conservation, and community well-being, fostering a holistic approach to responsible travel in Sri Lanka.

2.9 Finances

Jetwing Vil Uyana, an eco-luxury resort, supports conservation and sustainable tourism through various revenue streams. In addition to hospitality services, it funds loris conservation and eco initiatives, aligns with Sri Lanka's environmental levy, and collaborates with conservation organizations, voluntourism, and sustainable tours for environmental stewardship.

Resort revenue: As an eco-luxury resort, Jetwing Vil Uyana generates revenue from its hospitality services, including accommodations, dining, spa, and other guest amenities. A portion of these earnings is allocated to funding loris conservation projects and sustainable tourism initiatives.

Environmental levy: Jetwing Vil Uyana, in alignment with Sri Lanka's sustainable tourism goals, adheres to a 2.5% annual revenue contribution for an environmental levy. These funds aid various conservation efforts, notably protecting the loris population in the area. This demonstrates the resort's dedication to local biodiversity and environmental stewardship.

Private donations: The resort actively seeks private donations and sponsorships from individuals or organizations interested in supporting wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism. These contributions supplement the funding required for conservation projects and educational programs.

Partnership with conservation organizations: Jetwing Vil Uyana collaborates with conservation organizations like the Sri Lanka Wildlife Conservation Society and the Green Earth Foundation to promote wildlife protection and sustainable practices. These partnerships involve financial contributions from both parties and aim to advance comprehensive conservation strategies. The resort demonstrates its commitment to environmental preservation and harmonious coexistence between hospitality and nature through these joint efforts.

Guest donations and voluntourism: The resort encourages guests to participate in its conservation efforts by providing opportunities for voluntary contributions towards loris conservation and other environmental initiatives. Additionally, Jetwing Vil Uyana offers "voluntourism" programs, allowing interested guests to actively engage in hands-on conservation work during their stay.

Grants and funding initiatives: Jetwing Vil Uyana is proactive in its pursuit of grants and funding initiatives, actively engaging with governmental agencies, prominent NGOs such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and renowned international conservation bodies like the Global Environment Facility (GEF). These collaborations are instrumental in advancing the resort’s commitment to wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism. By securing grants such as the WWF’s “Wildlife Protection Fund” and the GEF’s “Biodiversity Conservation Grant,” Jetwing Vil Uyana amplifies its financial resources, fortifying its ability to drive impactful initiatives forward.

Revenue from sustainable tours and activities: Jetwing Vil Uyana integrates sustainable tours and activities for guests to connect with local wildlife. Birdwatching, nature walks, loris trails, and wildlife photography workshops offer rich biodiversity experiences. Revenue from these activities supports conservation efforts, creating a responsible tourism cycle that benefits the environment and guest experience.

2.10 Human resources

To effectively implement a loris conservation program, Jetwing Vil Uyana likely needed to hire or collaborate with wildlife conservation specialists. These experts would have the knowledge and experience in working with lorises, understanding their behaviors, habitat requirements, and the best conservation practices.

Environmental scientists play a crucial role in assessing the impact of tourism activities on the local ecosystem and developing strategies to minimize the resort’s carbon footprint. They help identify sustainable practices and monitor the overall ecological health of the area.

To provide guests with meaningful and educational ecotourism experiences, Jetwing Vil Uyana might have employed or trained ecotourism guides. These guides would educate visitors about the local wildlife, including lorises, and the importance of conservation efforts.

Depending on the scale of the initiative, the resort may have engaged local or international conservation volunteers who are passionate about wildlife protection. These volunteers could assist in monitoring and gathering data on lorises and their habitats.

Engaging with local communities is vital for successful sustainable tourism initiatives. Community engagement officers facilitate communication between the resort and nearby communities, involving them in conservation efforts and providing economic opportunities through responsible tourism practices.

Sustainable tourism initiatives require dedicated individuals to oversee the implementation and tracking of eco-friendly practices throughout the resort’s operations. Sustainability coordinators help ensure that the resort adheres to its environmental goals.

If Jetwing Vil Uyana conducted research on loris populations or conservation techniques, they might have hired research assistants to collect data and analyze information to inform decision-making.

Successfully promoting sustainable tourism initiatives requires skilled marketing and public relations professionals. They would have been responsible for communicating the resort's commitment to loris conservation and sustainable practices to potential guests and the wider public. To raise awareness and promote a culture of sustainability among the resort staff and guests, Jetwing Vil Uyana may have formed a team to provide training sessions and educational materials on wildlife conservation and sustainable practices. A team dedicated to monitoring the impact of the sustainability initiatives would assess the effectiveness of conservation efforts over time, making necessary adjustments and improvements to achieve long-term goals.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

Jetwing Vil Uyana prioritizes sustainable tourism, particularly focused on loris conservation. They utilize social media platforms and their website to educate audiences about loris's protection and resort contributions. Email newsletters, press releases, guided tours, and partnerships with conservation organizations further emphasize responsible tourism at the resort.

Digital media campaigns: The resort utilizes various digital channels, including social media platforms such as Facebook (<https://web.facebook.com/jetwingviluyana>), Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/jetwing.viluyana/?hl=en>), Twitter (<https://twitter.com/JetwingHotels/status/1003858644910444544?lang=en>), and LinkedIn (<https://lk.linkedin.com/company/jetwinghotels>), to raise awareness about their sustainable tourism initiatives, with a specific focus on Loris's conservation. Engaging content, such as videos, images, and informative posts, is shared regularly to inform the target market and stakeholders about the importance of protecting the Loris and how the resort contributes to this cause.

Website content: The resort's official website features a dedicated section highlighting their Loris conservation efforts. This section provides detailed information about the Loris species, the threats they face, and the specific initiatives taken by Jetwing Vil Uyana to protect them. They also have a website for Loris Conservation Project itself - <http://www.slenderloris.lk/>

Email newsletters: The resort communicates directly with its audience through regular email newsletters, sharing updates, stories, and information about their conservation initiatives and responsible tourism practices - <https://newsletters.srilankatailormade.com/author/jetwing/page/14/>.

Press releases and media coverage: By issuing press releases and collaborating with the media, Jetwing Vil Uyana gains visibility and coverage, effectively spreading the word about their Loris conservation project and sustainable endeavours.

Community engagement: Engaging with the local community fosters a sense of shared responsibility. Jetwing Vil Uyana likely organizes events, workshops, and interactions to involve community members in their conservation efforts.

On-site activities and guided tours: Offering on-site activities and guided tours related to Loris's conservation enhances visitor experiences while educating them about the cause and the resort's commitment.

Partnerships with conservation organizations: Collaborating with other conservation-focused entities extends their reach and influence, strengthening the overall impact of their initiatives.

Sustainability reports: By producing regular sustainability reports, the resort showcases its progress, initiatives, and achievements in the realm of responsible tourism and conservation.

Guest testimonials and feedback: Positive guest testimonials and feedback not only enhance the resort's reputation but also provide real-life endorsements of their sustainable practices and conservation efforts.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Jetwing Vil Uyana's impact resonates across a diverse spectrum of clientele which drawn to witness the elusive slender Loris in its natural habitat, fostering a deeper connection with nature. Here is how it impact on the target market niches.

Wildlife enthusiasts: Jetwing Vil Uyana provides a rare chance for wildlife enthusiasts to see slender lorises in their natural habitat, promoting conservation through guided tours and educational programs.

Eco-tourists: Jetwing Vil Uyana attracts eco-tourists with its eco-friendly approach and commitment to conserving Sri Lanka's biodiversity, notably the loris species. Visitors support sustainable tourism and eco-accommodations.

Conservation advocates: Jetwing Vil Uyana, a hub for wildlife enthusiasts, champions loris conservation, fostering responsible travel. Advocates can amplify efforts via awareness and resort support.

Nature photographers: Jetwing Vil Uyana's loris conservation project attracts nature photographers seeking rare chances to capture elusive creatures in Sri Lanka's natural beauty, aided by the resort's commitment to conservation.

Educational travelers: Jetwing Vil Uyana attracts educational travelers, particularly students and researchers keen on exploring Sri Lanka's ecosystems and endangered species. The loris conservation project provides a unique opportunity to study these primates' behavior, ecology, and conservation issues.

Responsible luxury seekers: Jetwing Vil Uyana aligns luxury seekers' desires for responsible luxury with its commitment to loris conservation, offering high-end experiences fused with sustainability efforts.

Family holidays: Jetwing Vil Uyana offers families educational loris conservation programs and guided tours, fostering a shared understanding of wildlife preservation and natural habitat conservation.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Other than the target market there are some other stakeholders who are impacted by Jetwing Vil Uyana's Sustainability Projects, mainly from Loris Conservation Project. Some such stakeholders and their impacts can be identified as,

3.2.1 Environment

- Conservation of wildlife specially Loris Species
- Habitat Restoration with creation of a healthier ecosystem within the region.
- Biodiversity Preservation

3.2.2 Local communities

- Employment Opportunities such as tour guides, naturalists, educational programme coordinators, landscaping and maintenance crews, local suppliers, and research assistants.
- May lead to Community Engagement programs, raising awareness about the importance of wildlife conservation.
- Encouraging local support for sustainable practices.

3.2.3 Guests

- Unique Wildlife Experience
- Aligns with the interests of environmentally conscious and responsible travelers, attracting guests who value sustainable tourism practices.

3.2.4 Jetwing vil uyana

- Positive Reputation

- Differentiation from other hotels and resorts in the region, offering a unique selling point and a competitive edge in the eco-luxury hospitality market.
- Long-term Sustainability of its own operations, as well as the surrounding ecosystem and communities.

3.3 Impact for the environment

The Jetwing Loris Conservation Project exemplifies a harmonious blend of sustainability and nature, focusing on preserving the slender loris and its habitat. Through responsible tourism practices, the project showcases the potential for impactful conservation initiatives in hospitality, particularly in protecting the endangered Sri Lankan loris, listed as vulnerable by the IUCN.

Other impacts:

- Habitat Restoration
- Wildlife Corridors
- Local Community Engagement
- Reduced Human-Wildlife Conflict
- Ecosystem Balance

3.4 Impact for the company

The Jetwing Loris Conservation Project has significantly improved the company's reputation as an environmentally responsible resort, attracting eco-conscious guests and enhancing guest engagement. The project also benefits the local community through employment and engagement, establishing the company as a positive force. By prioritizing sustainability, the company becomes a leader in the industry, inspiring others and fostering guest loyalty for a prosperous and eco-friendly future.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

Jetwing Vil Uyana is committed to preserving slender lorises and their habitat. They actively promote conservation, community involvement, and sustainable tourism, making a significant impact on the Center of Excellence (CoE).

Slender loris habitat restoration: Jetwing Vil Uyana has actively participated in habitat restoration initiatives to recreate natural ecosystems conducive to the slender loris' survival. By re-establishing and conserving the loris' natural habitat, the resort creates safe and sustainable environments for these nocturnal creatures to thrive.

Wildlife research and monitoring: The resort, in collaboration with CoE, has undertaken extensive wildlife research and monitoring programs focused on slender loris

populations. Through data collection and analysis, these initiatives contribute to a deeper understanding of loris behavior, population dynamics, and habitat requirements, enabling more informed conservation strategies.

Wildlife corridors: Jetwing Vil Uyana has played a vital role in creating wildlife corridors that connect fragmented habitats, facilitating the movement of slender lorises and promoting genetic diversity among populations. These corridors enhance the chances of loris survival and foster a healthy ecosystem.

Community outreach and education: Recognizing the importance of community involvement, Jetwing Vil Uyana and CoE conduct outreach programs to raise awareness about the conservation of slender lorises among local communities. By engaging residents in conservation efforts, the resort fosters a sense of responsibility and stewardship towards the species and its habitat.

Anti-poaching and wildlife protection: The resort actively supports anti-poaching measures and wildlife protection initiatives to combat illegal activities that threaten the slender loris population. By working closely with local authorities and conservation organizations, Jetwing Vil Uyana helps safeguard the species from poaching and other illegal activities.

Sustainable tourism practices: As a flagship eco-luxury property, Jetwing Vil Uyana serves as a model for sustainable tourism practices. By implementing eco-friendly operations and promoting responsible travel, the resort minimizes its ecological footprint, ensuring the long-term conservation of the slender loris and other wildlife.

Conservation advocacy: Through its association with CoE, Jetwing Vil Uyana actively advocates for the conservation of the slender loris and its habitat at regional and international forums. The resort's commitment to raising awareness about the species' plight contributes to garnering support and resources for broader conservation efforts.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

The Loris Conservation Project at Jetwing Vil Uyana is a commendable effort showcasing the resort's commitment to wildlife preservation and sustainability. Success is attributed to creating a suitable habitat, involving staff and guests in conservation, and collaborating with experts and local communities. However, opportunities for improvement exist, such as enhancing monitoring and research efforts for better conservation strategies. Expanding outreach and education programs for guests and the community could also create a network of passionate advocates for long-term wildlife preservation beyond the resort's boundaries.

4.2 Possibility of replication

Jetwing Vil Uyana's loris conservation initiative offers a replicable model for safeguarding endangered slender lorises. Key elements include creating diverse habitats, like wetlands and forests, and establishing wildlife corridors to promote genetic diversity. Community engagement fosters local support, and collaborations with researchers and conservation organizations enhance knowledge sharing. Moreover, the resort's sustainable practices, such as green building and responsible waste management, set a valuable example for eco-luxury properties looking to contribute to wildlife preservation. By replicating these strategies in other regions, we can work towards the conservation of slender lorises and their fragile ecosystems.

CASE STUDY 28

Walawe Nadee: Sustainable River Safari

W.H. Yathartha and C.N.R. Wijesundara

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

“Walawe Jungle River Safari” is the name given to a river safari, which has been originated by a community-based organization called “Walawe Nadee Eco-tourism Organization”. The project locate in Ambalantota, which is in the Hambantota district, Southern province of Sri Lanka. This spectacular river safari starts from Ambalantota and the visitors/tourists are taken down the famous “Walawe River” in a motor-boat up to the Godawaya beach, which is known as the ancient seaport of Hambantota, a distance of the journey around 2.5 km (one way) and then bring back to the starting point. It is one of the liveliest experiences to any nature-lover and specially to those who are interested in bird watching. Since this amazing boat ride running down along the green scenic route, travellers can enjoy the nature and wild life (specially birds) during the journey. The Walawa jungle river safari popular among locals and tourists will take them through a rich biodiversity area complete with six varieties of mangroves, 52 fish species, 72 bird species, 38 plant varieties and 28 animal species.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: Keep the nature better for everyone, while offering the real jungle river safari thrill.

Mission: Offer a wide range of well-planned sustainable offerings to the prospective eco-minded travellers, while generating positive impacts to the local community and safeguard the nature.

1.3 Products/services

River Boat Safari: Walawe river safari offers a unique boat safari proceed by a community group and they awarded for this program as the best community-based tourism project in Sri Lanka. This boat excursion on the Walawe River will be treasured. As you travel down this magnificent river, you will experience a once-in-a-lifetime voyage. Listen to the peacocks calling from their roost as you travel down the river. Cormorants extend their wings to dry, white-bellied sea eagles soar overhead, and curious langur monkeys peer through the trees. The fortunate naturalist might even catch

a glimpse of a crocodile before it disappears beneath the water.

When you reach the halfway point, you'll stop at a beach, where you have the opportunity to take some lovely pictures. Enjoy a king coconut and let your souls be renewed. You'll see animals like water buffalo paddling along, a huge crocodile peering out of the water, trees full of sleeping bats, etc. Where the river empties into the sea is another fantastic location you will come across.

1.4 Target market(s)

Walawe Nadee Safari Operator's customer base ranges from individual tourists to groups, from adventurous tourists to families.

1. **Wildlife enthusiasts:** People who have a keen interest in observing and photographing wildlife in their natural habitats. Walawe Boat safaris often provide unique opportunities to see a variety of animals, such as 52 fish species, 72 bird species, 38 plant varieties and 28 animal species.
2. **Nature lovers:** Individuals who enjoy being surrounded by nature and appreciate the beauty of landscapes, rivers, and ecosystems. Walawe Boat safaris allow them to experience the tranquility and serenity of natural environments.
3. **Adventure seekers:** Those who are looking for thrilling and unique experiences. Walawe Boat safaris can offer an adventurous ride along rivers, through mangroves, or across lakes, providing an exciting and different perspective of the environment.
4. **Birdwatchers:** Bird enthusiasts who specifically seek out opportunities to observe and identify various bird species. Boat safaris often take visitors to areas with rich avian diversity, allowing them to spot and learn about different bird species.
5. **Eco-tourists:** Travelers with a focus on sustainable and responsible tourism. Walawe Boat safaris, when operated in an environmentally friendly manner, can be appealing to eco-conscious individuals who want to minimize their impact on delicate ecosystems.

1.5 Organization and management

The mission of the Walawe Nadee Eco Tourism Foundation is to manage and promote tourism-related activities in a way that incorporates and benefits the local community. To create and maintain tourist programmes that conserve and highlight the cultural, natural, and social features of the community, locals and other stakeholders frequently work together.

This community association's main goal is to empower the neighbourhood by actively including residents in decision-making processes, disseminating the advantages of tourism, and promoting sustainable development. This kind of organisation aims to

maximise the beneficial effects of tourism while minimising any detrimental effects on the local area and the environment.

The organizational structure of this community lead association comprised by “Governing Boards”. The governing board is responsible for overseeing the association’s operations and implementing decisions made by the general assembly. It typically consists of elected or appointed members who hold key positions within the association. The board may have a chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, secretary, and other relevant positions.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Walawe Jungle Boat safari operators typically generate revenue by selling tours to visitors who want to experience the river boat safari. The boat safari price may vary based on factors such as the duration of the safari, the type of visitors (Local/Foreign). They also earn income by selling some other additional facilities to the prospective visitors.

Table 1: Revenue Streams

No.	Item Description	Cost	Selling Price
01	Boat Tour - Local	Rs.3000/-	Rs.6000/-
02	Boat Tour - Foreign	Rs.4000/-	Rs.7500/-
03	Lunch	Rs.300/-	Rs.550/-
04	King coconut / Fresh Juice	Rs. 50/-	Rs. 100/-

1.7 Other information

Walawe river safari is an exciting unique boat safari proceed by a community group and they awarded for this program as the best community-based tourism project in Sri Lanka. Ambalantota which belongs to the Hambantota district has given birth to this project.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Night camping on the Beach: They have intention to offer Night camping on the beach. Since camping do the minimum impact to the existing setup of the place & region, it will be a good sustainable way of lodging operation in the area. Night camping on the beach is a thrilling and unforgettable experience that combines the tranquility of nature with the soothing sound of crashing waves. Picture yourself nestled on the sandy

shore, surrounded by the vastness of the Indian-ocean and the starry night sky above.

Setting up camp on the beach offers a unique opportunity to connect with nature in a serene environment. You can pitch your tent in the soft sand, creating a cozy refuge where you can rest and relax. Building a crackling bonfire adds warmth to the cool night air and provides a focal point for gathering with friends or loved ones.

Moreover, in order to increasingly favour this sustainable way of accommodating among the broadest audience, it is important to structure an offer that is accessible to all types of tourists, regardless of their age, gender, income & whether they foreign or local.

The objective of this sustainable “beach camping” is to enjoy outdoor recreational activities while immersing oneself in the natural beauty and tranquility of a beach environment. It provides an opportunity to connect with nature, relax, and engage in various recreational activities such as swimming, surfing, hiking, fishing, and simply enjoying the beach atmosphere.

2.2 The business/project idea

Beach camping enables people and families to get away from the busy city life, take in the calming sounds of the waves, and soak up the sun. It provides a special environment where one may relax, take in the magnificent sunrises and sunsets, and make enduring memories with loved ones.

Beach camping may be a way for people to grow and rejuvenate in addition to having fun. It provides time for consideration and seclusion, enabling people to reconnect with themselves and achieve inner peace while surrounded by nature.

Camping on the beach also fosters environmental awareness and sustainable lifestyle choices. Campers are frequently encouraged to protect the beach habitat, reduce their environmental impact, and behave responsibly outside. By teaching campers, the value of protecting these coastal habitats and conserving their natural balance, this promotes a sense of environmental stewardship.

Overall, the objective of beach camping is to provide an immersive and sustainable outdoor experience, allowing individuals to relax, connect with nature, and enjoy the unique beauty of the beach environment.

2.3 External analysis

From a general point of view, Beach camping has seen a major increase in the popularity of environmental awareness. To lessen their influence on the environment, campers are using eco-friendly practises including using biodegradable toiletries, packing away waste, and following Leave No Trace guidelines. So that, Walawe Jungle

Safari Operators have a great opportunity to have an advantage over there.

There are lots of chances for leisure activities when camping on the beach. beach combing, snorkelling, kayaking, beach yoga, beach volleyball, and bonfires are all current trends. Nowadays, a lot of campgrounds lend out equipment for these activities. Through the proposed camping project, these people can get all these advantages.

Beach camping offers an opportunity for people to disconnect from their devices and take a digital detox in light of the growing dependency on technology. The natural beauty of the seaside environment can be completely experienced by campers while they unwind, unwind, and relax. Since this is one of the major concerns of the current society, Walawe Jungle safari operators can have the maximum benefits by fulfilling this requirement.

On the one hand, the Covid pandemic has pushed this market thanks to the desire of people to travel outdoors and to have experiences that have a positive impact on their physical as well as mental well-being. On the other hand, the development of the beach camping has made an excellent opportunity for both local and foreign visitors to enjoy the unpolluted nature setup with fresh Air.

The post-pandemic demand for beach camping has seen a significant increase as people are seeking outdoor experiences and nature-focused activities. After periods of lockdowns and travel restrictions, many individuals are eager to explore the outdoors and enjoy the natural beauty of beaches while also adhering to social distancing guidelines.

2.4 Internal analysis

The main strengths of “Walawe Jungle River Safari” people concerning the implementation of the “Beach Camping” project are:

- **Local knowledge and expertise:** Community-based tourism organisations often have people who have a thorough knowledge of their neighbourhood, its history, customs, and resources. They can provide guests with distinctive and genuine experiences that capture the actual spirit of the place thanks to their local knowledge.
- **Ability to enhance the visitor experience:** Visitors frequently have better experiences because to the specialised services and local expertise provided by community-based tourist organisations. The chance to interact meaningfully with locals, learn from them, and form connections with them makes travel more genuine, fulfilling, and unforgettable.
- **Cultural preservation:** These organisations frequently concentrate on promoting and maintaining regional heritage, traditions, and culture. By actively incorporating locals in tourism-related events, they contribute to the preservation and celebration of their cultural identity and guarantee its survival for future generations.

- **Sustainable development:** Community-based tourism associations are often committed to sustainable development practices. They prioritize the well-being of the community and the environment, ensuring that tourism activities have a positive impact while minimizing negative effects.
- **Community ownership:** Associations for local tourism help people feel proud of and invested in their communities. Locals are given the power to take control of their own development and actively participate in the success of tourism in their area by including them in the decision-making processes, planning, and execution of tourism initiatives.
- **Diversification of tourism offerings:** These associations often focus on diversifying tourism offerings beyond mainstream attractions, allowing visitors to explore lesser-known aspects of a destination.

2.4.1 Weaknesses

- **Limited financial resources:** Community-based tourism associations often operate on limited budgets and resources, which can restrict their ability to implement large-scale projects or initiatives.
- **Coordinating issues:** Coordination between several stakeholders, including locals, tour operators, governmental agencies, and NGOs, can be difficult in a community-based tourist association.
- **Limited professional skills:** Community members who may not have received professional training or experience in tourism administration, marketing, or other pertinent fields frequently make up community-based tourist associations. Their inability to undertake market research, develop and implement complete strategy, or compete with more expertly run tourism organisations can all be hampered by this lack of knowledge.

2.5 Activities

With regard to the activities necessary for the implementation of the project, these are related to the:

- **Build a visually appealing website:** Create a user-friendly and visually appealing website that showcases the beauty of the proposed camping site. Include high-quality images, detailed descriptions of amenities and facilities, and an easy-to-use booking system.
- **Proper utilization of social media:** Create a strong online presence on websites like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Share captivating photos, videos, and articles

frequently that emphasise the distinctive experiences and activities offered at the campground. Run competitions or post guest images to interact with the audience, answer comments, and promote user-generated material.

- **Proper corporation with nearby hotels:** They have to build up a good rapport with the nearby hotels which are operating in nearby destinations. Since these hotels receive sufficiently enough number of guests during the seasons, this camping operators can anticipate considerable number of inquiries from these hotels. In house guests are normally seeking possible tour options which are available in close proximity.
- **Do content marketing:** Produce interesting and educational content on camping and outdoor activities. Publish blog posts, how-to guides, and films that offer insightful advice, packing suggestions, and activity suggestions. This establishes the camping website as a specialist in the field and draws site visitors looking for relevant information.
- **Try-out some local marketing:** Target local communities and nearby tourist destinations through traditional marketing channels. Advertise in local newspapers, distribute flyers at visitor centers, and consider participating in local outdoor events and trade shows.
- **Adding it to the tour-packages:** Negotiate with the existing travel agents and try to include the camping activity as their one of the tour activities for the tourists who visit Sri Lanka.
- **Collect and showcase testimonials:** Encourage visitors to leave reviews and testimonials about their experience at their camping site. Display these positive reviews on the website, social media, and other marketing materials to build trust and credibility.
- **Engage with the local community:** Develop relationships with the local community, including neighbouring businesses, tourist boards, and environmental organizations. Participate in community events and support local initiatives to foster goodwill and gain local support.

2.6 Stakeholders

The main stakeholders of this sort of camping site can vary depending on the specific context and ownership structure. However, here are some common stakeholders typically associated with this sort of camping site.

- **Camping site operator (owner):** The owner or operator of the camping site is a key stakeholder. They have overall responsibility for managing the site, ensuring its maintenance, and making decisions regarding amenities, services, and regulations.

- **Potential tourists (local/foreign):** the tourists who can benefit from a richer, innovative and sustainable tourist offer. Campers are a crucial stakeholder group as they are the primary users of the camping site. Their satisfaction, safety, and overall experience are essential considerations for the site's success.
- **Local community:** The local community that surrounds the campground might be interested in how it is run. They might gain from the campers' increased tourism and economic output. However, they could also be worried about things like noise, the environment, or congestion.
- **Local government authorities:** A camping site may have stakeholders from different governmental organisations, including regional municipalities, the wildlife department, or the coastline conservation agency. They may oversee and uphold the rules governing licences, zoning, land use, safety requirements, and environmental protection.
- **Staff and employees:** The employees working at the camping site, including management, administrative staff, maintenance workers, and campground hosts, are stakeholders. Their role is crucial in ensuring the smooth functioning of the site and providing services to campers.
- **Environmental organizations:** If the camping site is located in a sensitive natural area, environmental organizations may have an interest in the site's impact on the environment. They may advocate for sustainable practices, wildlife protection, waste management, and preservation of natural resources.
- **Tourist organizations:** Regional or national tourist organizations (Tourist hotels and Travel agents) may have an interest in promoting the camping site as a tourist attraction and ensuring it meets certain quality standards. They may collaborate with the campground owner/operator to market the site and attract visitors.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Outdoor enthusiasts: These people appreciate being outside and seeking out new experiences. They might be campers, hikers, or backpackers who enjoy activities that combine beach and camping.

Family travelers: Families wishing to spend quality time together may find beach camping to be an appealing alternative. It gives kids the chance to camp out while playing in the sand, swimming, and participating in other beach activities.

Nature lovers: People who appreciate the beauty of coastal landscapes, ocean views, and marine life are often drawn to beach camping. They seek relaxation, tranquility, and a chance to connect with nature.

Water sports lovers: Water sports including surfing, kayaking, paddleboarding, snorkelling, and fishing are easily accessible while beach camping. Beach camping areas with equipment rentals or convenient access to water sport facilities may draw those who are interested in these activities.

Adventure seekers: Beach camping is frequently appealing to people who like taking on new challenges and travelling to new locations. They might enjoy outdoor pursuits like hiking, wildlife watching, beachcombing, and exploring neighbouring tourist destinations or scenic areas.

2.8 Partners

Coastal conservation department (CCD): The entity responsible for managing the beach or campground where the activity takes place. They provide facilities, permits, and guidelines for camping.

Tour operators: Some tour operators specialize in organizing beach camping trips. They take care of logistics, transportation, and may provide additional services like guided hikes, water sports, or group activities.

Regional tourism enterprises: Regional or local tourism entities (Ex: nearby hotels) often promote beach camping as a recreational activity. They may provide information, maps, and resources to help campers plan their trips.

Environmental organizations: These groups seek to maintain and safeguard the pristine beauty of beaches and coastal areas. For the purpose of promoting ethical camping methods and environmental sustainability, they might collaborate with beach campers.

Activity providers: Outdoor pursuits like swimming, surfing, kayaking, or beach volleyball are frequently part of beach camping. Campers and local companies or activity providers may collaborate to provide equipment rental or guided excursions.

Emergency services: Safety is paramount during camping trips. Local emergency services, including police, fire departments, and medical facilities, may be considered partners to ensure camper safety and address any emergencies that may arise.

2.9 Finances

Starting a camping business can require significant upfront investment. Walawe Jungle River Safari operators are looking for some financial sources to fund their new venture, here are a few options to consider:

Savings of the prevailing boat safari business: Walawe Jungle River Safari operators are currently possessing a good business and they have some amount of money which they saved through their business. They have intention to utilize these money as the prime source of funding to initiate the proposed project.

Personal savings of project members: Utilize the personal savings to fund the initial setup costs of their camping business. This allows them to maintain control over their business without incurring debt or interest payments.

Small business grants: Look into small business grants for the tourism or outdoor recreation sector and submit an application. Grants are frequently provided to assist entrepreneurial endeavours by public and private institutions.

2.10 Human resources

No additional human resources will be needed but only an internal redistribution of tasks. Even-though the camping business is little bit different task from their current business, they can manage this proposed business by utilising their community members. Two young boys who represent the same community, currently following a Hotel management course. Once the business start, they are willing to give their contribution to the project. Another one who has worked more than 10 years in a reputed hotel is actively working with the boat safari project. He also expect to give his maximum support for the proposed project.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

Partnerships and collaborations: Establish partnerships with companies that complement their own, including adventure tour operators, or regional tourism bureaus. cross-promote each other's services by working together on marketing campaigns, making referrals, or offering bundles.

Create an attractive website: Create a professional and user-friendly website that showcases the camping facilities, amenities, activities, and booking information. Optimize the website for search engines to improve the online visibility.

Utilise social media marketing: Use well-known social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to share informative articles, eye-catching images, and entertaining videos about the camping business. To reach a larger audience, interact with their followers, reply to their comments, and use targeted advertising.

Targeted advertising: To target particular demographics, interests, and regions, use internet advertising platforms such as Google Ads or social media advertising. By doing this, you can connect with potential clients who are looking for camping trips or who have expressed an interest in outdoor activities

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Beach camping offers a unique experience and has several advantages for campers. Here are some of the benefits of beach camping:

One of the biggest advantages of beach camping is the breathtaking natural beauty. Beaches are often associated with relaxation and serenity. The tranquil atmosphere, gentle sea breeze, and the soothing sound of waves crashing against the shore create a peaceful environment. Beaches offer a wide range of recreational activities for campers. Swimming, snorkeling, surfing, kayaking, beachcombing, fishing, and beach volleyball are just a few examples. Beaches are often home to diverse ecosystems and wildlife. Campers may have the chance to observe and appreciate marine life, including seabirds, dolphins, turtles, and various fish species. Beach camping provides access to fresh seafood. Campers can catch their own fish, crabs, or other seafood, and cook them over a campfire or grill. Beach camping often attracts a community of like-minded individuals who share a love for the outdoors.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

- **Local Economic Benefits:** By bringing in customers and making money, a beach camping operation can boost the local economy. Visitors will spend money on lodging, dining, shopping, and recreational activities, which will help the neighborhood's businesses and open new job prospects.
- **Regional tourism development:** Beach camping has the potential to be a popular tourist destination, attracting people from near and far. This can promote the area's natural beauty, diversify the local tourism sector, and encourage longer stays by offering a cost-effective and distinctive lodging choice.
- **promotion of slow and sustainable tourism practices increase in the stay of tourists at the destination and the opportunity to extend their stay in accommodation facilities, this resulting in greater economic impact**

3.3 Impact for the environment

Environmental Conservation: Responsible beach camping businesses can contribute to environmental conservation efforts. By promoting sustainable practices, such as waste management, recycling, and minimizing ecological impact, the business can help protect the fragile coastal ecosystems. Moreover, camping enthusiasts often develop a greater appreciation for nature and become advocates for environmental preservation.

3.4 Impact for the company

Enhance the community engagement: A beach camping operation can promote social contact and community involvement. It might plan social gatherings, outdoor activities, or educational activities to foster interaction, knowledge sharing, and

mutual learning between locals and guests. Such connections can strengthen local pride, cross-cultural dialogue, and community spirit.

Some sort of Infrastructure development: It may be necessary to create or upgrade the local infrastructure to support the camping industry. This could involve building roads, parking lots, restrooms, and waste management systems. Such enhancements can help the camping industry as well as the larger community, raising the standard of living for locals and tourists alike.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

Business diversification: Previously they had only boat tours, but with the implementation of beach camping project, they may have another income source for their community. It will definitely strengthen economic capacity of this community.

Enhance the community engagement: A beach camping operation can promote social contact and community involvement. It might plan social gatherings, outdoor activities, or educational activities to foster interaction, knowledge sharing, and mutual learning between locals and guests. Such connections can strengthen local pride, cross-cultural dialogue, and community spirit.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

In general, the term “beach camping” refers to the action of erecting a campsite on or near a beach, where people or groups spend the night or a considerable amount of time. Depending on the geography and the cultural context, “beach camping” might imply different things to different local communities. Camping is typically done on sand beaches or in approved places along the coast. For many coastal communities, beach camping is a popular recreational activity that allows people to enjoy the natural beauty of the beach environment, experience outdoor living, and engage in various beach-related activities. It provides an opportunity to relax, unwind, and connect with nature. Beach camping often includes activities such as swimming, sunbathing, beach games, picnicking, fishing, hiking, and stargazing. In general, for the “Walawe People” beach camping refers to the act of maintaining a temporary camp construction along the coast. To the local population, this practise has several implications, including recreation, a sense of connection to nature, and potential economic advantages.

CASE STUDY 29

Wild Glamping Gal Oya: Beacon of Responsible Luxury Camping

W.R.A.K.K. Ranasinghe and J.A.R.C. Sandaruwani

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Ecotourism is a type of responsible travel that focuses on promoting environmental conservation and community development while providing unique and educational travel experiences. It is a combination of sustainable tourism and nature-based tourism, which means that it seeks to minimize the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and local communities while maximizing the benefits. Wild Glamping Gal Oya (WGGO) is a hotel under the Thema Collection and it is an award-winning project that tries to enhance the ecotourism experience through a sustainable architectural approach, focusing on the principles of property, planet, and profit. Located near the prestigious Gal Oya National Park, this glamping retreat is nestled in Rathugala, a majestic mountain-locked village inhabited by the Veddas-the aboriginal inhabitants of Sri Lanka. With its commitment to minimizing environmental impact and empowering local communities, WGGO has been recognized for its eco-friendly practices and dedication to preserving the ecological balance.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: The vision at Wild Glamping Gal Oya is to be a beacon of responsible luxury, where nature and culture intertwine seamlessly. We aspire to be a catalyst for change, inspiring the world with our unique blend of eco-conscious hospitality and community-driven initiatives. By fostering meaningful connections between our guests and the Veddah Community, we envision a future where Wild Glamping Gal Oya serves as a model for sustainable tourism, showcases the resilience of indigenous traditions, and contributes significantly to the conservation of nature.

Mission: At Wild Glamping Gal Oya, we are committed to creating an extraordinary eco-friendly haven that celebrates the pristine beauty of the Gal Oya region while empowering and uplifting the underprivileged local communities. Our mission is to provide an exceptional, sustainable, and culturally enriching glamping experience that harmonizes with nature, supports community development, and leaves a positive, lasting impact on both our guests and the local ecosystem.

1.3 Products/services

WGGO provides a wonderful range of products and services that guarantee an unforgettable experience. Their Semi-permanent camping site that includes 05 spacious wooden tented camps for families and 09 double-tented camps. Each camp offers a comfortable bedroom, washroom, and a spacious seating area, allowing guests to relax and immerse themselves in the serene surroundings. Nature enthusiasts will be delighted by the thoughtfully designed safari tours and trekking that enable them to explore the diverse Gal Oya National Park while preserving its delicate balance. The site also organizes exciting excursions to nearby attractions, including the lost monastery of Rajagala, Senanayake Samudra, Monkey Mountain, Rathugala Indigenous Village and Kiri Oruwa Lake help to providing guests with a glimpse into the region's natural beauty and rich heritage. Elephant watching enthusiasts will be thrilled by the site's reputation for diverse wildlife, with opportunities to spot enchanting species like the golden gecko, Barronet butterfly, Yellow-touted green pigeon, and many more. As a unique and rejuvenating experience, guests can experience Indigenous Cooking, where they can learn how to cook nutritious and delicious dishes from the Veddas during their stay at WGGO. To unwind after a day of exploration, the site offers excellent relaxation facilities, including authentic linear restaurant with a curve-shaped bar and an infinity swimming pool ensuring that guests find peace and rejuvenation during their stay.

1.4 Target market(s)

WGGO caters to a diverse range of target groups seeking unique ecotourism, culture tourism and sustainable experiences in nature. Their primary target groups include:

- **Nature Enthusiasts:** Individuals who have a deep appreciation for wildlife and seek to explore and understand the Gal Oya National Park ecosystem.
- **New experience seekers:** Individuals who want to have a different and adventurous experience, such as traveling on a forest journey, seeing Rajagala and other ancient monuments, or going on a boat safari to see elephants and other animals.
- **Eco-Conscious Travelers:** Individuals that place an emphasis on environmentally beneficial and sustainable travel options. WGGO promotes responsible tourism and sustainable methods, such as organic farming, conserving energy, and a reduction in single-use plastics.
- **Culture explorers:** Tourists that are interested in learning about and interacting with local communities and cultures ought to explore the property because it is close to the Vedda community's native Rathugala Village, providing opportunities to learn about their way of life.

- **Sustainable and Eco-Conscious Travelers:** Individuals who prioritize sustainable tourism practices and seek accommodations and experiences that align with their values.

WGGO ensures that its offerings cater to a wide range of guests, providing them with memorable experiences and the opportunity to connect with nature, adventure, relaxation, wildlife, and sustainability. Also, they aim to provide a fulfilling experience for each of these target groups by offering a range of services and activities tailored to their interests and needs.

1.5 Organization and management

WGGO operates with a team of 34 highly skilled butlers who handle all guest-related responsibilities, from check-in to check-out, ensuring a personalized and exceptional experience. Supported by three supervisors overseeing crucial aspects such as housekeeping, food and beverage, and the kitchen, WGGO maintains the highest standards of quality and service. Notably, 80% of their employees are recruited from the Vedda community.

Additionally, WGGO collaborates with local farmers to maintain their organic farm, supporting the local economy and promoting sustainable practices. This comprehensive approach to personnel and community involvement underscores WGGO's commitment to sustainable and responsible tourism.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Cost structure: The cost structure of WGGO encompasses ongoing operational expenses including staff salaries, conservation initiatives, community engagement, and marketing efforts.

Revenue streams: WGGO generates revenue through providing quality and sustainable accommodation, ethical and responsible tours and recreational activities, selling excess harvest from the farm, and sales of local organic and sustainable food and drinks, souvenirs, and other craft items.

1.7 Other information

The Green Building Platinum Award was proudly given to WGGO in recognition of its exceptional dedication to sustainability and environmentally friendly methods. The facility is recognized as a true instance of sustainable hospitality attributable to its efforts to promote green design, the use of renewable energy sources, organic farming, and water conservation.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

WGGO faces for the challenge of fostering environmentally conscious tourism and protecting the area around Gal Oya National Park. Their goal is to provide a distinctive and immersive glamping experience that immerses visitors in nature while having the least possible negative effects on the ecology. This challenge encompasses a variety of topics, such as lowering the use of single-use plastics, effectively managing waste, and using solar power to conserve energy. They also focus on empowering and supporting the local indigenous community, the Veddas, by employing them and involving them in their operation farming practices at the organic farm. The site encourages ecotourism while helping guests to develop a greater understanding of the environment and local culture by involving guests in a variety of activities, such as trekking to the lost monastery of Rajagala or engaging in a boat safari to observe swimming elephants at Gal Oya. In this way, WGGO tackles the issue of sustainable tourism by making sure that visitors have a memorable time while protecting the area's natural assets.

2.2 The business/project idea

WGGO is dedicated to promoting sustainable tourism practices and has implemented several initiatives to face this challenge. The facility's efforts to reduce single-use plastics, promote the use of eco-friendly materials, and apply sustainable design and construction methods demonstrate its commitment to minimizing its negative environmental effects. The site was built with natural resources including Clay, Illuk grass, Earth bricks, and Cajan leaves to reduce its impact on the environment. The property's emphasis on organic farming methods at its organic farm displays its commitment to sustaining food production and helping the neighbourhood. The site gives back to the surrounding by hiring the Veddas, the native people who live in the Rathugala the village and provide visitors the chance to learn about unique farming methods. Also, WGGO exemplifies its commitment to sustainability through various initiatives. They are committed to conserving biodiversity through research and educational initiatives, as evidenced by their participation in the Bio-diversity Educational Research Initiative (BERI).

The site supports environmental education, appropriately manages waste, and utilizes solar electricity. By providing distinctive and ethical tourist experiences including boat safaris and hikes to historical places, the area's beauty is highlighted while respecting its rich cultural history. The site is an outstanding example of eco-

friendly and community-driven tourism since it places a strong emphasis on hiring members of indigenous communities, which promotes sustainable development and strengthens the local community.

2.3 External analysis

Several meso and macro developments and innovations in sustainable tourism have an impact on the dynamic environment in which the WGGO operates. Depending on how they are addressed and incorporated into the site's business strategy, these changes can be seen as possibilities as well as threats. The rising worldwide consciousness of environmental sustainability is one major trend. There is a rising demand for environmentally friendly travel options as more people become aware of how important it is to preserve the environment. WGGO has an opportunity since its commitment to eco-friendly procedures and conservation aligns with the ideals of environmental-aware tourists. The site will attract in more guests and set itself out as a top destination for appropriate travellers by leveraging this trend and keeping sustainability as a top priority in their business practices.

The increase in awareness toward responsible and experiential travel is another significant trend. Modern travellers look for authentic, meaningful experiences that benefit the environment and nearby communities. By highlighting their community engagement activities and providing distinctive, immersive experiences that engage visitors in the local environment and culture, WGGO can capitalize on this trend. The site can offer a transformative and sustainable tour experience by stressing their responsible tourism practices and marketing activities like guided nature trails and Vedda cultural tours. This approach also makes it easier for local communities and organizations to form relationships, which strengthens the site's positive influence on the area. There are challenges to overcome, along with these opportunities. Sustainable travel and tourism are seriously threatened by climate change and natural calamities. The fragile ecosystems on which WGGO depends can be harmed by changes in weather patterns and the occurrence of extreme events. The site must change to meet these difficulties by putting in place resilient infrastructure, practicing sustainable land management techniques, and working with local governments and communities to reduce hazards.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- Eco-friendly infrastructure with the use of recycled materials.
- Located near to the Rathugala National park which has 100 of endemic flora and fauna.

- Well-designed excursions and wildlife activities.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

- Remote location may pose accessibility challenges.
- Limited on-site facilities compared to some guests' expectations.
- Need to improve market awareness and reach.

Overall, WGGO performs exceptionally in its dedication to sustainability, involvement in the local community, and provision of distinctive nature-based experiences. To effectively take advantage of the benefits offered by the expanding ecotourism and sustainable travel trends, it needs to address weaknesses such as low awareness, resource limitations, and seasonal effects. The lodge can strengthen its position as the best option for ethical and engaging eco-tourism experiences by successfully resolving these problems.

2.5 Activities

- Implementing sustainable construction methods and utilizing recycled materials
- Establishing waste management systems to minimize pollution and waste generation
- Creating nature trails that minimize disturbance to the ecosystem
- Educating guests about the Vedda's culture and their living style.
- Upgrading living conditions for the local community
- Providing employment opportunities for the local community
- Collaborating with local stakeholders, such as guides and suppliers
- Promoting responsible visitor behaviour and minimizing waste generation
- Supporting local businesses and promoting cultural heritage
- Conducting education and awareness programs for staff and guests

These activities were undertaken by the WGGO to prioritize environmental conservation, protect wildlife, engage the local and Vedda community, implement responsible tourism practices, and promote education and awareness about sustainability.

2.6 Stakeholders

- **Local Community**

Interest: High

Influence: Medium

Role: Beneficiary and cultural ambassadors; support for the project is vital for its success.

- **Indigenous Communities (Veddas)**
Interest: High
Influence: Medium
Role: Cultural partners and guides; their involvement enriches guests' experiences and promotes cultural preservation.
- **Guests and Travelers**
Interest: High
Influence: High
Role: Primary customers; their interest and choice impact the success and reputation of the lodge.
- **Employees and Staff**
Interest: High
Influence: Medium
Role: Integral part of operations; their dedication and service influence guest satisfaction.
- **Local Authorities and Government**
Interest: Medium
Influence: Medium
Role: Regulators and promoters of sustainable tourism; policies and regulations can affect the lodge's operations.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Conservation Groups**
Interest: High
Influence: Medium
Role: Advocates for biodiversity conservation and sustainable practices; potential partners in conservation efforts.
- **Suppliers and Local Businesses**
Interest: Medium
Influence: Low to Medium
Role: Providers of goods and services; contribute to the local economy and supply chain.
- **Tour Operators and Travel Agencies**
Interest: Medium
Influence: Medium
Role: Promoters of sustainable destinations; their marketing can attract guests to the lodge.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

- **Nature enthusiasts:** These individuals have an intense affection for the environment, wildlife, and eco-friendly travel. They aspire to become more environmentally conscious, educate themselves on the environment, and aid in conservation initiatives. They have an exceptional opportunity to observe Gal Oya National Park's natural surroundings, experience a variety of wildlife, and engage in sustainable activities by participating in WGGO.
- **Cultural explorers:** The WGGO attracts tourists interested in cultural experiences and indigenous heritage. They are able to learn about ancient traditions, customs, and lifestyles according to the Vedda population that live there. Visitors can participate in Vedda-led woodland excursions to learn more about the area's history, spiritual traditions, and culture.
- **Sustainable travelers:** People that seek out for environmentally and socially responsible travel options make up this target group. They give preference to locations and sites that support sustainable principles. By incorporating sustainable practices into all aspects of its business operations and supporting community engagement programs, WGGO caters to this niche
- **Local communities and indigenous groups:** Local communities and indigenous groups immediately benefit from the lodge's sustainable business methods and responsible tourism philosophy, which create employment, income, and opportunities for cross-cultural interaction. By protecting natural resources, WGGO's dedication to environmental preservation also enhances the general wellbeing of the nearby community.
- **Educational and research institutions:** WGGO attracts educational institutions and researchers interested in biodiversity studies and eco-tourism development. Through the Bio-diversity Educational Research Initiative (BERI), the property serves as a research base for biodiversity-related studies, promoting educational programs and practical solutions for conservation.
- **Government and environmental organizations:** The site's sustainable tourism practices and conservation efforts align with the goals and priorities of government and environmental organizations. By showcasing a successful model of sustainable tourism, the lodge becomes a source of inspiration and collaboration for policy-makers, conservationists, and sustainable development advocates. The site's initiatives contribute to the preservation of the Gal Oya national park.

2.8 Partners

WGGO works with a wide range of partners. The Vedda community, the site actively collaborates with indigenous communities to promote cultural exchange and economic empowerment. Partnerships with NGOs, governing bodies, and conservation organizations also guarantee adherence to conservation laws, wildlife protection, and neighbourhood development. Through the Bio-diversity Educational Research Initiative (BERI), academic partnerships with research organizations and universities further the study of biodiversity and environmental education. Also, collaborates with local companies, tour operators, and travel agencies to promote eco-friendly activities and enhance its appeal to environmentally aware tourists. These collaborations demonstrate WGGO's dedication to sustainable development and responsible tourism.

2.9 Finances

WGGO is the beneficiary of a substantial LKR 300 million investment provided by Thema Collection, an indicator of their robust commitment to developing this extraordinary eco-friendly glamping site.

2.10 Human resources

Community engagement specialists to work with the beside Vedda community, sustainability experts to direct the lodge's eco-friendly practices, conservationists to safeguard biodiversity and wildlife, and environmental educators to promote environmental conservation among staff and visitors. The Bio-diversity Educational Research Initiative (BERI) also required a research and education team, and eco-friendly infrastructure was guaranteed by a sustainable design and construction team. Reduced environmental effect and use of solar power was also rendered feasible by waste management personnel and solar energy specialists. These varied human resources were extremely important in promoting responsible tourism and successfully integrating sustainability while interacting with the Vedda community.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

WGGO utilized a variety of communication channels to inform the target market and stakeholders about their business on sustainable tourism. They employed a well-designed website and social media platforms to reach potential guests, sharing information about their eco-friendly practices, unique experiences, and commitment to sustainability. Also, attach with Thema collection will be value added to the marketing and communication activities. Additionally, the lodge used email newsletters to keep past visitors and interested parties informed about updates and special offers. They

collaborated with travel agencies and tour operators to promote their sustainable tourism offerings to a wider audience. Furthermore, WGGO actively engaged in sustainability conferences, trade shows, and industry events to showcase their initiatives to stakeholders, including government officials, conservation organizations, and sustainability advocates. Through these channels, the lodge effectively conveyed its message of responsible and eco-conscious tourism to its target market and stakeholders.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

When guests see green initiatives in action, it enhances guests' overall experience. As the main architectural concept of WGGO is 'glamping through green & blue', it creates a link with the atmosphere of the site through visual connections. The entire glamping site was designed to maximize the views of the surrounding, offering guests spectacular sceneries of mountains with forests and the river that merges with nature. The guests can experience a true sense of sustainability along with the local experiences throughout their stay. They can engage in sustainable activities like bird watching, boat safari, safari in the Gal Oya National Park, 30-acre organic farm visits, meeting the local aboriginal community (Vedda tribe) and can engage in prehistoric cave visits and exploring the writings on the rocks, involve in authentic cultural events (Dewa Dhanaya). Guests can reduce their carbon footprint and can have more sustainable travel choices. Moreover, guests can experience exquisite Sri Lankan cuisine prepared using fresh and organic ingredients and fragrant spices sourced locally, and immerse themselves in the authentic village living experience in a mountain-locked village in 'Rathugala' inhabited by the Veddas (the aboriginal inhabitants of Sri Lanka). Further, the guests can have a bath in WGGO's saltwater infinity pool which felt super good for the body when taking a dip as the pool is well maintained without chlorine.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Impact on the community: WGGO is nestled in a rural, underprivileged area that is homed to Sri Lanka's indigenous people. The sustainable practices of WGGO uplift the living standards of the indigenous (Vedda) community through the promotion of agro-based eco-tourism. They are given the opportunity to join the hotel project during its construction stages and in the agricultural land development, which leads to the boosting of the local economy. The WGGO also build a 'harvest collection center', that allows local dwellers, who are daily wage earners and merchandisers to sell their own products (vegetables, fruits, honey etc.) for a reasonable price. WGGO merges the

existing context of mountain shapes and dwelling construction methods of indigenous people in construction by using the simple sustainable architectural form to the resort. Traditional labor craftsmanship, which creates a strong social bond within the area, was used for construction with experts and technology. Additionally, the property has employed 95 percent of the required staff from the neighbouring indigenous community. They had been given the opportunity to get involved in the project's construction stages as elaborated earlier, and thereafter in agricultural land development as a socially and economically inclusive gesture. WGGO as a community-based project acts as a knowledge-sharing center and gives guests visiting the property to get a glimpse of Sri Lankan cultural beliefs and customs, ecosystems and other related areas which bring cultural pride to the Rathugala indigenous community. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) is used that helps promote sustainable agriculture and its social dimension would be to protect the agricultural workers' health from improper use of chemicals and pesticides.

Impact on the staff: Employees who are seeking fulfilling work experience that aligns with their key social and environmental values. More and more workers, especially the younger generations, consider the culture and value represented by the organizations they work with just as important (if not more important) as the pay. So demonstrating leadership in sustainability issues is a great way to remain competitive in the hospitality talent market.

Impact on the suppliers: Independent sustainable practices of WGGO motivate and influence its suppliers to incorporate sustainability as part of how they do business. The case study emphasizes the WGGO partnerships with various suppliers, promoting responsible supply chains, sustainable operations, and support for local suppliers (e.g. organic farming).

Impact on the NGOs: The case study highlights WGGO's potential collaboration with NGOs focused on environmental conservation and sustainable tourism, fostering partnerships and potential funding opportunities for further impact.

Impact on the government: The case study demonstrates how WGGO aligns with government objectives by promoting sustainable tourism practices, and collaborating on environmental conservation and local development initiatives.

3.3 Impact for the environment

WGGO sustainable initiatives preserve the community's environment by using materials and building methods that do not harm the local ecosystem.

1. Sustainable construction: WGGO under the Thema Collection is overjoyed to be the first hotel in the hospitality industry to receive a Green Building Council

Platinum Rating. Light-weight construction methods were used for the entire project since this is a semi-permeant structure. 98'0" long and 26'6" wide main restaurant building and 42'4" long and 21'0" wide family tent building have been constructed as a fully conventional building with eco-friendly materials such as timber columns, timber rafters and reapers, thatched roof with illuk. The usage of natural light and ventilation for its tented camps and the open restaurant contributes to saving energy. Solar panels placed on each of the tents produce a large amount of electricity for lighting and hot water, is one of the most significant features of the property as well as it reduces pollution emissions. Locally available building materials such as earth brick, mud, illuk grass and cadjan were used for the entire building complex. In an effort to minimize the negative effects of illicit deforestation in the area, all timber required for the projects were sourced from State Timber Corporation of Sri Lanka.

2. **Reducing chemical use:** Reducing chemical use and selecting cleaning products with a lower environmental impact will help protect the quality of the aquatic environment such as lakes and streams. Posting hotel policies regarding towel placement and laundering clearly for the stayovers and educating guests about minimizing chemical usage is usually done at WGGO and make them respectful of requesting laundry service only when necessary.
3. **Waste management plan:** The whole property is minimized the usage of plastics. Dry garbage is separated into papers, plastics, cardboard, tin, coconut shells, etc. Used papers will send to a sister hotel for recycling and receive recycled paper materials such as table mats, baggage tags, invitation cards etc. Coconut shells are collected and used for coconut shell charcoal. Discharge of used cooking oils in the sewers directly endangers the flora and fauna of rivers, lakes and seas. So, wasted cooking oil is used for natural lighting torches. And oil cans (20L) are used for farming vegetables in the garden.
4. **Sustainable water management:** Use of low flow bathroom, aerated shower heads and low-flow toilets with dual flush system features, optimum number and size of machine loads to reduce water usage. Treated water use for system tanks and garden uses. Also waste water can reuse to the hotel farm and for the landscaping around the property.

3.4 Impact for the company

- WGGO has won multiple accreditation, certifications and recognitions for grassroots sustainability initiatives.
- Eco-friendly construction and design, products and services leave a good impression among the guests and more eco-conscious tourists will be motivated to reserve

- Sustainable initiatives enhance the in-house guest experiences
- Incorporating sustainable practices into all operations cuts major costs significantly (via energy savings, own in-house solar power source, waste recycling, sustainable use of materials, etc.)
- Create a positive image by leveraging great economic aids for surrounding communities

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The successful implementation of sustainable tourism practices and its commitment to environmental conservation and community wellbeing serve as a role model for the training sessions conducted by CoE of SUSL. It showcases the effectiveness of integrating sustainability principles into hotel operations and the positive outcomes that can be achieved. The case study provides the CoE with a real-life example to study, analyse, and disseminate to other businesses and stakeholders within the tourism industry. The case study helps in raising awareness, inspiring innovation, and driving the adoption of sustainable practices, thus supporting the CoE's goal of creating a more sustainable and responsible tourism industry.

The process undertaken in developing this case challenge would enhance and keep up the university-industry collaboration allowing the co-creation of sustainable tourism knowledge that leads to innovation.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

What worked well in the implementation process of WGGO on sustainable tourism is the successful integration of sustainable construction and design practices. The use of recycled materials in constructing the eco camping tents showcases a commitment to reducing environmental impact while providing guests with a unique and comfortable accommodation experience. This approach not only minimizes waste but also serves as an example of innovative and eco-friendly construction techniques. Additionally, the development of nature trails and well-organized excursions to nearby attractions has been effective in engaging visitors with the Gal Oya ecosystem and Rathugala aboriginal culture. These activities offer immersive experiences that promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of the natural and cultural heritage of the region.

However, there are areas that could be improved in the implementation process. Firstly, enhancing marketing and promotional efforts would help raise awareness about

the lodge's sustainable initiatives and attract a broader audience of eco-conscious travellers. By utilizing various communication channels and targeting specific market segments, the lodge can effectively communicate its unique offerings and commitment to sustainability. Secondly, strengthening collaboration with stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs, and suppliers could lead to more comprehensive and impactful sustainability initiatives. By fostering partnerships and leveraging collective expertise and resources, the property can amplify its sustainability efforts and contribute to broader industry-wide initiatives. Continuously monitoring and evaluating the lodge's environmental, social, and economic performance would also be beneficial to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure ongoing alignment with sustainable tourism goals. Additionally, staying innovative and adaptable by seeking out emerging sustainable practices and embracing technological advancements will help the lodge remain at the forefront of sustainable tourism and address evolving industry trends and challenges.

Annexure

Table 1: Wild Glamping Gal Oya

Management Accounts for the Quarter Ending 30th June 2023.	
Occupancy %	28%
Gross Revenue	
Accommodation	10,373,423.09
Allocation -Food	1,122,765.02
Food & Beverages	1,476,289.38
Others	1,445,377.75
X'mas & New Year Supplement	-
Gross Revenue	14,417,855.25
Taxes & Service Charge	(3,020,341.22)
Discounts given for the period	-
Net Revenue	
Accommodation	8,200,334.46
Allocation -Food	887,561.28
Food & Beverages	1,167,027.18
Others	1,142,591.11
X'mas & New Year Supplement	-
Net Revenue after discounts	11,397,514.03
Less: Establishment Expenses	
Tourism Development Levy (TDL)	113,975.14
Pradeshya Sabha Levy (PSL)	113,975.14
OTA Related Expenses	184,786.43
Cost of Sales	1,978,383.47
Contribution	9,006,393.85

Less : Expenses	
Pay Roll & Other Related Expenses	3,851,446.35
Staff Welfare	80,860.08
Administration & General Expenses	616,501.60
Advertising & Promotion	28,854.00
Entertainment	14,752.50
Bank Overdraft Expenses	134,224.37
Heat, Light & Power	788,447.40
Techniques	1,061,566.00
Replacement	-
Others	31,403.47
	6,608,055.77
Hotel Gross Operating Profit/(Loss)	2,398,338.08
Less: Marketing consultancy Fees on Turnover (4%)	455,900.56
Marketing Consultancy Fees on GOP (7%)	179,307.24
Accounting Fees	-
Hotel Net Operating Profit/(Loss)	1,763,130.28
Less: Finance Charges	32,080.00
Profit/(Loss) After financial cost	1,731,050.28
Interest/Other Income *	-
Profit/(Loss) Before Depreciation & Taxation	1,731,050.28
Less: Depreciation	900,000.00
Profit/(Loss) Before Taxation	831,050.28

CASE STUDY 30

Heeloya Village: Community-based Sustainable Tourism Heaven

R.A.V. Lakshan and G.V.H. Dinusha

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

In Sri Lanka's Kandy District, there is a tiny village called HeelOya Village. With lush rees, rivers, and waterfalls all around it, the community is located in a stunning natural setting. Living a traditional lifestyle, the residents of HeelOya Village are a tiny yet lively community. The tranquil river that runs through the center of this picturesque village, popularly known as Sihil Oya, gave it its name. The coolness it brings with it refreshes both the mind and the body. The actual attractiveness of Heel Oya, however, rests in its approach to community-based tourism, which shows foreign tourists the genuine Sri Lankan way of life. Visitors are given a special chance to experience the warmth and hospitality of local families by encouraging homestays, and these families are more than happy to share their rituals, traditions, and tales. And for those who enjoy history, Heel Oya provides a fascinating look into Sri Lanka's past because it was King Sri Wikrama Rajasinha's covert hiding place. This green village consist of thousand verity.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Heeloya mission statement is "To create a best practices in Sri Lanka utilizing tourism as a tool for sustainable rural development and as a space for transformation."

And mission statement is "we developed tourism products and experiences carefully considering its environmental sociocultural and economic impacts in order to make heel oya a better place to live and a better place to travel".

1.3 Products/services

Heel Oya village has a wide range of activities to suit the interests of every visitor. Heel Oya village is a must-visit location for anybody seeking a genuine and rewarding tourism experience, whether they are interested in seeing the area's natural beauty, learning about traditional Sri Lankan agriculture, or becoming fully immersed in the community through homestays and temple visits. Visitors will be delighted by the genuine community-based tourism experience provided by Heel Oya village. The village is home to some of the most gorgeous sceneries in the area, including the Kdathura stone

cave, Nayina Kelina Gala, Kaludiya Pond, Perumall Fall, and Wadda Watunu Falls. It is governed by a tiny tourism society made up of about 20 families.

The area provides an opportunity to observe the “Gal Kamatha,” a traditional stone rice mill, and “Wee Atuwa,” a historic irrigation system utilized for paddy fields, for tourists interested in learning about traditional Sri Lankan agriculture. The village’s strong cultural legacy is attested to by these centuries-old customs.

The homestay accommodations in Heel Oya village are one of its key draws. The chance to stay with a local family allows tourists to experience Sri Lankan hospitality and a way of life first-hand. The homestays give visitors the chance to experience local cuisine, discover traditional culinary techniques, and take part in cultural events and everyday activities.

A historical and culturally significant temple is also located in the village. Visitors are welcome to explore the temple and take in the customs and rituals of the area. There is also a Kovil (Tamil temple) in the settlement, which provides a singular perspective on Sri Lanka’s multi-ethnic and multi-religious makeup. HeelOya Village is a wonderful location to unwind and take in the silence. Tourists can enjoy a sense of tranquillity that is difficult to find in other areas of Sri Lanka because the community is largely unspoiled by tourism.

1.4 Target market(s)

Travelers looking for a relaxing and serene vacation are the main target market for Heel Oya village. They cater to tourists who wish to get away from the bustle of the city and experience the peace of Sri Lankan village life. Visitors can stay with a local family in the hamlet for a special homestay experience where they can get a true sense of Sri Lankan hospitality and culture. Visitors can sample traditional Sri Lankan meals and discover regional culinary techniques while enjoying the local cuisine, which is another top draw. In general, Heel Oya village serves tourists seeking an authentic cultural encounter outside of the usual tourist sites.

- **Backpackers:** Backpackers frequently seek unusual and genuine travel encounters. They probably want to discover more about Sri Lanka’s traditional way of life and take in the breath-taking scenery of the Knuckles Mountain Range.
- **Hikers:** The Knuckles Mountain Range, where HeelOya Village is situated, is a well-liked hiking location. The mountain range’s walking pathways and the breath-taking vistas of the surroundings are certain to pique hikers’ interest.
- **Cultural tourists:** Those who are curious about other cultures. Their interest in Sri Lanka’s traditional way of life and learning about HeelOya Village’s history and culture is likely to be high.

- **Voluntourism:** HeelOya Village provides chances for volunteering. This implies that guests can lend a hand in the villagers by volunteering their time.

1.5 Organization and management

In this place, a tourism group that the villagers founded handles the majority of the administrative work. The government and tourism board are involved in this through their intervention. Due to the decentralized nature of this management system, the tourism sector can benefit from greater levels of local participation. By providing direction and instructions to the populace, the Sri Lankan government's tourist board supports the village. The government also contributes a structure that functions as a centre for tourists coming to the area. The society's members collaborate to administer and maintain the homestays, plan villagers cultural activities, and advertise village tourism. All community members will benefit from tourism, thanks to the community-based approach to the administration of the industry. Overall, Heel Oya village's tourism business management system serves as an example of sustainable and responsible tourism that supports local empowerment and cultural preservation. This organization structure create to give benefits for the all stake holders in this project, main party is the villagers.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

They have very simple revenue structures. There is no hidden charges for tourists. Heel oya village service providers assume a fixed amount of charge to every homestay facility. Their breakfast price 300 rupees lunch and dinner is 600 rupees, they charge 4000 rupees per homestay. that homestay and food revenue goes to that assigned family and that assigned family facilitates all requirements of tourists. they provide tracking for the guest they approximately charge 4000 rupees per guide and tracking takes nearly 4 hours.

1.7 Other information

HeelOya has a fairly tiny but attractive community base. It provides shelter to over 256 families, including 240 Sinhalese and 16 Tamils. Agriculture is the main source of income here. Even though they produce diaries, Kithul products, clothing, furniture, and organic fertilizer to display their indigenous lifeways, they also sew and make bath products. They grow their paddy field based on the "helmalu cultivation" structure. it's a very rare and unique cultivation method

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

The heel Oya village, doing tourism mainly base on sustainability practices. Theirs trying to provide a unique and environmentally friendly homestay e experience while ensuring the preservation of the natural surroundings and supporting the local community Heel Oya Village is a small, remote village in Sri Lanka that is committed to sustainability. The villagers have a deep respect for nature and have developed a number of practices to protect the environment.

Although their primary intention is to carry out this tourism project in an environmentally friendly manner, they sometimes face financial and other resource problems. They always strive to make the lives of the villagers, who are connected with the environment, a new experience for the tourists. Heel Oya Village is a fantastic illustration of how a little community can have a significant impact.

Rainwater collection is an essential technique, to collect rainwater from their roofs, they built tanks and gutters. Villagers use this water to their day today consumption. Particularly in Sri Lanka's dry climate, it helps people conserve water. Another essential method used in Heel Oya Village is composting. They create compost from leftover food and yard trash, which they then use to improve their paddy fields. Reducing waste and improving soil quality are two benefits of composting. Along with these actions, the villagers also cultivate their own food and recycle and reuse materials. They collaborate to address issues and have a strong sense of community.

2.2 The business/project idea

Heal Oya village was established by a small unit built by the people of the area based on the eco-friendly concept. The HeelOya Village Sustainable Tourism Project is a community-led initiative that aims to promote sustainable tourism in the village. The project will focus on conservation, community engagement, and authentic and sustainable guest experiences.

The project will work to conserve the natural environment of the village, including its forests, rivers, and wildlife. It will also engage the local community in the development and implementation of sustainable tourism practices. the project creates exceptional guest experiences that promote environmental stewardship and connect visitors with the local culture.

The project has the potential to be a successful and sustainable venture. These excursions are thoughtfully designed to minimize negative impacts on the environment while engaging with the local community in a respectful and responsible manner. By

working with the local community and focusing on environmental conservation, the project can create a win-win situation for everyone involved.

2.3 External analysis

It is possible to pay attention to several external environmental factors related to the HeelOya tourism project. In general, Sri Lankan politics are friendly to sustainable tourism in HeelOya Village. There are several rules and regulations in place that encourage sustainable tourist practices since the government is committed to sustainable development. Focusing on the economic aspects, HeelOya Village's prospects for sustainable tourism in Sri Lanka are likewise largely excellent. The village's tourism numbers may rise as a result of the economy's expansion. It may be challenging to draw tourists due to the unstable nature of the economy.

Additionally, HeelOya Village's sustainable tourism is often supported by social considerations in Sri Lanka. The rich and varied culture of Sri Lanka might be a major tourist attraction. However, there is a chance that tourism may bring about social and cultural changes in the village; it is crucial to make sure that these changes would be advantageous.

Additionally, the technological aspects of Sri Lanka are generally in favor of sustainable tourism in HeelOya Village. Tourists may find and reserve travel to the village more easily as a result of the development of new technology, such as Internet booking platforms. Concentrate on environmental elements. The village's placement in a stunning natural area may be a big magnet for tourists, but there is a chance that tourism could have an adverse effect on the ecosystem, thus it is crucial to use sustainable techniques. The villages must adapt to these problems by putting in place resilient infrastructure, using sustainable land management techniques, and working with village organizations and communities to reduce hazards.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- Natural beauty: HeelOya Village is surrounded by thick forests, rivers, and waterfalls in a stunning natural setting. This might be a significant tourist attraction.
- Rich culture in heel oyan: HeelOya Village's rich culture and history may serve as an additional attraction for tourists.
- Support from the local community: The adoption of sustainable practices may be made simpler by the local community's support of sustainable tourism.

- Encouragement from the government: The Sri Lankan government is dedicated to sustainable development, which might encourage activities for eco-friendly tourism in HeelOya Village.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

- HeelOya Village is situated in a rural place, making it somewhat difficult for travelers to reach.
- Lack of infrastructure: HeelOya Village is deficient in some of the infrastructure required to support tourism, including roads, lodging facilities, and eateries.
- Lack of knowledge: Neither the locals of HeelOya Village nor the have a good understanding of sustainable tourism.
- In general, HeelOya Village has some promise as a site for ecotourism. To turn the hamlet into a prosperous sustainable tourism destination, however, there are other issues that also need to be resolved.

2.5 Activities

- Make a feasibility analysis: Analyze the village's potential for sustainable tourism as well as the difficulties that would need to be overcome.
- Create a strategy for sustainable tourism: Describe the initiative's particular aims and objectives, along with the tactics that will be employed to meet them.
- Create partnerships: To ensure the success of the initiative, collaborate with the community, governmental organizations, and other stakeholders.
- Encourage eco-friendly travel: Increase the local population's and tourists' understanding of the advantages of sustainable tourism.
- Put sustainable practices into action: Use techniques that lessen the impact of tourism on the environment, such as renewable energy, trash reduction, and water conservation.
- Monitor and evaluate the initiative: Track the progress of the initiative and make necessary adjustments to ensure that it is successful.

2.6 Stakeholders

- **Local community:** The most significant participant in any program for sustainable tourism is the local community. They will be most impacted by tourism, both favourably and unfavourably. The neighbourhoods should be involved in the initiative's design, implementation, monitoring, and assessment phases.

Interest: High

Influence: High

- **Government organizations:** Government organizations may be very helpful in promoting measures for sustainable tourism. They are able to offer financial support, technical aid, and regulatory assistance. The creation of sustainable tourism laws and regulations ought to involve government organizations.
Interest: Medium
Influence: Law
- **Tourism-related businesses:** These organizations play a significant role in projects promoting sustainable tourism. They can offer travellers lodging, transportation, and other services. The creation of sustainable tourism practices should involve tourism enterprises.
Interest: High
Influence: medium
- **Environmental organizations:** Environmental organizations can be extremely helpful in promoting the value of sustainable travel. Initiatives for sustainable tourism might also receive their technical support. Monitoring and evaluating programs for sustainable tourism should involve environmental organizations.
Interest: High
Influence: medium
- **Tourists:** The main beneficiaries of sustainable tourism projects are tourists. By deciding to visit locations that are dedicated to sustainability, they can contribute to the support of sustainable tourism practices. Tourists should be informed about the value of sustainable tourism and the methods in which they may support it.
Interest: law
Influence: medium

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

- **(Internal/External) sustainable and cultural travelers:** The village of HeelOya is surrounded by thick forests, rivers, and waterfalls in a stunning natural environment. There are numerous places to go hiking and trekking in the area, including trails that are appropriate for hikers of all skill levels. HeelOya Village has a long history and a vibrant culture. By visiting temples, museums, and cultural institutions, tourists can learn about the local way of life. They might take part in customary events as well. By connecting with the local population and learning about their way of life, tourists can acquire real experiences.
- **Voluntourism:** There are many opportunities for volunteer tourism in HeelOya Village. Visitors can volunteer their time to help with a variety of projects, such as

teaching English, building schools, or working with conservation organizations. Tourists can make a positive impact on the local community and learn about the challenges and opportunities facing the area.

- **Health and wellness tourists:** HeelOya Village is a great place to relax and rejuvenate. Visitors can enjoy the natural beauty of the area, participate in yoga and meditation sessions, or visit the local wellness treatments
- **Educational tourism:** Heeloya can draw students and lifelong learners if there are chances for educational experiences, such as ecological workshops, language lessons, or cultural immersion programs.

2.8 Partners

The HeelOya Village Sustainable Tourism Initiative is a collaboration between the neighbourhood's residents, governing bodies, travel companies, and environmental groups. Because it guarantees that all stakeholders are involved and the effort is sustainable, this cooperation is crucial to the success of the initiative. The most crucial collaborator in the project is the villagers in HeelOya. They will be most impacted by tourism, both favorably and unfavorably. The initiative has access to land, labour, and traditional knowledge thanks to the local community. Additionally, they aid in promoting the effort to tourists.

The effort is supported by government organizations in terms of money, technical support, and regulatory guidance. Additionally, they aid in drawing tourists to the initiative. Tourism-related businesses offer lodging, transportation, and other services to tourists as part of the project. Additionally, they aid in promoting the effort to tourists. Environmental groups work to increase public understanding of the value of sustainable travel. In order to lessen the initiative's environmental impact, they also offer technical help. These partners can make sure that the HeelOya Village Sustainable Tourism Initiative is successful and advantageous for all parties involved by cooperating. Together, they can develop a destination for sustainable tourism that will benefit the local population, the environment, and visitors.

2.9 Finances

Heel oya village provide an authentic and unique travel experience for those who travel in Heeloya village. Their rates change according to time periods and Sri Lankan economic situation. Mainly they follow a basic strategy for their income distribute equality within the villagers, This strategy is, they Tourists coming to the village are distributed proportionally among the villagers respectively by the tourism society, Thus, the income from tourists is received by the member from the tourist society and some part of it is tourism society.

2.10 Human resources

If look at the human resource, the villages are currently cooperating on this initiative, and the government is also getting involved. There is now a structure in place where all operations are governed by a society made up of the villagers, and the rewards are distributed among all the villagers. The local villagers and youngsters are currently receiving the necessary knowledge and information about the tourism business from an institution that the government is helping to develop. The local villagers and youngsters are currently receiving the necessary knowledge and information about the tourism business from an institution that the government is helping to develop. There, local adolescents will receive training to mentor them in the growth of tourism in their region.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

Tourism service providers and tourists are currently participating in PR and awareness campaigns here. The villagers do not now employ commonplace marketing or promotion techniques. Here, tourism management organizations, the government, and other organizations involved in the tourism industry that frequent the area promote, inform, and familiarize tourists with this location.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

The tourists that make up the target market are greatly impacted by the report about Heeloya Village. It produces a life-changing travel experience by providing one-of-a-kind, genuine encounters with sustainable practices and cultural heritage.

By highlighting its organic farming, traditional handicrafts, and cultural activities, the report immerses the target consumer in Heeloya Village's charm. As a result, visitors may interact with the community and develop a respect and admiration for the village's sustainable way of life.

Tourists develop a stronger appreciation for the value of responsible travel by personally witnessing Heeloya's sustainable practices. They change their travel preferences and habits as a result of growing environmental and social awareness.

Both a remarkable and impactful travel experience and a renewed commitment to sustainable tourism are felt by the target market. The study encourages visitors to look for genuine interactions, assist local organizations, and make deliberate decisions that help the preservation of the environment and cultural heritage.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

The report on Heeloya Village has a transformative impact on stakeholders. For the local community, it brings economic growth, preserves cultural heritage, and empowers residents through sustainable practices.

Government organizations gain insight into successful sustainable tourism models for replication. Tourism-related businesses witness increased demand, benefiting the local economy. Environmental organizations appreciate the village's commitment to conservation and ecological responsibility.

Tourists experience authentic cultural immersion, supporting the community and gaining awareness of sustainable practices. The report fosters collaboration among stakeholders, promoting sustainable tourism and creating a positive cycle of economic, cultural, and environmental well-being for all involved.

3.2.1 Local community

Positive effect: More employment opportunities in the tourism industry.

Higher living levels.

Potential displacement as a result of the tourism industry's quick growth.

Disruption of customary cultural and way of life.

3.2.2 Tourism-related businesses

Positive effects include the creation of income and job opportunities.

Negative Impact: Excessive commercialization and competitiveness can be detrimental to sustainability.

3.2.3 Local and federal authorities

Increased tax revenue is a positive impact.

Ability to put policies for sustainable tourism into action.

Negative Effect: Stress on the government's infrastructure and services due to improper management.

3.2.4 Environmental organizations

Promoting sustainable lifestyles and environmental protection has a positive impact.

Promoting the preservation of the environment.

Negative Effect: Potential disputes with property developers or companies that put profits first.

3.2.5 Tourists

Positive Effect: Support for the local economy.

Support for protecting cultural and natural heritage.

Negative effects include environmental deterioration and tourist overcrowding.

A lack of regard for regional customs and traditions.

3.3 Impact for the environment

The environmental impact of the Heeloya Village assessment is quite favorable. It increases awareness and encourages responsible behavior toward the environment by publicizing the village's sustainable efforts.

Conservation of natural resources is one important effect. The article highlights Heeloya's organic agricultural methods, which reduce the use of dangerous pesticides and support biodiversity. The hamlet contributes to the preservation of the ecology as a whole by refraining from using artificial pesticides and fertilizers. This environmentally friendly strategy lessens the environmental impact of traditional farming practices. The report also highlights the village's dedication to protecting native plants and animals. Heeloya's efforts to preserve and restore natural environments help to ensure the survival of indigenous species and the ecological balance. This emphasis on environmental stewardship contributes to the preservation of the village's distinctive biodiversity, which is essential for a robust ecosystem.

The report also emphasizes the village's trash management procedures. Heeloya places a high priority on recycling and trash reduction in order to reduce the burden on landfills and advance the circular economy. The village decreases pollutants and helps to create a cleaner, healthier environment by using sustainable waste management techniques.

3.4 Impact for the company

The report, which positions the firm as a trustworthy and socially conscientious organization, first highlights the company's dedication to sustainability. This promotes the company's image as a pioneer in sustainable practices and improves the brand reputation of the business.

Second, the report highlights the company's partnership with Heeloya Village, highlighting its commitment to neighborhood improvement and patronizing small businesses. This promotes a favorable relationship with all parties involved, such as the neighborhood, governmental agencies, and tourism-related businesses.

The report also gives the business the chance to find like-minded partners and financiers who place a high value on sustainability and social responsibility. It opens up

opportunities for possible partnerships and growth in sustainable tourism projects. By encouraging sustainable practices and responsible tourism, the report also presents the company as a catalyst for positive change in the travel and tourist sector. It encourages other businesses to imitate it and use comparable strategies, assisting in the industry's general transition to more environmentally friendly business practices.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The Center of Excellence (CoE) may learn a lot from the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka's (SUSL) achievements in sustainable tourism practices. This case study demonstrates how incorporating sustainability into lodging may help both the local community and the environment. The CoE can utilize this case study to motivate and instruct others in the travel and tourism sector. The industry and SUSL are working together to advance sustainability and information exchange in Sri Lanka's tourist sector.

Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (SUSL) is an excellent example for the Center of Excellence (CoE) of successful sustainable tourism techniques. This case study demonstrates how incorporating sustainability into lodging may help both the environment and nearby populations. The CoE might use this instance to motivate and instruct others in the travel and tourism sector. The industry and SUSL are working together to advance sustainability and information sharing in Sri Lanka's tourist sector.

The collaborative method used to create this case study challenge promotes the relationship between the university and the business community. By enabling the co-creation of information about sustainable tourism, it supports an innovative culture.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

Sustainability in tourism is a goal that The Heeloya Village Kandy has been aiming toward. They've taken part in community outreach as one of their initiatives. Early on in the planning and development of the tourism project, they included the village elders and locals. This has made it easier to guarantee that the project will be beneficial to the community as a whole and will be in line with its requirements and interests. The Heeloya Village in Kandy has also employed sustainable methods. They implement sustainable techniques into every facet of their tourism business, from the building of the lodgings to the disposal of waste. For instance, they construct their lodgings from recycled materials and use a composting system for food leftovers. As a result, the project's environmental impact is reduced, and the destination becomes more environmentally friendly. Marketing and advertising are one area where Heeloya Village

Kandy may do better. Their sustainable tourism offers might use more marketing and promotion. This could be accomplished by developing a website or brochure, taking part in tourism trade exhibitions, or collaborating with travel companies and tour guides. This would increase the number of tourists who visit the town and increase local income.

Monitoring and evaluation are another area where the Heeloya Village Kandy may do better. They need to create a system to track and assess their sustainability performance. By doing this, the village can find out where improvements may be made and make sure that its sustainability objectives are being met.

For instance, they could keep tabs on how much electricity and water they consume, how much trash they produce, and how many tourists they draw in. The tourism operations can be changed to increase their sustainability using this knowledge.

In general, the Heeloya Village Kandy is progressing in putting sustainable tourist techniques into practice. They still have room to grow in a few areas, though. The town may continue to make progress toward its objective of developing into a fully sustainable tourist attraction by resolving these issues.

CASE STUDY 31

CIC Agro Farm, Hingurakgoda, Sri Lank: Icon of Sustainable Agriculture in Sri Lanka

*Sampath W.S.W., Hasini G.G.A., Weerasinghe W.M.A.M.,
Wijerathne C.J., Sudu Arachchi S.M. and Sammani U.G.O.*

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

CIC Holdings PLC is one of the Sri Lanka's leading company with businesses ranging from agriculture to consumer goods and from industrial solutions to pharmaceuticals. Initially CIC Holdings was a part of Imperial Chemical Industries which was a UK company and later on Chemical Industries (Colombo) Limited was incorporated in 1964 as a supplier of high-quality chemical products for the local market. The company is now known as CIC Holdings PLC which is one of Sri Lanka's leading conglomerates, and through the years has become a household name in Sri Lanka through its many ventures. CIC Holdings consist business ventures from several areas such as herbal products, health and personal care products, industrial raw materials, stationery, adhesives, and consumer products markets but mainly large part of CIC Holdings includes Agriculture and its related businesses. Some of agricultural farms owned by CIC Holdings are Palwehera Farm, Tawalama Farm and Hingurakgoda Farm.

CIC Holdings acquired the Hingurakgoda farm from the government on a long-term lease agreement in 1998. The total extent of the farm is around 1,300 acres out of which 700 acres are under paddy cultivation which cultivation carry out during both Yala and Maha season. The Argo Farm in Higurakgoda focuses primarily on crop cultivation and experimentation. It serves as a research and development centre for various agricultural practices, aiming to enhance productivity, sustainability, and profitability in farming. The farm covers a significant area of land and employs modern techniques and technologies to optimize crop yields while minimizing environmental impact.

One of the key objectives of the CIC Argo Farm, Hingurakgoda is to develop and promote innovative farming methods to address the challenges faced by Sri Lankan farmers. This includes improving soil fertility, implementing efficient irrigation systems, adopting crop protection measures, and exploring advanced cultivation techniques.

Overall, the CIC Argo Farm in Hingurakgoda plays a vital role in the agricultural sector of Sri Lanka by fostering innovation, conducting research, and promoting sustainable farming practices.

CIC Agro resort is tourism accommodation facility situated in the premises of 1380 acre agriculture farm of Hingurakgoda. Here the visitors can experience the serenity and can educate themselves on agriculture, beauty of the place and enjoy the surroundings. CIC Agro Resort provides the visitors with seven air-conditioned Cabanas with many other facilities for comfortable stay.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: To be the most respected and admired corporate for the positive impact we make on society by nurturing the lives of those we touch.

Mission: Harnessing science and modern technology, we will provide solutions of superior quality which are efficient and safe. We will build rewarding and lasting relationships with our stakeholders and be a significant entity in every sector we operate.

1.3 Products/services

Table 1: Products and Services Offered by CIC Agro Farm

Product or Service	Description
Seed Production and Distribution	Cultivate 10 popular varieties of paddy seeds such as BG 450, BG 360 (Keeri Samba) and distribute high-quality seeds for a range of crops. They might create and provide hybrid seeds, enhanced varieties, or specialty seeds appropriate for the region.
Livestock and Poultry	The high yielding Murrah & Nili Ravi breeds of buffalo herd is maintained at the farm for milk production as well as breeding purposes. Currently, the Hingurakgoda farm has the best buffalo herd in the country and produce Sri Lanka’s best quality curd which is made under very hygienic conditions and sold in all reputed supermarkets. The farm is equipped with a milk processing center and a laboratory. The milking is fully mechanized.
Banana Cultivation	50 acres of banana plantation has been cultivated under high technology and modern agricultural methods, for export purpose. Special, modern sprinkler irrigation system has been introduced for irrigation and fustigation.
Plant Nursery	Maintains a plant nursery to supply quality planting materials to farmers and produces fruit plants like mango, orange, guava.
Commercial Vegetable Cultivation	Dry zone vegetables and most of the up-country vegetables such as beans, cabbages and ginger are grown with incorporating modern agriculture practices and using appropriate technology. Latest introduced hybrid vegetable varieties and modern irrigation system like sprinkler and drip are used to improve the production and the productivity of the land.

Seed Processing	Have seed drying and seed processing Machines. The seed drying capacity is 1200 bushels per day and the seed processing capacity is 2000 bushels per day and maintains a high physical purity of seed paddy by using the processing machine.
Mango Cultivation	The first plants of a few varieties (especially Willard, Karthcolomban, Vellei Kolomban, Ambalavi and Neelum) which were planted in Sri Lanka, is in the Hingurakgoda farm. Hingurakgoda Willard, which is one of the popular mango varieties, was discovered at the Hingurakgoda Farm.
CIC Agro Resort	The CIC Agro Resort is situated in a 1380-acre, agriculture farm where the city dweller can experience serenity and can educate himself on agriculture, the beauty of the place and enjoy the surroundings. Seven air-conditioned Cabanas (including two family apartments) are now available. Including other several facilities such as an Open Restaurant surrounding cram and peacefully Garden to have your meals, a bar that offers a hedonistic range of cocktails, offers a range of rejuvenating concoctions to provide a burst of energy in style, also, a swimming pool.
Events	Auditorium -Meetings & Events B.B.Q Nights Wedding Hall
Entertainment	Bicycle Ride and Evening Walk Fishing Bird Watching Games at Windsor Park Day Outings

1.4 Target market(s)

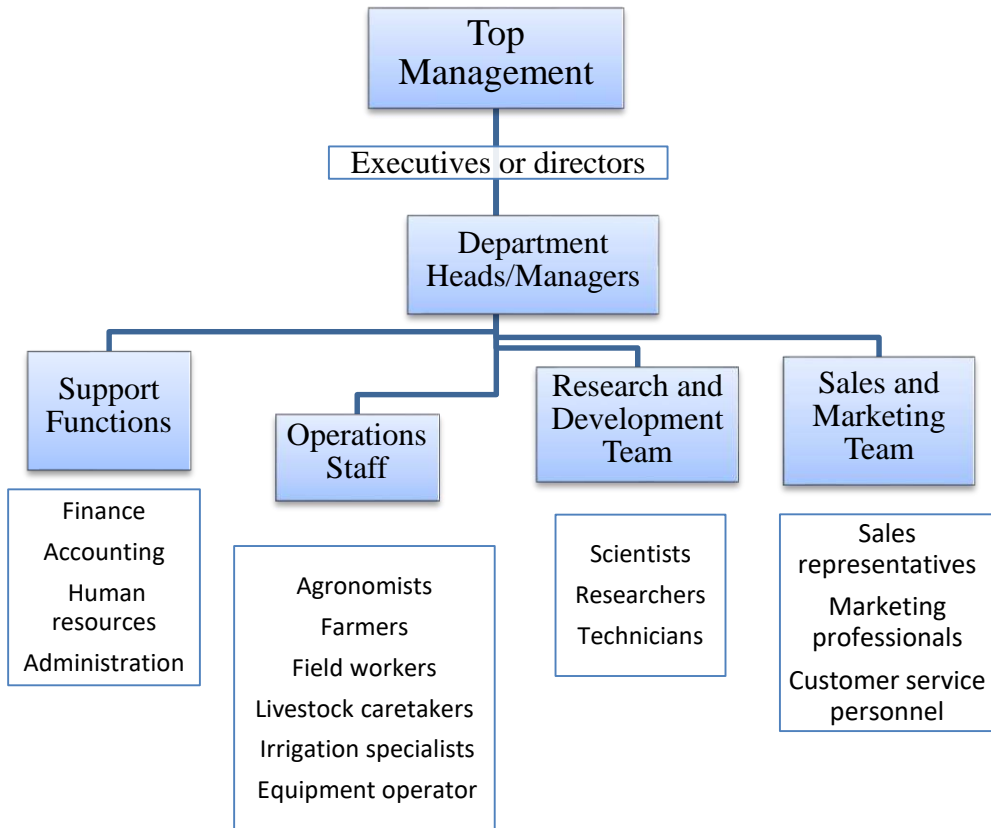
- **Farmers:** Farmers from all around Sri Lanka buy paddy seed varieties through the CIC Agro farm for cultivating purposes.
- **Wholesale buyers and distributors:** Wholesale Byers and distributors such as supermarket chains are targeted in selling the cultivated fruits and up country and dry zone vegetables.
- **Retail consumers:** Retail Consumers such as local vendors are targeted in selling the commercial vegetables and fruits cultivated in the farm.
- **Livestock industry:** Livestock industry consist animal farms which are targeted in providing animals.
- **Export markets:** Golden crop band of CIC consisting Basmati and White Slender rice is exported to the international market.
- **Research and development institutes:** Many research and development institutes such as state universities, Tourism development institutions and agricultural reach institutes are targeted for future developments.

- **Government tenders:** Government Tenders for paddy seeds, vegetables, fruits and budded plants are considered a target market.
- **Local and foreign tourists:** Both domestic and international tourists are targeted as market at the CIC Agro Resort and farm.

1.5 Organization and management

- **Top management:** This includes executives or directors who oversee the overall operations and strategic direction of the farm. They make high-level decisions and set the organization’s goals and objectives.

Figure 1: Hierarchy of the Institution



- **Department heads/managers:** The farm may have different departments or divisions responsible for specific functions such as crop production, livestock

management, research and development, sales and marketing, finance, human resources, and administration.

- **Operations staff:** This category includes various personnel involved in day-to-day farm operations. They may include agronomists, farmers, field workers, livestock caretakers, irrigation specialists, and equipment operators.
- **Research and development team:** If the farm has a dedicated research and development department, it may consist of scientists, researchers, and technicians who conduct experiments, trials, and studies to develop new agricultural technologies, improve crop varieties, or find solutions to farming challenges.
- **Sales and marketing team:** This team focuses on promoting and selling the farm's products. They may include sales representatives, marketing professionals, and customer service personnel who engage with buyers, develop distribution channels, and manage customer relationships.
- **Support functions:** This includes functions such as finance, accounting, human resources, and administration, which provide support services to the overall organization. These functions ensure financial management, employee recruitment and management, administrative support, and compliance with regulations.

CIC Agro Resort consist of general manager inchoate of the resort and an assistant manager. Then Managers of each department in the resort, as housekeeping, front office, kitchen, food the beverage and back office. Under each department operational staff are available.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

1.6.1 Cost structure

- **Operational costs:** The costs required for the daily operations or activities of the Agro farm and resort.
- **Infrastructure and equipment costs:** The costs required for the maintenance purposes of the equipment such as farming tractors and other infrastructural facilities.
- **Input costs:** Some of the input costs of the farm and resort are direct material costs, direct labour costs and factory overhead costs.
- **Research and development costs:** Costs required for the development and research purposes of new seed varieties and other experimental products.
- **Administrative and overhead costs:** Costs required to pay employee salaries and other administrative expenses.

1.6.2 Revenue streams

- **Crop sales:** Revenue acquired through selling the crops of the farm.
- **Seed sales:** Revenue acquired through selling the seeds produced at the farm.
- **Livestock and poultry sales:** Revenue acquired through selling aged farm animals to other animal farms and through selling the Curd products produced at the farm.
- **Research collaboration:** Revenue gained through research publications and collaborations with other research institutes.
- **Training and consultancy services:** Revenue earned through providing training and consultancy services to other institutions and organizations.
- **Value-added products:** Revenue gained through the sale of value added products.
- **Revenue from tourists:** Revenue gained through providing accommodation facilities to the tourists who visit the agro resort.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

“CIC Farm” could be thought of as a rural or agriculturally focused tourist destination that aims to draw visitors interested in ecotourism, sustainable agriculture techniques, or living on a farm. There might be a number of challenges with sustainable tourism in such a situation. Environmental Stewardship, Resource Management, Conservation Efforts, Community Engagement, Infrastructure Development and Waste Management likewise they have different kinds of sustainable tourism challenges in CIC Agro Farm.

- Lack of visitor facilities such as restrooms, parking, seating areas, shade, and sanitary facilities.
- Difficulty in transportation due to lack of road facilities within the farm.
- Inadequate facilities for a dining room or restaurant to obtain meals.
- Absence of essential amenities like fitness centres, spa facilities, and entertainment options.
- Lack of strong telecommunication facilities.
- Protecting visitors from animal hazards during tourist experiences such as buffaloes, dogs and rats.
- If a crop has been damaged, the area must be removed and replanted.
- Difficulty in maintaining the lake within the farm during the dry season.

2.2 The business/project idea

In a bold step towards redefining the tourism experience, the CIC Agro Farm is introducing an ecotourism venture that promises to elevate sustainable travel offerings. Currently, they only give their visitors a farm tour through the CIC Agro resort. The business project intends to innovate sustainable agro tourism experiences.

Situated against a backdrop of lush paddy fields, the CIC Agro resort is all set to introduce a new level of sustainable luxury by crafting cabanas from locally sourced and eco-friendly materials. Going beyond the traditional farm tour, the innovative “CIC Greeny” package invites guests to embark on an immersive journey that seamlessly blends sustainable hospitality and eco-adventure. Through this package, they will be able to get many special experiences that have not been provided by any farm or hotel in Sri Lanka. Covering this beautiful paddy area, they can build several cabanas and tree houses using natural materials. Guests can be given a farm tour in addition to spending a night in a cabana as part of the special package. Also, they can include a bicycle tour in their package to visit the farm. Our commitment to sustainable transportation is realized through the inclusion of bicycles or tours with tractors, which empower guests to navigate the extensive farm expanses without compromising the integrity of the environment. During the farm tour, guests will have the chance to engage in a series of enriching activities carefully curated to showcase the farm’s commitment to ecological conservation. And the uniqueness of this “CIC Greeny” package is that many special activities have been organized for them during the farm tour. They are,

- Bicycle ride
- Farm tour in a tractor
- Best photography moments around the farm
- Boat ride in the lotus flower tank (Visitors can be engaged with plucking lotus flowers, creating various designs from lotus flowers and leaves)
- Active participation and learning about different sections in the farm such as dairy production, machine yard, tissue cultivation yard and cultivation of different agricultural products.
- Bird Watching
- Build a restaurant near the louts’ tank and provide a live cooking experience for guests by using the vegetables in the farm by providing the opportunity for tourists to learn about preparation of Sri Lankan traditional meals. (Can be cooked in wooden stove and serve them in clay bears.)
- Bonfire night and the cabana experience

Various activities are provided to the guests who come to the CIC resort through this “CIC Greeny” package in three days. Along with that, they will get a guide for their safety. The activities can be customized according to the customer preferences.

Figure 2: “CIC Greeny” Package

Day 01	Day 02	Day 03
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm tour • Bicycle ride / Tractor tour • Boat ride • Photography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle ride • Active participation and leaning about agricultural activities • Bird watching • Bonfire Night and stay at Tree house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle ride • Live cooking experience at the restaurant • Active participation and leaning about agricultural activities • Bonfire Night

Visitors can enjoy this unique experience while staying in a cabana for three days. You can stay for as many days as you want, and you will have the opportunity to do various activities during the stay. In line with the principles of ecotourism, the “CIC Greeny” package emphasizes Leave No Trace ethics, ensuring that guests have a memorable experience while respecting the delicate balance of the environment.

2.3 External analysis

2.3.1 Opportunities

- Government support to uplift the tourism industry and the agricultural sector
- Changing customer attitudes in favour of food items made sustainable manner.
- The increase in demand for locally produced agricultural products due to the decrease in imports.

2.3.2 Threats

- Increasing the maintenance cost of facilities and properties of due to inflation and economic crisis.
- Unpredictable weather patterns have an impact on crop yields, overall farm output and planning the farm tours and activities for tourists.

- Competition for resort from the leading hospitality establishments in the area like Hotel Sudu Araliya and Deer Park Hotel.
- Risk of insect and disease outbreaks influencing crop production and revenue generation.
- Reduction of demand from the corporate sector for events and functions due to the increasing cost and economic crisis.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strengths

- Unique agro tourism experience for the guests.
- Having well-trained employees.
- Having laboratory facilities for the production and development of seeds.
- Having its own outlet to introduce and sell CIC products.
- Having sustainable practices such as using own vegetables and fruits for their food preparation process for employees and animals, use of own produced chemicals and fertilizers (Eg: Paddy seed stone fragments, buffalo dung waste, and infertile paddy seeds)
- An established customer base of buyers.
- Equipped with an ISO Certificate.
- Equipped with a machinery yard for the maintenance purposes of farm vehicles and machines.
- Relationship with agriculture related research institutes.
- Majority of the employees are from the nearby community.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

- Lack of foreign language skills among the employees.
- Risk of insect and disease outbreaks influencing crop production and revenue.
- Lack of relationship with higher education institutes related to the hospitality and tourism industry.

2.5 Activities

- Training and awareness for employees on agro tourism.
- The creation of tourist packages related to the Agro resort and farm.
- Publication of the package on the CIC Resort website.
- Developing the relationships and partnerships with tour guides, travel agencies, tour operators, hotels and other relevant stakeholders.

2.6 Stakeholders

- **Government authorities:** Offer incentives for sustainable practices and provide streamlined regulations for agro-tourism operations that can be highly influenced. CIC Farm and Resort contribute to local economic growth and sustainable tourism. Then their interest can be high.
- **Investors and owners:** highlight the potential for returns through diverse revenue streams from both the farm and resort. Their influence is getting medium-High. If you present a comprehensive business plan showcasing profitability, market demand, and positive community impact, then their interest will be high.
- **Environmental organizations:** If you collaborate on eco-friendly initiatives such as waste reduction, renewable energy, and conservation efforts, then the interest is medium. Demonstrate commitment to sustainable practices and seek certifications that align with environmental goals, like creating cabanas in the CIC Agro Resort and recreational activities that provide them with medium to high interest.
- **Educational institutions:** Offer tailored programs for students, integrating hands-on learning about agriculture, nature, and sustainability. Then their influence gets low. Educational value through interactive tours and workshops that align with curricula. Then their interest can be moderate.
- **Farmers:** Involve farmers in decision-making, provide training on agro-tourism interactions, and highlight their expertise as their influence grows from medium to high. If you offer fair compensation, professional development, and opportunities to showcase traditional farming methods for tourists, then their interest can be high.
- **Retail buyers:** If they emphasize the quality and freshness of farm produce, emphasizing the direct farm-to-table connection, then they can get the medium's influence on it. However, if you offer exclusive access to specialty products and promote each other's outlets and shops, their interest can be high.
- **Shareholders:** sharing consistent progress reports on visitor numbers, revenue, and sustainability achievements gets medium influence. The CIC farm and resort are maximizing returns while adhering to ethical and environmental standards to provide a medium level of interest.
- **Villagers:** These ventures create new job opportunities at the CIC farm and the resort, boost the local economy, and support community initiatives that highly influence villagers. Other than the ventures, celebrating local traditions, using local resources, and fostering a sense of pride in the area's natural beauty and heritage create high interest among the villagers.

- **Tourists:** If they offer captivating tours, activities, and experiences that showcase the beauty of nature, sustainable practices, and cultural richness, then their influence is medium to high. Provide exceptional hospitality, memorable activities, and a connection to local traditions to keep tourist interest high.
- **Resort staff:** If they provide ongoing training in guest services, sustainability practices, and local cultural awareness, then their influence gets medium. If you create them in a positive work environment, provide new opportunities for growth, and recognize outstanding service, then interest will be medium to high.
- **Travel agencies:** They're medium-high influenced in collaboration with travel agencies to include the farm and resort in their itineraries, highlighting their unique offerings. Provide a farm tour and resorts can provide the "CIC Greeny" Package for experiences that align with their high interest.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

- Agricultural and Tourism related Research and Development Institutions
- Local and Foreign Tourists
- Eco tourist
- Foodies and culinary enthusiasts
- Families
- Travelers seeking authentic experience
- Couples
- Educational groups
- Wellness travellers
- **Agricultural and tourism related research and development institutes:** These institutes often seek partnerships with farms that can promote new agro tourism based practices. For example, a CIC Agro Farm could partner with relevant institutes to conduct field trials of new agricultural varieties and incorporation agricultural practices into tourism aspects to enhance the experience of the tourists.
- **Domestic and foreign tourists:** Agro tourism is a growing industry. People are interested in visiting farms, seeing how food is grown and even participating in farm activities. CIC Agro Farm runs a program of farm tours, farm classes, or 'pick-your-own' events to attract tourists. For example, vegetable or fruit picking events can attract tourists.
- **Eco-tourists:** These are travellers who are interested in nature and the environment. An agro-farm offers them a first-hand experience of farming practices, crop cultivation, and sustainable agriculture.

- **Foodies and culinary enthusiasts:** The restaurant component can attract those who are interested in farm-to-table experiences, tasting local produce, and exploring traditional dishes.
- **Families:** Farms can be educational for kids, offering them an opportunity to learn about where their food comes from, interact with animals, and enjoy outdoor activities.
- **Travelers seeking authentic experiences:** Those who wish to understand the local culture and lifestyle may find such places appealing as they can interact with local farmers, learn about traditional farming methods, and experience rural life.
- **Couples:** Farms can offer romantic getaways for couples, especially if the restaurant provides fine dining or unique culinary experiences.
- **Educational groups:** Schools, colleges and higher education institutes may consider agro-farms for field trips as they offer practical knowledge about agriculture, biology, and ecology and agro tourism.
- **Wellness travellers:** Some people look for retreats that offer fresh air, organic food, and a break from the hustle and bustle of city life.

2.8 Partners

- Travel Agent and Tour operators
- Tour Guides
- Government Institutions
- Local government publications
- Tourism associations
- Agricultural and tourism related higher education institutes
- Industry report and journals
- Hotels
- **Travel agents:** They are the intermediaries between the tourists and the various tourism services. The farm can create packages with travel agents, offering guided tours, farm stays, or agricultural experiences. Travel agents can promote these packages to potential tourists.
- **Tour guides:** They provide in-depth information about a destination and its attractions, ensuring tourists have an enriching experience. Collaboration: Having knowledgeable tour guides can elevate the visitor's experience in the agro farm. They can explain the farming processes, the types of crops, the history of the farm, and the significance of sustainable agriculture.

- **Government institutions:** They play an integral part in promoting and regulating tourism. This includes ensuring standards, offering certifications, and marketing destinations. The farm can work with these institutions to gain necessary permits, certifications, or recognition. Additionally, they can leverage government-run promotional campaigns or platforms to highlight the unique experiences their farm offers. Partnering with the government can also help in accessing grants or funds allocated for sustainable or agro-tourism projects. For examples, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA), Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), Ministry of Tourism, North Central Province, Department of Agriculture.
- **Local government publications:** They might release data or reports regarding agritourism developments and partnerships.
- **Agricultural and tourism associations:** National or regional bodies that represent the interests of farmers or the tourism sector might have updated listings or publications.
- **Industry reports and journals:** Industry-focused journals or market research firms might have reports on the intersection of agriculture and tourism in the CIS region.
- **Hotels:** By making relationships with the hotels and accommodation establishments in the area will be help to promote about the farm tours for their guests.

2.9 Finances

Table 2: Budget Proposal (LKR:000)

Description	Amount	Total
1. Initial Investment and Infrastructure Development		
– Construction of Cabanas, Restaurant, Bar, and Other Facilities	30,000	
– Landscaping and Garden Development.	10,000	
– Auditorium and Wedding Hall Construction.	20,000	
– Total Initial Investment		60,000
2. Operational Costs(Per Year)		
– Staff Salaries (Hospitality, Farming, and Maintenance)	7,000	
– Utilities (Water, Electricity, Gas)	2,000	
– Maintenance and Repairs:	4,000	
– Marketing and Promotion	3,000	
– Administrative Expenses:	2,000	
– Total Operational Costs		18,000
3. Research and Development		
– Sustainable Agricultural Research Initiatives:	3,000	
– Development of Innovative Farming Methods:	2,000	
– Total R&D Costs		5,000
4. Total Cost		83,000.00

Initially, the activities will be funded from the CIC Agro Farm's financial resources as shown in Table 2.

The CIC Agro Resort's sustainable tourism initiative is expected to yield substantial annual revenue through various income streams, including crop and seed sales and poultry sales, research collaboration, and tourism-related activities. With careful cost management and a strong focus on sustainability and innovation, the initiative aims to generate significant net profits each year. The initial investment is expected to be repaid over a period of 4 years, after which the project can contribute even more significantly to both the company's financial success and the promotion of sustainable tourism in the region.

2.10 Human resources

The additional human resources will be needed to give different agro tourism experiences. The hotel school students, undergraduates from the tourism related higher education institutes and the community people will be hired for the additional human resources. Usually the CIC agro-farms engage local residents of nearby villages during their peak harvest season. During this busy period, it is common practice for farms to employ extra seasonal labour to ensure efficient and timely collection of all crops, in this case seeds and bananas. Community people can have hands-on experience and understanding of the land and crops, making them valuable resources during harvest.

In addition, CIC Agro Farm can use hotel school students and undergraduates from the tourism related higher education institutes to gain practical experience in the field of hospitality and CIC Agro Farm provides such opportunities to students in their academic learning. Applied in a real-world environment, they can improve their skills in customer service, management and other aspects of running a resort and other agro tourism activities. Mainly these two main groups of human resources represent an interesting blend of local, practical knowledge and more formal, academic training that can lead to a well-rounded operating model for the farm and resort.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

- Facebook page of the CIC Agro Farm
- Website of CIC Agro Farm and Resort
- Online Travel Agent bookings for the Resort
- Television advertisements
- Networking
- Exhibition

- **Facebook page of the CIC agro farm:** CIC Agro Farm can use their Facebook page to connect with potential customers and stakeholders. They may post pictures and videos of their farm and resort, showcasing their farming techniques, sustainable practices, or the variety of products they offer. They can share customer reviews and success stories to build trust and credibility. For example, a post featuring a family enjoying the resort includes a caption explaining the various farm-based activities available.
- **CIC agriculture farms and resorts website:** The website acts as a digital store for farms and resorts. It can provide detailed information about the accommodation, products available, farming methods and experiences that visitors can expect. For example, they have a section dedicated to virtual farm tours or pages detailing how a specific product goes from farm to table.
- **Online travel agents for the resort:** Being listed on online travel agents extend the reach of CIC Agro Farm to a global audience. Here, they can highlight features of the resort, availability, pricing, and customer reviews. For example, the resort might be marketed as a perfect getaway for those seeking a unique rural experience, with descriptions and images highlighting amenities like farm-to-table dining experiences, hands-on farming activities, and comfortable lodging.
- **Television advertisements:** Television ads are a great way to reach a large, diverse audience. CIC could create commercials that demonstrate the quality and benefits of their products, share their commitment to sustainable farming, or promote their resort especially targeting the local tourists. An ad might show a day in the life of a CIC farmer, emphasizing the care they put into producing their goods, followed by shots of their products in retail locations.
- **Networking:** By establishing strong connections within the agricultural and culinary industries, CIC Agro Farm can create a valuable network of partners, suppliers, and potential customers. They might collaborate with other farms, seed distributors, hotels, tour guides, travel agents, tour operators, relevant government organizations, associations to share knowledge and resources. Creating this blend of networking can help them build relationships and stay updated on the latest trends.
- **Exhibitions/workshops:** Participating in different domestic and foreign exhibitions, workshops and forums like Sancharaka Udawa can be a great way for CIC Agro Farm to showcase their products, services and agro tourism experiences. They could promote their unique agro tourism experiences to the domestic and foreign target markets.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

- **Employment opportunities for the community:** The surrounding villagers of Agro Tourism CIC Seed Farm/CIC Agro Holiday Resort is very significant. By providing jobs, the resort improves the economic well-being of the local community, enabling them to meet basic needs, access better healthcare and education, and contribute to the local economy.
- **Nutritious food for the consumers:** Agro CIC Seed Farm's impact on providing nutritious food to consumers leads to improved health benefits. Consumers benefit from consuming fresh, chemical-free produce grown on-site, improving their overall well-being. The resort's farm-to-table culinary experience offers consumers nutritious meals that contribute to better health outcomes and promotes a healthy lifestyle.
- **A secure place for accommodation for tourists:** The impact of providing a secure place for accommodation for tourists at the Agro Tourism CIC Seed Farm and CIC Agro Holiday Resort ensures a comfortable and safe stay for visitors. This fosters positive guest experiences, leading to increased word-of-mouth recommendations and higher bookings. As a result, the resort experiences a rise in tourist demand, contributing to revenue growth and enhancing the company's reputation as a preferred destination for travellers seeking a serene and secure agro-tourism experience.
- **Networking and events:** The resort's facilities, including an auditorium and wedding hall, provide space for events, meetings, and gatherings. It fosters networking opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to share knowledge, ideas, and experiences related to agriculture, technology, and sustainable living.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

- **Profit for the shareholders:** Agro Tourism CIC Seed Farm's multifaceted operations, including innovative crop cultivation, livestock management, and agro-tourism services, generate substantial revenue and steady growth. Shareholders benefit from consistent dividends and capital appreciation driven by the company's sustainable practices, high-quality products, and positive societal impact. The integration of modern technology and research-driven practices ensures operational efficiency and competitive advantage, contributing to enhanced shareholder value and a solid financial outlook.

- **Increasing health benefits for the consumers:** By providing nutritious food and promoting sustainable farming practices, Agro Tourism CIC Farm contributes to increasing health benefits for customers. Having high-quality fruits, vegetables, and dairy products free of harmful chemicals enhances the nutritional value of their diet. As consumers consume healthier produce and dairy products, they enjoy improved overall health and well-being. In addition, the resort's tranquil environment and recreational activities provide guests with a positive and rejuvenating experience, promoting mental well-being and relaxation.
- **Economic benefits for community through employment opportunities:** The economic benefits for villagers through employment opportunities at the Agro Tourism CIC Seed Farm/CIC Agro Holiday Resort are significant. By working at the farm or resort, nearby villagers earn stable incomes, improving their financial status and overall livelihoods. The wages received allow them to meet basic needs, access better healthcare and education, and contribute to the local economy. Additionally, reduced seasonal unemployment provides consistent earning opportunities, enhancing economic stability and social welfare within the village community.
- **Educational Enrichment:** The CIC Agro Farm focuses on education and providing live learning experience for tourists and relevant students of hotel school and undergraduates of higher education institutes about different agro tourism based activities.

3.3 Impact for the environment

- **Sustainable agriculture and animal husbandry:** The farm's focus on research and development for innovative farming methods demonstrates a commitment to sustainable agriculture. By experimenting with advanced cultivation techniques, efficient irrigation systems, sustainable soil management, water management, dairy production and crop protection methods, the farm contributes to reducing the negative environmental impact of traditional farming methods.

The emphasis on improving soil fertility implies that the farm prioritizes maintaining healthy soil. This practice helps prevent soil degradation and erosion, preserves the long-term productivity of the land, and supports ecosystem health. Moreover, Commercial vegetable cultivation and banana cultivation show a conscious effort to manage water resources efficiently by adopting modern irrigation methods like sprinkler and drip systems. This minimizes water wastage and improves water conservation.

Furthermore, Maintenance of high-yielding buffalo breeds for farm milk production is a sustainable approach to animal husbandry. Proper animal husbandry practices and mechanical milking contribute to animal welfare and the production of quality milk products. High-quality milk production under hygienic conditions increases food safety and reduces the environmental impact associated with dairy processing

- **Biodiversity:** Having a plant nursery that produces various fruit plants like mangoes, oranges, and guavas helps to maintain and enhance the local biodiversity. Growing different types of fruit promote a diverse ecosystem and provide a habitat for different species.
- **Eco-friendly infrastructure and recreational activities:** CIC Agro Farm facilitates eco-friendly infrastructure facilities like cabanas with more open spaces and natural ventilation are designed to enhance the connection with natural environment. Offering activities like biking, bird watching, photography and boat tours encourage the visitors to connect with nature by providing awareness and education on environment.
- **Educational opportunities:** The educational aspect of the Agro-niche provides an opportunity to learn about the importance of sustainable agro tourism practices. This can lead to greater awareness and more informed consumer choices.
- **Positive community impact:** CIC Agro Farm involvement in sustainable agricultural practices such as seed production, distribution, and innovative agricultural techniques as well as the sustainable agro tourism activities can positively impact local communities by contributing to food security, economic development, and knowledge sharing.

3.4 Impact for the company

- **Increasing revenue:** The increase in income of Agro Tourism CIC Seed Farm/CIC Agro Holiday Resort is based on various factors. Increased bookings and higher occupancy rates lead to increased revenue from accommodation and hospitality services. In addition, the production and distribution of high-quality seeds on the farm contribute to the growth of income from seed sales. Implementing sustainable practices and eco-friendly initiatives attracts more visitors and improves the resort's brand image, leading to higher demand and revenue generation
- **Development of the CIC brand image:** Sustainable and socially responsible initiatives of Agro Tourism CIC Seed Farm/CIC Agro Holiday Resort are positively impacted to develop CIC brand image. The resort's eco-friendly practices,

employment opportunities for villagers, and focus on providing high-quality seeds and nutritious food to consumers create a strong reputation for CIC as an environmentally friendly and community-oriented company. The improved brand image leads to increased trust and loyalty among consumers, attracts more tourists and investors, and ultimately contributes to the long-term success and recognition of the CIC brand in the market.

- **Innovation:** CIC Argo Farm's research and development efforts through their own resources and networking with higher education institutes not only benefit farm operations but also contribute to the advancement of sustainable technology driven agro tourism practices. The introduction of new crop varieties, irrigation techniques, and sustainable methods can lead to breakthroughs that positively impact the industry as a whole.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

Impact for the CoE (Centre of Excellence) refers to the impact for the CESTour Centre of the Uva Wellassa University. Sustainable Service Unit (SSU) is the CESTour Centre of the Uva Wellassa University and our proposed project will have following impacts on the undergraduates and Uva Wellassa University through the Sustainable Service Unit.

- **Research and learning opportunities:** The Agro Farm serves as a research and development center for various agricultural practices. This presents an opportunity for university students to engage in hands-on learning experiences, gain insights into modern agricultural and tourism related techniques, and contribute to research initiatives aligned with sustainable farming practices.
- **Educational exposure:** The Agro Farm provides a unique platform for university students to immerse themselves in the agricultural environment, understand the significance of agriculture, and witness first hand how sustainable tourism agricultural practices can be implemented. This exposure enhances their knowledge and appreciation for agriculture, aligning with the goals of the university's Sustainable Service Unit.
- **Sustainable tourism education:** The CICI Agro Farm focuses on educating visitors about agriculture and sustainability aligns with the objectives of the Sustainable Service Unit. University students can learn how tourism can promote and support sustainable agricultural practices, thereby contributing to the local economy and environment.

- **Collaborative partnerships:** The Agro Farm and Resort offer opportunities for collaboration between Uva Wellassa University and CIC Holdings. Such partnerships can lead to joint research projects, internship opportunities, and knowledge-sharing, benefiting both the university and the industry.
- **Skill development:** Exposure to the farm and resort operations can help university students develop a wide range of skills, including agricultural practices, sustainability concepts, hospitality management, event planning, and more. These skills are valuable for their academic and professional growth.
- **Promoting sustainable practices:** The Agro Farm and Resort serve as examples of how sustainable practices can be integrated into the agriculture and tourism sectors. University students can learn how to promote and advocate for sustainable practices, aligning with the goals of the Sustainable Tourism Unit.
- **Tourism development:** The presence of the Agro Farm can contribute to the development of sustainable tourism in the region. Students studying tourism can analyze the resort's impact, evaluate its sustainability practices, and propose strategies for enhancing the tourism experience while minimizing environmental impact.

In summary, the CIC Agro Farm and Resort are important for Uva Wellassa University, its undergraduates, and the Sustainable Service Unit due to the valuable learning experiences, research opportunities, skill development, and collaborative partnerships they offer, all while promoting sustainable agricultural and tourism practices.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

4.1.1 Section 01

The CIC Agro Farm, located in Windsorpark, Hingurakgoda, is part of CIC Holdings PLC, a prominent Sri Lankan conglomerate with businesses ranging from agriculture to consumer goods. Originally linked to Imperial Chemical Industries, CIC Holdings diversified and now operates in various sectors including agriculture. The Hingurakgoda farm spans 1,300 acres, focusing on crop cultivation, experimentation, and innovative farming methods to benefit local farmers. CIC Agro Resort, situated on the same premises, offers visitors a serene agricultural experience, educational opportunities, and comfortable accommodations.

CIC Agro Farm engages in seed production and distribution, livestock and poultry farming, banana cultivation, running a plant nursery, growing commercial vegetables, and cultivating mangoes. Their goals are centred on sustainable agriculture, advanced cultivation techniques, and addressing challenges faced by farmers. Target markets include farmers, wholesale buyers, retail consumers, livestock industry, export markets, research institutions, government tenders, and local/foreign tourists.

The organizational structure includes top management, department heads, operational staff, research and development teams, sales/marketing teams, and support functions. The cost structure involves operational, infrastructure, input, research, and administrative costs. Revenue streams come from crop and seed sales, livestock products, research collaborations, training/consultancy services, value-added products, and tourism-related income.

4.1.2 Section 02

The “CIC Farm” project envisions a sustainable tourist destination focusing on ecotourism and sustainable agriculture. The venture faces various challenges, including Specific hurdles involving lack of visitor facilities, transportation, dining options, amenities, telecommunications, animal hazards, crop damage, and maintaining the farm’s lake during dry periods.

They propose the “CIC Greeny” package with eco-friendly stays, farm activities, and unique experiences. The uniqueness of this “CIC Greeny” package is that many special activities have been organized for them during the farm tour. Opportunities include government support and changing sustainability attitudes, while threats involve costs, weather, competition, and crop issues. Internally, strengths lie in unique offerings, trained staff, and partnerships, with weaknesses in language skills and academic connections. Key actions include training, package creation, promotion, and stakeholder partnerships, impacting success.

CIC Agro Farm, as a seed distribution company and resort, likely collaborates with a range of partners. This might include agricultural researchers and institutes for the seed business, ensuring they offer the best seed varieties, and travel agencies or hospitality networks for the resort aspect to enhance guest experiences and outreach. These partnerships help in reinforcing their commitment to both the agricultural and hospitality sectors

CIC Agro Farm, operating both as a seed company and resort, likely boasts a diverse human resources profile. On one hand, they have agricultural experts, researchers, and distribution professionals ensuring seed quality and delivery. On the other, they employ hospitality staff, including resort managers, chefs, and customer

service representatives, to ensure guests have a memorable stay. This blend of expertise showcases their commitment to excellence in both sectors.

They develop the actual strategy based on the company's goals, target audience and market dynamics. They use different strategies for marketing.

4.1.3 Section 03

The Agro Tourism CIC Seed Farm and Agro Holiday Resort brings multifaceted impacts. It creates local employment, elevating economic status and access to healthcare and education. The focus on chemical-free produce improves health, and farm-to-table meals promote healthier lifestyles. Technological integration boosts efficiency and competitiveness. Sustainable practices yield high-quality products. The resort's ambiance enhances mental well-being. For the community, it offers stable jobs, reducing seasonal unemployment and boosting economic stability.

The resort prioritizes educational enrichment, educating tourists and students on agro-tourism for informed consumer choices. Environmentally, it excels in sustainable agriculture and animal husbandry with research-driven methods. Soil health, water management, and biodiversity are emphasized, minimizing environmental impact. Eco-friendly infrastructure and activities connect visitors with nature, promoting responsible practices. Positive community impact includes food security and economic development. Revenue growth comes from bookings, seeds, and branding. Innovation drives R&D, benefiting the industry. Overall, the resort transforms employment, nutrition, environment, and community with a commitment to sustainability and responsible practices.

Annexures

Figure 3: Introduction About CIC Agro Farm



Figure 4: Introduction about CIC Agro Resort



Figure 5: Seed Production



Figure 6: Seed Production Machines



Figure 7: Seed Production Machine



Figure 8: Seeds Drying Process



Figure 9: Seed Production and Distribution



Figure 10: Buffalo Herd Milking Unit



Figure 11: Livestock and Poultry



Figure 12: Banana Cultivation



Figure 13: Banana Packing Process and Distribution Process



Figure 14: Plant Nursery



Figure 15: Hybrid Corn Seed



Figure 16: CIC Agro Resort



Figure 17: Choosing Different Themes



Figure 18: Resort Garden



Figure 19: Machinery Yard



Figure 20: Farm Tour Tractor



Figure 21: Group Members



CASE STUDY 32

Wildlife Tourism with Responsibility: The Role of Yala – Eco Team in Promoting Sustainable Tourism

*Sankalpana, K.M.S., Kumudumali, A.A.K., Wijesinghe, R.G.D.A.,
Niwarthana M.L.S., Priyangika, W.M.S. and Karunarathne, A.C.I.D.*

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Established in 2000, Eco Team Sri Lanka began as an eco and adventure tourism company and has since evolved into a specialist in various niche segments of tourism. Recognizing the changing expectations of travelers, Eco Team has developed 10 specialized brands to offer customized tour solutions, including wildlife, birding, adventure travel, luxury travel, biking, trekking, and diving. The company remains committed to responsible tourism, emphasizing community benefit, conservation, and preserving local values. Under the leadership of founder Anuruddha Bandara, Eco Team has grown into a renowned organization, serving over 140 national and international companies while striving to make a difference in every endeavor.

Eco Team's diverse range of five specialized accommodation brands offers some of the most unique Tented Accommodations & Lodges in the country. Each brand is designed to cater to different types of travelers and experiences, providing a variety of options for guests seeking an unforgettable stay in Sri Lanka. They mentioned that Eco Team was the first mobile tented camps provider in the world.

Eco Team Yala is one of the camping locations that Eco Team handled under their business umbrella. The location of Yala mainly focuses on wildlife tourism & experiential travel. It provides related facilities, amenities, and experiences.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Mission: To promote sustainable tourism and environmental conservation in Sri Lanka.

Vision: To be a leading force in sustainable tourism and environmental conservation, both in Sri Lanka and globally.

1.3 Products/services

The Eco Team Sri Lanka is a service provider that focuses on sustainable tourism and environmental conservation in Sri Lanka. As well, they are specialists in Wildlife Tourism and Experiential Travel. They offer a range of services aimed at

promoting responsible travel and protecting the natural resources of the country. The Eco Team – Yala, Sri Lanka organizes, experiences in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Eco Team Experiences



Nature Trails
Special Study Tours
Photography & Film location Services
Wildlife Safaris
Wildlife Glamping

Photo Credit - Mahoora Yala by Eco Team

They strive to minimize the environmental impact of tourism by practicing sustainable methods, such as using eco-friendly accommodations, promoting local communities, and supporting conservation initiatives. Additionally, the Eco Team Sri Lanka conducts **educational programs and workshops** to raise awareness about environmental issues and encourage eco-conscious practices among tourists and locals alike. Their services aim to create a positive impact on the environment while providing an authentic and enriching travel experience for visitors to Sri Lanka. Eco Team- Yala provides some **packages** to their target market. Through that package, they target different levels of tourists. Those packages are,

- Mahoora Yala
- Big Game Camp Yala.

Figure 2: Mahoora Yala and Big Game Camp Yala Photo Gallery

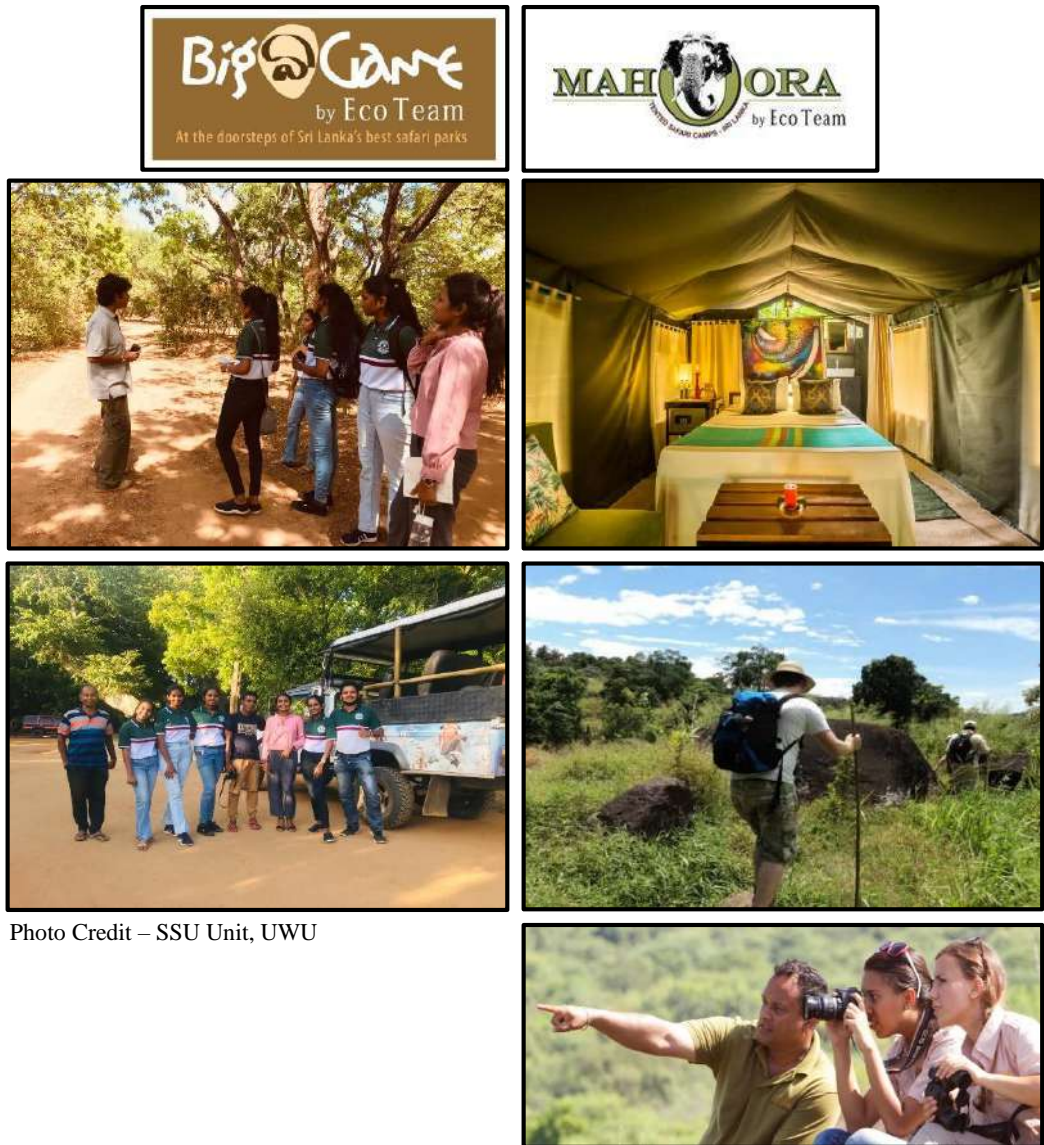


Photo Credit – SSU Unit, UWU

Photo Credit - Eco Team- Yala

The Mahoora tent provides a bedroom and separate living room tent as well as an attached bathroom. This setup allows guests to have a comfortable and private space to relax and unwind during their stay. So, the Mahoora was created for high-end customers who seek a luxurious and comfortable experience while exploring the

wilderness of Yala. The target market for Mahoora Yala includes travelers who are willing to spend more for premium accommodations and a higher level of comfort.

On the other hand, the Big Game camp was created especially for cost-conscious travelers, the Big Game campsites pack luxury into a tight budget. While the accommodations may be simpler compared to Mahoora Yala, the Big Game Camps still offer a level of luxury within the constraints of a tight budget. By offering two distinct packages, Eco Team Yala caters to a wider range of tourists, providing them with options that align with their preferences, budgets, and expectations.

1.4 Target market(s)

The target market for Eco Team Sri Lanka is eco-conscious travelers, Wildlife Tourism, and Experiential Travel who are passionate about sustainable tourism, nature exploration, and authentic cultural experiences. They are interested in immersive adventures that have a positive impact on the environment and local communities. And these individuals value responsible travel and are passionate about wildlife viewing, birdwatching, and photography. When it comes to the target market segmentation under Wildlife Tourism and Experiential Travel in Yala, those are:

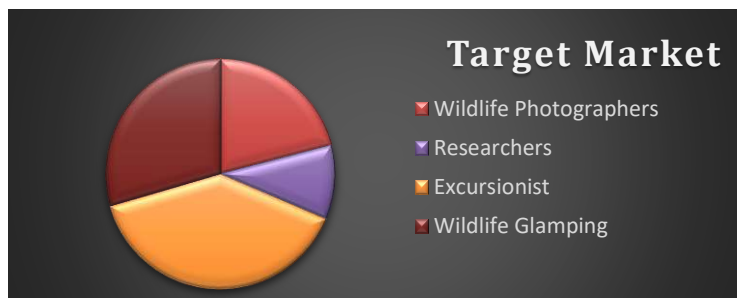
Wildlife photographers: This segment focuses on wildlife photography and filming. They are highly passionate about filming wildlife habits like how they naturally behave in the reserve area.

Researchers: This segment is also the same for photographers. They mainly focus on learning wildlife behaviours for further research.

Excursionist: This segment is the most common segment for wildlife tourism. They mainly focus on seeing the animals and environment in reserve areas.

Wildlife glamping: This segment is another niche target group. This segment focuses on camping in reserve areas with all the amenities and comfort.

Figure 3: Target Market for Eco Team Sri Lanka

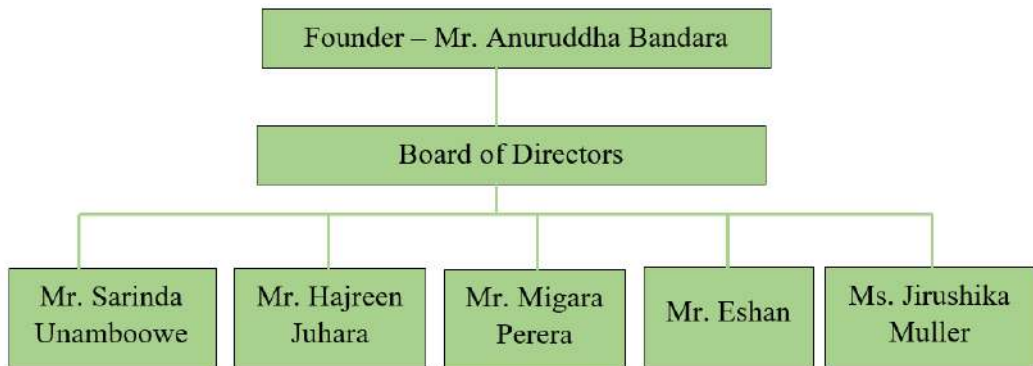


Overall, the main concept of Wildlife Tourism, and Experiential Travel has **niche tourist** groups all over the world. Therefore, Eco Team target that niche tourist group to provide their services. Under this target audience, they seek Wildlife Tourism, and Experiential Travel activities like wildlife photography, learning wildlife activities, eco-tourism activities, etc.

1.5 Organization and management

Eco Team was founded in 2000 as a pioneering Eco and Adventure tourism firm and has now refined its emphasis to become the most sought-after specialist in **wildlife tourism and experiential travel**. In the startup stage, the company's headquarters employs less than 5 people who work in Human Resources, Booking & marketing, and administration. They handled all the stuff such as finding the smallest of niches and providing customized tour solutions.

Figure 4: Eco Team Organizational Structure



At present, the headquarters employs 25 people across many areas, including sales and marketing, finance and accounting, human resources, and operations.

Furthermore, the number of field staff personnel in the category of national parks and natural reserves is as follows:

Location of Yala	19
Location of Udawala	21
Location of Wilpattu	27

When it comes to the organizational structure of Eco Team - Yala, it follows a hierarchical organizational structure. Therefore, the levels of authority and responsibility

are well-defined at the Yala location. According to the organizational structure, Eco Team - Yala manages its business location in a good way.

Especially Eco Team mentioned that they hire employees, but they hire those who truly like and are passionate to work in this category.

Figure 5: Local Organizational Structure

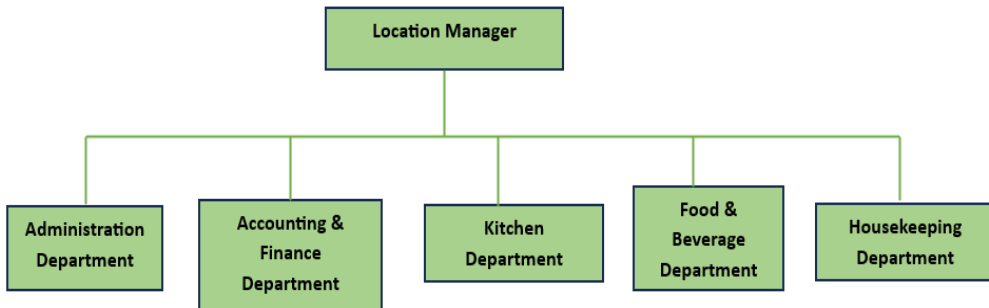


Figure 6: Eco Team Photo Gallery



Founder - Mr. Anuruddha Bandara



Photo Credit - Eco Team- Yala



Photo Credit - Eco Team- Yala

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

1.6.1 Revenue streams

Especially, when it comes to the Eco Team - Yala provides mainly two packages. Such as Mahoora and Big Game. Below mentioned that rates of packages of these two, These are the main revenue-generated activities in Eco Team - Yala.

Table 1: “Yala – Mahoora” by Eco Team Yala

Glamping in Style	Glamping Tent with a Free Night Walk	37 USD
	Bed & Breakfast [Room with Breakfast]	70 USD
	Half Board [Room with Dinner & Breakfast]	82 USD
	Full Board [Room with Lunch Dinner Breakfast]	90 USD
No-Frills Safari Deal	Glamping Tent with a Night Walk & a Shared Safari	197 USD
	Bed & Breakfast with Safari	205 USD
Mahoora Exclusive Safari Package	Customized for passionate wildlife lovers and photographers with privately Guided Safaris and Many more value additions	301 USD
Birder Package	Designed for Birders with Privately Guided Safaris & more	301 USD
Celebration in the Wild	Designed to Celebrate Special Occasions with Private Safaris & more.	345 USD

Table 2: “Yala - Big Game” by Eco Team Yala

Big Game in Style	Tent with a free guided Night Walk	36 USD
	Bed & Breakfast	41 USD
	Half Board with Safari	193 USD
	Full Board with Safari	203 USD
Big Game Budget Safari Deal	Tent with a Night Walk & a Shared Safari	157 USD
	Bed & Breakfast with Safari	176 USD
Big Game Celebration Package	Perfect way to celebrate Special Occasions in the Wild with Safaris & more.	235 USD
Big Game Exclusive Private Safari	Ideal for photographers to enjoy the Wilderness with Dinner, Breakfast & Private Guided Safari	267 USD
Big Game Exclusive, Private Birding Safari Package	Big Game Birder Package	267 USD

1.6.2 Cost structure

When it comes to the cost structure at Eco Team - Yala, the main costing aspects are:

Staff expenses: Especially at the Eco Team Yala, working 19 workers and must pay salaries for them.

Supplies: They purchase organic vegetables and fruits from the villagers. Therefore, they must allocate costs for it.

Energy & maintenance: Eco Team - Yala, must consider maintenance from time to time. it should have to the allocation of cost.

Transportation: Eco Team - Yala, has Safari Jeeps and organizes safaris for the guests. It must allocate fuel costs.

Safety expenses: Eco Team - Yala allocate cost for the safety. They ensure guest safety while camping and other activities.

These are the main Cost structures in Eco Team – Yala

Figure 7: Revenues and Costs



Figure 8: Yala Eco Team Photo Gallery



Photo Credit - Eco Team- Yala

1.7 Other Information

In Eco Team – Yala, especially practices sustainable activities within the location. Some of them are,

- They never use a general electricity supply within the location. They use the Solar energy system for generating energy. And within the open space, they never use any bulbs or types of equipment for lighting the space. Instead of that, they use “Kakuna Thel Pandam” for lighting the space. (* Kakuna Thel Pandam - Lighting lamps that using Kakuna oil.)
- Also, Eco Team - Yala, use their wastes for generating biogas.
- They mentioned that The Yala Eco Team location is a carbon-neutral place.
- They minimize the usage of Plastic water bottles within the location, and they introduce glass water bottles for every guest.

Table 3: Sustainable Practices in Combination with SDGs in Eco Team – Yala

Sustainable Practice	Corresponding SDG Goals
Solar energy for electricity generation	SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
Use of Kakuna Thel Pandam for lighting	SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
Generation of biogas from waste	SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
Carbon-neutral location	SDG 13: Climate Action
Minimization of plastic water bottle usage	SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
Introduction of glass water bottles	SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Figure 9: Mahooraa by Eco Team Photo Gallery



Photo Credit – Mahooraa by Eco Team- Yala

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd is a pioneering organization dedicated to fostering sustainable tourism practices in the Yala region. As the demand for travel experiences continues to grow, the importance of responsible tourism becomes even more critical. Here, we will delve into the challenges faced by Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd and the innovative ways they are addressing these challenges to improve existing tourism concepts towards sustainability.

- 1. Literacy level of the local community:** The local community is one of the major stakeholders of the business. Their literacy level directly affects the business, and it is under the SDG 4 quality education goal. Because of not only reading and writing but also need awareness about the society. Eco Team - Yala, faced challenges because of the lack of awareness of the host community.

Solution: Eco Team - Yala, provides local jobs, CSR projects, and awareness projects to the host community to increase awareness about their business as well as society. It also helps to implement SDG 1 (eliminate poverty)

- 2. Climate changes:** Due to the climate changes business may face some challenges. Yala is one of the dry zones in the Sri Lankan context. Therefore, Eco Team -Yala, faced a dry climate, and in some periods, they faced droughts.

Solution: According to SDG 13 climate action, Eco Team - Yala planning mechanisms to face climate changes such as planting trees and recycling organic waste.

- 3. Economic challenges:** Inflation in the country affects the tourism industry. Because of that Eco Team face challenges such as logistics, purchasing materials, etc.

- 4. Lack of skilled workforce:** Eco Team - Yala, faces the challenge of lack of necessary skilled employees. Most of their employees come from a grassroots-level workforce. in the location, there are only two or three hotel school graduates who come with the necessary knowledge about the business.

Solution: According to SDG 8- decent work and economic growth, Eco Team, provide necessary training, development programs, and incentive programs for getting the best out of the employees.

- 5. Absence of industry policy implementations:** In Sri Lanka, there is no proper policy implication for the tourism industry. it is another challenge for the Eco Team - Yala. Because there are no regulatory systems for handling tourism activities and

their rights. Once, Eco Team-Yala faced a problem because of the changing political environment. That incident happened a lack of policy implications for the industry.

2.2 The business/project idea

Eco Team - Yala, faces some challenges while practicing sustainable activities due to some reasons. Therefore, they are concerned about business and project ideas for minimizing the negative impacts and challenges. They expect those ideas to aid in improving the sustainability of existing tourism concepts.

- **Initiating cycling tours:** Eco Team Yala expects to begin cycling tours around the Yala area. They anticipate this idea may aid in enhancing the existing tourism concept.
- **Provide local job opportunities:** Eco Team - Yala, is more concerned about providing job opportunities for the host community. Because they suppose that the host community is more suitable for working in the Yala environment.
- **Supplies from local producers:** Yala Eco Team purchasing vegetables and fruits from local producers. It helps to maintain beneficial relationships with the host community.
- **Community based projects:** Eco Team also hope to conduct various community-based projects to maintain their reputation while developing the local community.
- **Mango cultivation and paddy cultivation project with a Nederland Group:** Eco Team expects to start a mango and paddy cultivation initiative collaboration with the Nederland group of investors. Through this project, they desire to improve contacts with the investors as well as develop local villagers' standard of living.
- **CSR project (The project of providing drinking water to villages):** The Eco Team Yala, has started this project with the Buttala Gonagasgala site village officer's office. Using the Ellanga system, this project has been started to provide drinking water to "Uda villages" including Pelawatta. (* Ellanga system - The tank cascade system. It is an ancient Sri Lankan irrigation infrastructure.)

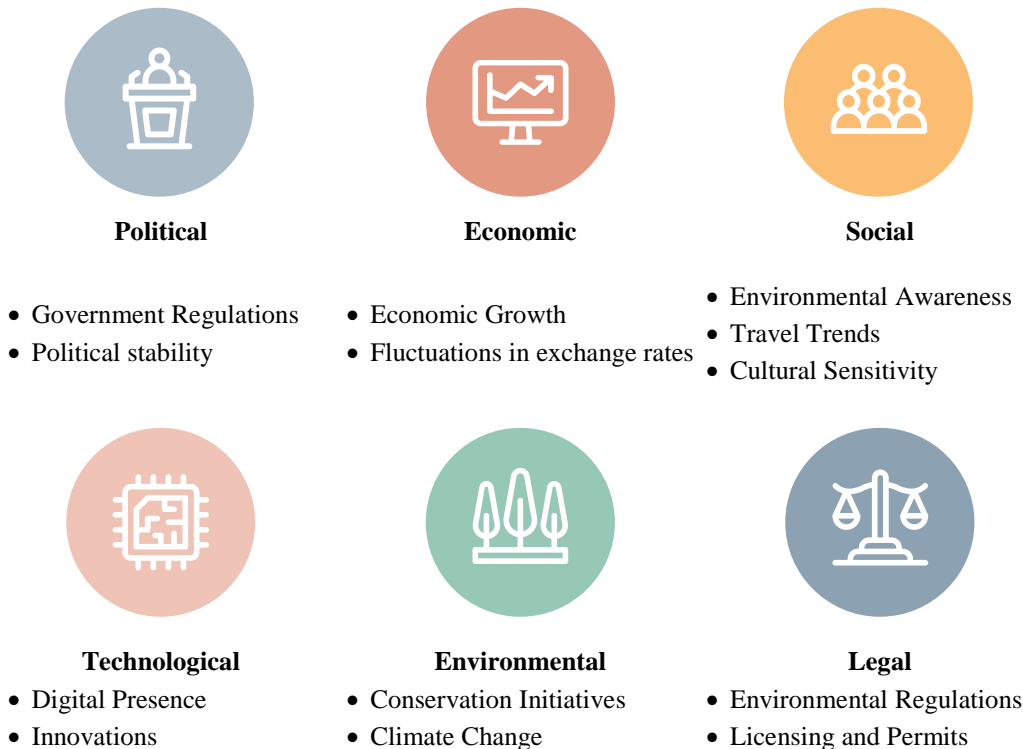
This type of CSR helps to solve challenges that happen cause local villagers. because this CSR helps to change villagers' wrong ideas about the business.

- **Elephant fence repair project:** Recently, the Elephant fence around the camping area needs to be repaired. Therefore, Eco Team Yala, hope to repair it and secure guests' safety while them camping.

2.3 External analysis

When it comes to the Wildlife Tourism and Experiential Travel is growing trend in overall tourism. Especially, under the eco-tourism and sustainable concepts, the above category has a major place.

Figure 10: PESTEL Analysis



2.3.1 Political

- **Government regulations:** Changes in government policies and regulations related to tourism and environmental conservation is impact Eco Team’s operations and practices.
- **Political stability:** Political stability in Sri Lanka affects the overall tourism industry and the safety of travelers.

2.3.2 Economic

- **Economic growth:** The economic growth of Sri Lanka is influencing the number of tourists and their spending on travel and experiences. As well as economic growth directly affects the existence of the Eco Team.
- **Exchange rates:** Fluctuations in exchange rates is impact the cost of supplies and services that Eco Team relies on.

2.3.3 Social

- **Environmental awareness:** Increasing awareness and concern for environmental conservation among travelers is benefit Eco Team's emphasis on sustainable tourism.
- **Travel trends:** Changing preferences of travelers towards experiential and responsible travel experiences can align with Eco Team's offerings.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Eco Team is ensuring the respects and values local cultures and traditions is helping to maintain positive relationships with the communities they operate in.

2.3.4 Technological

- **Digital presence:** Online marketing, bookings, and communication is help for Eco Team to reach and engage with potential customers.
- **Innovations:** Adopting new technologies for eco-friendly accommodations, waste management, and sustainable practices are improving Eco Team's offerings.

2.3.5 Environmental

- **Conservation initiatives:** Eco Team's commitment to environmental conservation aligns with growing concerns about protecting natural resources and wildlife.
- **Climate change:** Adapting to changing weather patterns and considering the potential impacts of climate change on tourism activities.

2.3.6 Legal

- **Environmental regulations:** Compliance with environmental regulations and conservation laws is vital for Eco Team's sustainable practices.
- **Licensing and permits:** Eco Team obtains all necessary licenses and permits for their activities and accommodations is important for their operations.

2.4 Internal analysis

When it comes to the internal analysis of Eco Team:

2.4.1 Strengths

Passionate service staff: When it come to the service staff of the Eco Team, they were more energetic and passionate about their work. Especially in the Yala Eco Team' location, there is one lady employee who works in a very energetic way and handled a supervised. most of the time lady employees don't like to work in the jungle areas because of the difficulties. But Eco Team have lady employees who work very passionately.

Eco-friendly practices: Eco Team always practice environment-friendly practices. They use natural ventilation, and natural light systems used for catering to their customers. because of that they can save their energy and reduce overall cost. they use "Kakuna" oil for lighting lamps at nighttime rather than using electricity for lighting. Gardening is another practice that they follow. Through gardening, they harvest what they want.

Warm hospitality: They always concern tourists' concerns and provide better hospitality service for them. they connect more friendly manner with tourists and ask,

- how was your trip?.
- is it enjoyable?

It helps to maintain good relationships with tourists and retain them.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

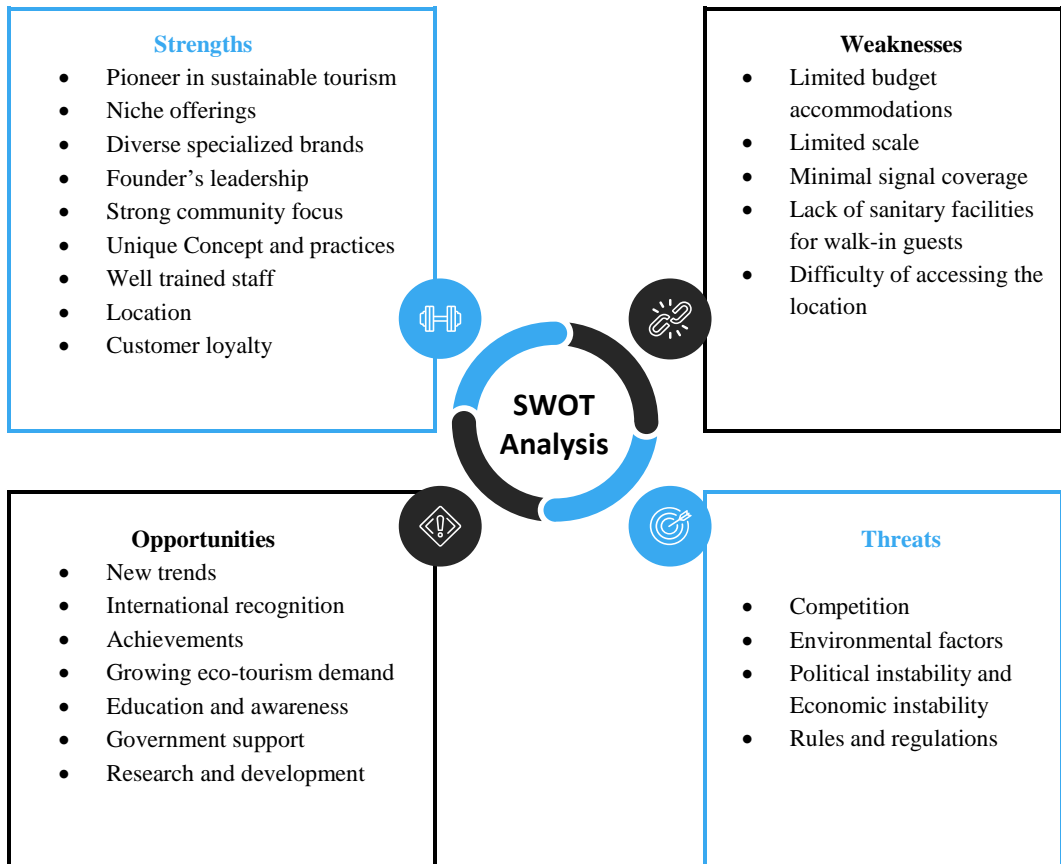
Lack of skilled staff: Because of the difficulties in the reserve areas, most of the employees don't like to work there. therefore, the Eco Team faced a lack of skilled staff. Most of the time they must give full training programs to hired employees before allocating work. it needs some specific period and extra cost.

Recommendation: hire skilled employees with extra incentives and give incentives based on their performance.

Guest sanitary facilities: They only arrange sanitary facilities for pre-reserved tourists. When someone came outside the Eco Team complex, they face problems with sanitary facilities.

Recommendation: build a sanitary facility for outside guest as well.

Figure 11: SWOT Analysis



2.5 Activities

Eco Team mainly provide two types of tourist packages. They are Big Game by Eco Team and Mahoora by Eco Team. They introduce different tour packages to tourists depending on their purpose of travel, activities that they like to engage in, etc.

Table 4: Mahoora and Big Game Tourism Packages

Mahoora	Luxury Glamping, night walk, Bonfire, treasure hunt games for children, a family safari adventure
Big Game	Camping, bonfire facilities, a treasure hunt for children, BBQ, a chef in the wild activity, exclusive private safari, private birding safari packages

Other than that, Eco Team conducts some activities to improve further sustainability of the business.

Tree planting: They arrange tree-planting efforts to promote green spaces, prevent deforestation, and improve air quality. They are particularly concerned about the planting of “Nuga” plants to cool down the environment.

Gardening: Eco Team - Yala has concerns about the on-site organic garden, which supplies the kitchen with a variety of vegetables cultivated using biodynamic/organic farming methods.

Maintain natural ponds: Eco Team - Yala maintains natural ponds near the dining space because of the scenic beauty.

Lighting lamps: Every night, they use “Kakuna Thel Pandam” to light the space. They never use light bulbs to illuminate the space. They could adopt sustainable methods while being unique.

2.6 Stakeholders

Eco Team Yala is likely a branch or division of Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd, which focuses on initiatives or projects in the Yala region of Sri Lanka, which is renowned for its abundant biodiversity and natural beauty. Stakeholders in Eco Team Yala may include local government officials, employees, environmental organizations, suppliers, etc.

- **Government:** As evidenced by their relationship, Eco Team works closely with the *Department of Wildlife Conservation* to secure authorizations and follow rules. Together with the *Tourism Authority*, Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd also maintains an excellent relationship to provide packages, promotions, etc.
- **Passionate tourists:** Tourists and nature enthusiasts flock to Yala in large numbers, and their experiences and perceptions of Eco Team Projects by Yala may have an impact on the company’s reputation. The individuals or groups who avail of the eco-tourism services offered by Eco Team, such as nature excursions, wildlife encounters, and sustainable travel options are responsible for the fundamental development of the project.
- **Local communities:** The local communities in the regions where Eco Team operate, their support and participation are essential for the achievement of eco-tourism programs and the maintenance of ethical tourist practices. The company’s operations immediately affect Yala’s population. They promote neighborhood economic health, open up job opportunities, and offer their resources to tourists, among other things.

Figure 12: Stakeholders



- **The employees:** Staff of the Eco Team organization, including the tour guides, office staff, and other team members support the company's eco-tourism strategy.
- **Suppliers:** The Eco Team Yala needs to make sure that it keeps positive relationships with its suppliers and can get the products and services it requires at a reasonable price. They aren't quite as interest, but they're influential. They need regular updates.
- **Environmental organizations:** The Eco Team Yala collaborate with environmental organizations to ensure that its operations. are environmentally sustainable. They have high interest and influence on the Eco Team operation.
- **Competitors:** The competitors are less influence and interest in the Eco Team. But Eco Team Yala must keep an eye on its competitors because they don't miss any changes.
- **Investors:** Investors are interested in Eco Team Yala financial performance. Eco Team Yala must keep investors updated on its financial performance. Investors have less influence, but they are highly interested.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Eco Team Sri Lanka caters to a niche market of travelers who prioritize responsible and sustainable tourism. Their target audience comprises eco-conscious travelers, tourists who want to have a camping experience, and adventure seekers who are enthusiastic about exploring nature, wildlife, and authentic cultural encounters in an ethical manner. Through their packages, the Eco Team Sri Lanka ensures that they can accommodate the varying preferences and budgets of their target market.

When considering the beneficiaries of Eco Team Yala,

- **Local communities:** Eco Team positively impacts local communities near the tourism sites. By involving locals in eco-tourism activities, providing employment opportunities, and supporting community development projects, the company contributes to the socio-economic growth of these areas.
- **Government:** Also by promoting responsible tourism practices, Rules, and following sustainable practices, Eco Team help protect natural habitats and wildlife species, contributing to biodiversity conservation.
- **Economy:** The Eco Team attracts more tourists who are willing to spend on travel experiences and it can support the economy.

When it comes to the target market beneficiaries under Wildlife Tourism and Experiential Travel in Yala, those are,

Wildlife Photographers: This segment focuses on wildlife photography and filming. they are highly passionate about filming wildlife habits like how they naturally behave in the reserve area. This segment consists of a niche tourist group and most travelers aged above 25 years individuals.

Researchers: This segment is also the same for photographers. they mainly focus on learning wildlife behaviours for further research. This segment also consists of a niche tourist group and most travelers aged above 20 years individuals or small groups of researchers.

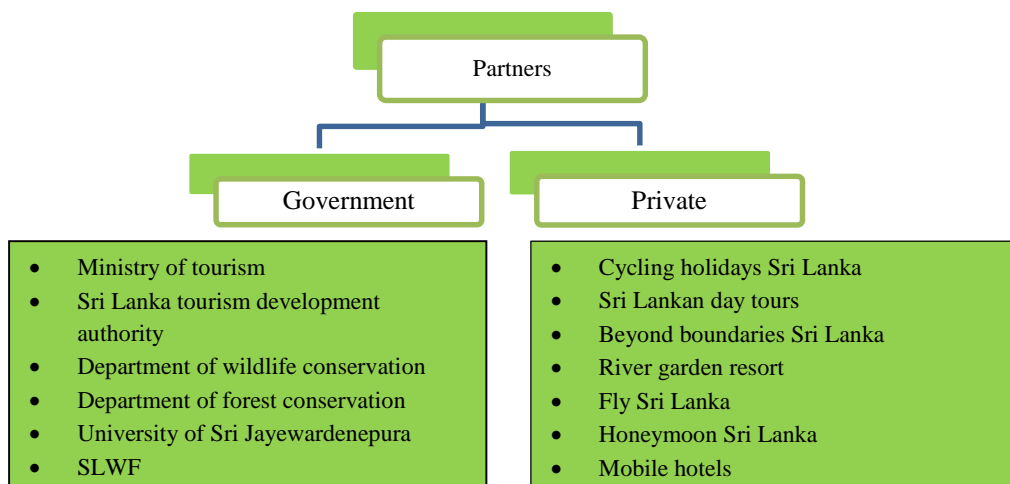
Excursionist: This segment is the most common segment for wildlife tourism. they mainly focus on seeing the animals and environment in reserve areas. this segment consists of different ages peoples and most of them are in small groups with friends, couples, or nuclear families.

Wildlife glamping: This segment is another niche target group. most travelers camping mountains or other ground areas rather than reserve areas. this segment focuses on camping in reserve areas with all the amenities and comfort. Especially, Eco Team provide service for them, and they introduce packages for glamping. This segment also consists of small groups with couples, and nuclear families.

2.8 Partners

- Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd is partnership with 140 local, national, and international businesses worldwide.
- Eco Team has worked as partners with many government, private and foreign organizations.
- As an organization that deals with the environment and tourists, they have to engage with government agencies such as the Ministry of Tourism, Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, Department of Wildlife Conservation and Department of Forest Conservation.
- The most important main partner's they have teamed up with to provide their customers with maximum travel inspiration are: Cycling Holidays Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Day Tours, Beyond Boundaries Sri Lanka, River Garden Resort and Fly Sri Lanka”.
- Academy of Eco Tourism, Wildlife and Nature Interpretation for Nation” is being run in collaboration with the University of Sri Jayewardenapura to expand the knowledge of environmental and wildlife tourism in the Sri Lankan student community.
- Eco Team works closely with Food suppliers and Jeep owners around Yala.

Figure 13: Partners



2.9 Finances

- At the startup stage, Eco Team was financed by using the owner’s funds.

- In Eco Team - the Yala location has main two revenue streams such as selling Mahoora and Big game travel packages. through these packages, Eco Team - Yala earns revenue for the further expansion of the business.
- Also, they use bank loans, national and international investing for finance for the business.

2.10 Human resources

When it comes to the Human Resources in the Eco Team Yala, they already have 19 employees for the staff in the Yala location. But they mentioned that they need some extra employees for further improvement of their existing tourism concept.

- They mentioned that they face a lack of female employees working in Yala Eco Team. Especially, for the guest relation officer position is especially suitable for female employees but the Yala camping site has only one female for handling campsite management and GRO positions. Therefore, they seek more female employees for the campsite.
- Eco Team Yala offers training and development programs that assist employees in performing better.
- Also, Eco Team - Yala, mentioned that they need knowledgeable employees for handling this process. They said that hotel school graduates or university graduates are needed to handle this tourism concept.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

Eco Team make any attempt to connect with their target audience through appropriate marketing and communication platforms. They aim, in particular, to employ modern advertising techniques to reach the intended audience.

- Eco Team (Pvt) ltd has used modern technology to its fullest potential to both entice travelers to their establishment and keep in touch with them.
- Eco Team runs a website that gives visitors information about the business and gives both domestic and foreign travelers the chance to make reservations online.
- They have established connections with the client through Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
- Eco Team seek to entice additional tourists to use their services by publicizing the testimonials of past travelers on these social media platforms.

The offline marketing efforts of Eco Team (Pvt) ltd include participation in tourism exhibitions like Sancharaka Udawa, unique study tours, informing travelers on the most recent information via direct mail, and direct phone calls

Figure 14: Marketing Mix

Product	<p>Eco Team - Yala offers main two of specialized tourism package, including wildlife tourism, experiential travel, and immersive glamping experiences. Those two packages are,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mahoora • Big game <p>Under these 02 brands they have a range of accommodation options, including tented accommodations and lodges, catering to different customer preferences.</p>
Price	<p>Eco Team- Yala, considers factors such as the level of luxury, unique experiences offered, and the value perceived by customers as the pricing strategy. Different categories of accommodations and experiences have varying price points in two packages that offer Eco Team- Yala.</p>
Place	<p>Eco Team works in a variety of areas in Sri Lanka, including national parks and nature reserves. They selected Yala as the one of best destinations for launching their services. The location, in particular, is near the buffer zone of Yala National Park and has easy access to the park.</p>
Promotion	<p>Eco Team markets its services through a variety of brands and websites, each of which caters to a distinct market group. To reach their target demographic, they typically employ websites, and social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube, as well as relationships with travel agents. Promotions are mostly handled by the Eco Team's headquarters. Positive word of mouth has always been a helping hand for the Eco Team.</p>
People	<p>Employees and customers constitute the main stakeholders of the Eco Team. The main target market is foreign tourists those who have higher financial ability and those who love to engage with nature. Eco Team emphasizes the importance of knowledgeable and experienced staff, including naturalists and guides, to enhance the customer experience during wildlife tours and adventures.</p>
Process	<p>The booking process for Eco Team's services runs smoothly and efficiently. From booking accommodations to arranging customized tours, the process Eco Team ensures a seamless customer journey but the check-in process of the Eco Team is done manually because the internet coverage is slow in forested rural areas</p>
Physical Evidence	<p>The booking process for Eco Team's services runs smoothly and efficiently. From booking accommodations to arranging customized tours, the process Eco Team ensures a seamless customer journey but the check-in process of the Eco Team is done manually because the internet coverage is slow in forested rural areas</p>

Figure 15: Marketing and Communication Activities



3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

3.1.1 Positive

- Eco Team offers a unique and immersive experience bordering the elephant fence of Yala National Park.
- Guests can enjoy living in Sri Lanka’s Largest Safari Tent, surrounded by picturesque landscapes, tall reeds, and abundant wildlife, including giant squirrels, birds, butterflies, and reptiles.
- The presence of a visiting crocodiles, Leopards and elephants adds to the thrill of the adventure.
- Eco Team Pvt Ltd offers additional highlights such as the Recreation Lounge & Common Area, providing relaxation and socializing opportunities, and the Stargazing Observation Deck overlooking Yala National Park for unforgettable night sky views.

3.1.2 Negative

- Adrenaline activities carry inherent risks. If not managed properly, accidents can happen.
- While going on safari, there may be threats from wild animals.
- If Eco Team Pvt Ltd doesn't prioritize sustainable practices and minimize the environmental impact of their expeditions, customers who value eco-conscious travel might be disappointed or even disillusioned by the company's disregard for the environment.
- If Eco Team Pvt Ltd doesn't manage the number of participants in each expedition, popular destinations might become overcrowded, negatively impacting the quality of the experience for customers who seek solitude and authentic connections with nature.
- If the company doesn't address the carbon footprint of their operations, customers who are conscious of their environmental impact might be deterred from participating in expeditions due to concerns about their own contribution to climate change.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

3.2.1 Positive

- Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd often foster a sense of purpose and pride among their employees, who feel they are contributing to a greater cause. These companies may also offer a healthier and more sustainable work environment to their employees, which could improve higher job satisfaction.
- Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd provides environmentally friendly products or services, which can appeal to environmentally conscious customers. Customers that use eco-friendly items may experience enhanced health and wellbeing as a result of such offerings.
- As sustainable practices and goods gain market value, Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd investors may profit from the possibility of long-term growth. However, because of the emphasis on environmentally friendly technologies and practices, they might also have to pay greater initial investment expenses.
- Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd often has a positive impact on the local community by promoting sustainable practices and supporting local initiatives. They might also boost quality of life and open up job opportunities, which would help the economy grow.

- Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd aligns with government goals for environmental protection and sustainability. This can lead to support through grants, incentives, or tax breaks, but they may also face stricter regulations to ensure compliance with environmental standards.

3.2.2 Negative

- One negative impact of Eco Team is that this organization improves with time and many employees work in it. This can be a disturbance to the local community. There are obstacles to carry out their day-to-day work properly.
- Eco Team Yala uses natural resources. They allow tourists to experience the unique natural resources of Yala. When the consumption of these natural resources increases, they can be damaged. Then the government has to bear a separate cost to preserve these natural resources. This has a negative impact on the government. Because the government loses the opportunity to use those funds for something else.
- Eco Team Yala provide camping experience for tourists. Because of this, this can have a negative impact on the competitors around here because Eco Team provide their guests with safari packages to glamping under the stars with a guided night walk, bonifire, treasure hunt games for children, a family, safari adventures etc. Because of this, Eco Team can make many guests attractive and it has a negative impact on competitors. Due to that, their business is decreasing. This can be taken as a negative impact.

3.3 Impact for the environment

3.3.1 Positive

- Eco Team prioritizes preserving fauna and flora, educating their staff and customers about environmental conservation, and minimizing the use of non-biodegradable items and adopting environmentally friendly waste management practices.
- For water conservation, they ensure safe drinking water for customers and employees while monitoring and reducing water wastage. They also focus on finding effective methods for wastewater management.
- Eco Team seeks continuous improvement in energy-related performance and aims for carbon neutrality in their accommodation services.
- They monitor and measure energy consumption to minimize wastage and promote the use of sustainable energy sources.
- Employees and customers are actively involved and informed about energy-related matters and the company's energy management programs.

- Eco Team Pvt Ltd strives to have a positive impact on nature and promote responsible tourism experiences and wilderness accommodations that benefit both humans and elephants, while ensuring the well-being of habitats for a long-lasting solution to the Human Elephant Conflict in the Buttala Divisional Secretariat – Konketiya Village of Sri Lanka

3.3.2 Negative

- Support vehicles, accommodations, or transportation for participants are not chosen with environmental impact in mind, they could contribute to carbon emissions.
- Wildlife tours and treks could potentially disturb local habitats and wildlife, especially if not conducted responsibly or if participants stray from designated paths.
- The increased number of tourists are led to increased waste generation, especially in remote or natural areas where waste disposal systems might be inadequate.
- Water-based activities are led to pollution of water bodies if waste and chemicals from these activities are not managed properly.
- Expanding tourism is lead to increased infrastructure development, potentially causing habitat loss, deforestation, and disruption of local ecosystems

3.4 Impact for the company

3.4.1 Positive

- The Company can positively impact the environment by promoting and implementing eco-friendly initiatives, reducing its carbon footprint, and supporting conservation efforts in the Yala region.
- Depending on the size and nature of the company, Eco Team Pvt Ltd could contribute to the local economy by providing jobs and generating income for people in the area. They may also engage in responsible tourism, which can bring in revenue through sustainable tourism practices that support local communities and protect the natural environment.
- Yala is known for its wildlife and natural beauty, especially the Yala National Park, which is home to various species including the Sri Lankan Leopard. Eco Team Pvt Ltd By engaging in ecotourism and wildlife conservation efforts they can play an important role in preserving the biodiversity of the area.
- Eco Team (Pvt) Ltd company is actively involved in community development projects, education, or healthcare initiatives, which can actually positively affect the well-being of the local population.

3.4.2 Negative

- Eco Team company and its industrial activities sometimes destroy natural habitats, threatening wildlife and biodiversity.
- Industries often consume finite resources rapidly, leading to scarcity and environmental degradation. Since this company is mainly using natural resources, this can identify as a negative impact of the company.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

3.5.1 Positive

- The Eco Team’s tourism concept aids in gaining a solid understanding of sustainable wildlife tourism practices for the case analysis group.
- Furthermore, the approach raises awareness about how to achieve success with sustainability.
- This tourism idea assists in identifying the need for further enhancement in sections or gaps, as well as in initiating further research.
- It also aids in the identification of new job prospects, training and development programs, and other learning opportunities.

3.5.2 Negative

- Case analysers experience challenges with obtaining precise information due to a shortage of skilled and informed staff.
- They are more likely to share positive details than negative ones. As a result, it makes detecting gaps more complicated.
- Due to rules, immediate feedback from in-house visitors was problematic.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

When it comes to the case of new initiatives and sustainability at Eco Team – Yala, it is Wildlife tourism and Experiential travel. Especially, Wildlife tourism is familiar to the market but in collaboration with wildlife experiential travel is not that familiar to the market. That is the area Eco Team identified in the market and they try to cater to this segment. Also, they practice sustainable and responsible tourism within the location, and it was clear when observing the location. Also, there are some areas for improvement regarding this case. There are limited sanitary facilities at the Yala Eco Team location. Only provided sanitary facilities for the camping tents and

accommodation. The recommendation is to build sanitary facilities in open spaces for easiness for the guests. Overall, 95% success they reached from this initiative as well as 5% of the remaining, needs to be successful by improving problem areas.

Figure 16: Photo Gallery



Photo Credit – SSU Unit, UWU

CASE STUDY 33

Tea Tourism and Sustainability: A Case Study of Heritage Tea Factory Hotel, Sri Lanka

*A.K.R.Y. Allewela, R.A.U. Piumanthi, B.D.S.H. Dharmasena,
M.K.E.A. Alwish, I. Gnanasegaram and J.P.R.C. Ranasinghe*

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

The only factory in Sri Lanka that has been transformed into a hotel with a distinctive concept is Heritance Tea Factory Hotel. The hotel is tucked away among verdant tea estates, surrounded by nature. Visitors can experience the allure of a Colonial-era tea industry while luxuriating in contemporary conveniences, breath-taking views, and the finest Ceylon tea. This is located in Kandapola, Nuwara Eliya, the beautiful hill country of Sri Lanka. The Heritance Tea Factory Hotel in Nuwara Eliya has a colonial past that extends to the nineteenth century. Hethersett Tea factory was located here before the hotel was built. In the middle of 1930, the hotel's structure was constructed as a tea factory. The Tea Factory Hotel is located on the Hethersett Estate, which was purchased by Aitken Spence in 1992. Aitken Spence PLC is a conglomerate of businesses with more than 150 years of history. It operates in four industries and there are 16 business sectors under that four industries. Mr. G.C. Wickremasinghe assumed management of these plantations, since he was the director with planting experience on the main board of Aitken Spence, the proposal to turn the Hethersett Tea Factory into a hotel was originated by Mr. G.C. Wickremasinghe. Aitken Spence PLC presently owns the Heritance Tea Factory Hotel, which it operates as a 5-star hotel under the Heritance brand name.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: A heritage of tea at the highest elevation, offering an experience of nature, adventure, tea culture and fine cuisine with friendly service to the discerning traveller

Mission: To provide a unique tea experience to the discerning traveller to enhance shareholder value through maximum utilization of resources to maintain sound business relations with suppliers in order to maximize benefits to develop human resources for the benefit of the community.

1.3 Products/services

As a hotel, Heritance Tea Factory Hotel's the main service they provide is accommodation. But there are more products and services they provide

1.3.1 Accommodation

In Heritance Tea Factory Hotel there are 50 rooms.

Table 1: Rooms at Heritance Tea Factory Hotel

Room category	No of rooms	Size (m2)	The view
superior rooms	35	210	view of tea plantation
Executive floor deluxe rooms	10	210	view of tea covered mountains
Premium rooms	03	345	view of tea plantation
junior suite room	01	497	viewing to tea plantation
flower dew suite room	01	750	Panoramic view of Ragala and the Randenigala reservoir.

1.3.2 Restaurants and bars

Table 2: Restaurants and Bars at Heritance Tea Factory Hotel

Restaurant and bar	Facts
Kenmare restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main restaurant of Heritance Tea Factory Hotel Offer local and international cuisine 110 pax This is operating for breakfast, lunch and dinner buffet and has a la carte operation also. <p>The location was the former sitting room of the old tea factory.</p>
TCK 6685 restaurant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first fine dining railway carriage restaurant in Sri Lanka operate only for dinner seating 16 pax The name of this restaurant is taken from the number of railway carriage which was running In Kelaniweli route which used for this restaurant
Hethersett bar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> bar and lounge in Heritance Tea Factory Hotel capacity of 60 pax Available beverages and snacks The old tea factory name is used for this bar
Goatfell bar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unique bar that is in this hotel tea bar that customer can choose varieties of tea

Garden Breakfast: This also one service Heritance Tea Factory Hotel provide for their guests to take experience breakfast with morning mist and the beautiful surrounding of flower dew cottage.

1.3.3 Spa

The spa gives Ayurveda treatment, beauty and wellness treatments under different packages.

1.3.4 Other experiences

Table 3: Services and Experiences at Heritance Tea Factory Hotel

Activities	Facts
Ella Tour	This is a day tour for Ella to visit Nine archer bridge, Little Adam's peak and Ravana waterfall for people who like adventure
Excursion tour : Horton plains	This is a tour for Horton plains national park
Kandapola high tea	Heritance Tea Factory Hotel gives high tea experience for their guest with sweet and savory and the tea which are made from their own Kandapola tea factory.
Cycling in Nuwara Eliya	Cycling through the tea plantation give unique experience for guests
Tea plucking	Another significant experience that guests can take away from the Heritance Tea Factory Hotel is tea plucking. The guests are dressed in formal attire and given a basket to collect leaves. The professional tea pluckers assistant guest plucks tea leaves. After tea plucking, guests are taken into a mini tea factory to engage in the tea-making process in the factory and make their own tea.
Walk in nature	This is a trekking to Kurawatta forest reserve .
Tea tasting	This give chance to taste the variety of tea samples with the guide of tea taster.

- Transportation
- Sports and games

1.4 Target market(s)

- High end customers: According to the discussion we had with Heritance Tea Factory Hotel, they mainly target high-end customers for their hotel. As this hotel has a small number of rooms, the room rates are high, and the experiences they get also add to their accounts. So, they target high-end guests. They also target high-end foreign tourists, especially the European market.

- The people who are interest in tea Tourism: Also, Heritance Tea Factory Hotels target people who are interested in tea tourism by offering experiences such as Tea tasting, Tea plucking activities, and cycling through tea plantations. The guest can get knowledge about the entire tea process activity, from tea plucking to tasting tea, through engagement in this process. Also, guests can get knowledge about tea plantations as there are experts. The location also benefits from them, as this hotel is an old tea factory converted into a hotel surrounding a tea plantation.

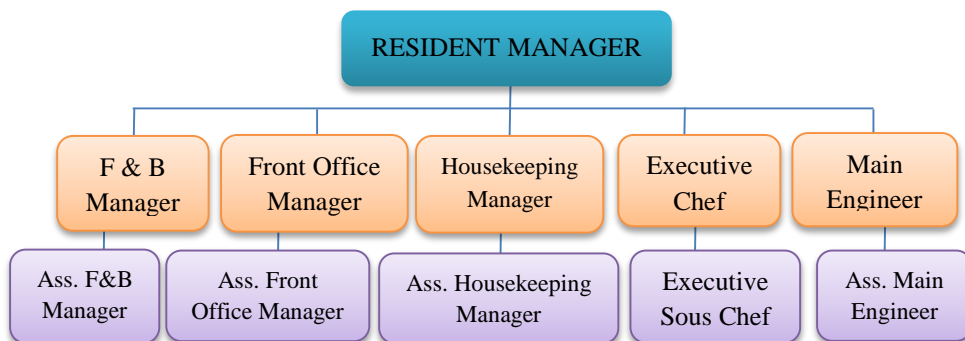
1.5 Organization and management

The arrangement of a company or any other type of organization in terms of hierarchy, responsibilities, roles and relationships between employees, departments and divisions is referred to as its organizational structure. It defines how information is exchanged, choices are taken and work is structured within the organization. There are numerous typical types of organizational structures such as

Divisional Structure, Functional Structure, Hierarchical or Tall Structure, Team-Based Structure etc. The Heritance Tea Factory Hotel organization follows the Tall organizational hierarchy Structure. This structure resembles a traditional pyramid, with several tiers of management and distinct lines of authority. Information is shared from top to bottom, and top-down decision-making is typical.

There have over 50 + employees working in hotel premises. The main responsible person of this organization is Resident Manager. It's quite different from others. Under resident manager there have mainly six departments. They are Front office department, Kitchen department, Food and Beverage department, Housekeeping, Human Resource and Finance department and Maintenance department.

Figure 1: Organization



1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

Cost structure mainly divided to two categories.

1.6.1 Fixed costs

Property and building costs: Costs associated with the physical property, mortgage payments, property taxes, and insurance, are included in this.

Salaries and benefits: For hotels, staff salaries, wages, and employee benefits represent this fixed expense.

Utilities and maintenance: Charges for the building's ongoing upkeep as well as for electricity, water, heating, and cooling.

Depreciation: The gradual decline in asset value over time experienced by the hotel.

1.6.2 Variable expenses

Operational costs: These cover expenses for running the hotel on a daily basis, such as housekeeping, front desk work, food and beverage delivery, and security.

Food and beverage costs: Costs related to buying and preparing food and drinks for visitors etc.

Costs associated with providing amenities like towels, toiletries, and linens for guests and supplies for cleaning and laundry, as well as the cost of laundering clothes.

1.6.3 Revenue streams

Room revenue: The majority of hotels rely primarily on the revenue from the rental of guest rooms. Average Daily Rate (ADR): This average revenue made per room that is occupied. Revenue from offerings like spa services, fitness centres, and wellness initiatives. Revenue from on-site dining, room service, and banquets that is related to food and beverages. Revenue from eateries and bars that are owned by hotels, as well as from cafes and lounges. Revenue from providing food and drinks to hotel rooms through room service. Profits from holding gatherings like weddings, conferences, and other event

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Heritage Tea Factory Hotel implemented new sustainable practices around them in order to overcome from the below challenges.

- **Energy saving:** focusing on reducing energy consumption in the hotel.

- **Reduction of CO₂ emission:** this practice comes along with energy saving. Here they are focusing on reducing the pollution that their activities produce. For example- reduce using petrol, coal.
- **Waste management:** focusing on reducing the amount of waste produce and value addition
- **Water usage and recycling:** focusing on minimizing the waste and maximizing the reuse of water.

2.2 The business/project idea

Heritage Tea Factory Hotel has implemented sustainable concepts in order to overcome the energy saving challenge. As solutions, they came up with Biomass Gasifier and Heat pumps, awareness raising and team member training, applying energy saving practices at the hotel premises.

When it considers about the biomass gasifier, it mainly reduces the usage of diesel for the boiler. According to their reports they were able to save over Rs. 28,464,402.00 up to March 2021 since October 2007. With the heat pumps they were succeeded to save 100 liters of diesel per day on the boiler which provides hot water to the hotel. Moreover, the hotel uses LED and low energy lighting, timer control lights synchronized with daylight. For the awareness about energy saving, they have switch off policy, training session on energy saving and display notices of reminding power saving.

To overcome from reducing CO₂ emission from their activities produce, they use less polluting systems which contribute to the carbon footprint, support solid waste recycling and using less polluting machines in the hotel. Also the gasifier which has the green apple certification can consider as a successful step that was taken to reduce emitting gases to the air.

As a well-known sustainable concept, the hotel practices in waste management. To add a value to the waste, the hotel processed under the 7R concept. The waste is collected separately which has standard color codes for waste bins. And to reduce the usage of plastics bottles, they replaced them with the glass bottles which can re-use. Encourage guests to avoid wasting food, having training sessions for recycling and waste management, having rules and regulations for disposing chemical waste, paint, solvent and light batteries are some sustainability measures that Heritage Tea Factory applied in waste management. Additionally, they have a compost unit which is processed by using waste. They produce packaging, papers by using waste materials.

Conservation the water resource is another challenge that Heritage Tea Factory Hotel faced. Therefore, they have stated to develop the best sustainable way to minimize water wastage and to maximize its reuse through the water saving and recycling systems

in their activities produced. Some sustainable measures of relating water saving are, re-using of waste water: 80% of the waste of is recycled and is reused on hotel's gardens and lawns, efficient showers and basins with flow reducers and timers, building a tank which can hold 100000 litres of rainwater, dual flush buttons in bathroom fittings also some Periodical inspections of machinery and water distribution devices to prevent leaks and water loss. This year the hotel has planned to implement solar panels as a new sustainable project in order to save electricity usage.

2.3 External analysis

2.3.1 Opportunities

Nowadays Sustainability practices are very common in society. Due to that, demand for eco-friendly and sustainable tourism are high. Most of people are following it. Because of that sustainability practices are key point for the hotel.

From the beginning this hotel was a tea factory, and this is the first ever factory that transfer to the hotel. So basically, the experiences I here is unique than the other hotels in the country. There is a rapidly growth on tourism in these days. Attracting guests to experience tea themed activities, enhancing the revenue and brand recognition for the hotel. Culinary tourism boosts heritage the factory hotel by showcasing unique tea-based experience and local flavours, attracting discerning travellers.

2.3.2 Threats

- Rising rivals pose risk to Heritage Tea Factory Hotel's market share, impacting its unique appeal and customer base.
- Fluctuations in tourism industry due to external factors such as economic downturns, natural disasters, terrorist attack.
- Consumer behaviours are always changing and also the travel trends will change in time to time. These things can't handle. That will negatively be affected to the hotel.
- Regulatory changes could impact Heritage Tea Factory Hotel's operations, compliance, cost, and guest experience, requiring adjustments.

2.4 Internal analysis

2.4.1 Strength

- Heritage tea factory is situated in amidst the picturesque landscapes of srilanka's tea plantations providing guests. With unique and serene environment.

- The hotel's conversion from a 19th century tea factory preserves its historical architectures and offers guests a chance to experience a blend of heritage and modern amenities.
- Guest immerse themselves in the local culture through guided tea plantation tours and insight into the tea making process
- The limited number of rooms create an intimate and exclusive atmosphere, enhancing personalized service and guest comfort.

2.4.2 weaknesses

- The unique and exclusive setting may lead to higher pricing, making it less accessible to budget –conscious travellers.
- Being a heritage property, maintenance and up keep of the historic structure may require ongoing efforts and investments.
- While the hotel focuses on tranquillity some guests might desire more entertainment options or recreational activities
- As they focus only on the high-end customers, they miss other type of customers. because of the size of the target market it will affect to the popularity and the income sources.

2.5 Activities

These are the main activities that needed in some of the sustainable practices.

- To operate the biomass gasifier, they have selected good suppliers to get wood, the main raw material that needed to start the operation. They mainly use gliricidia, Ipil Ipil and cinnamon.
- maintain, checking and repair biomass gasifier and heat pump once a month.
- displaying small notices on public area and rooms reminding saving electricity.
- checking on the waste management unit and getting degradable waste from the kitchen and restaurant for the compost making process.
- selecting high quality supplies for the hotel operation. For example – eco-friendly detergents.

2.6 Stakeholders

Stakeholders are the people have interest about the business. It can be positive or negative, from the hotel's aspect the first category is Guests of the hotel. They are the most important stakeholders to the hotel.

Employees of the hotel are another category of stakeholder. To run the hotel operation smoothly, key part is hotel employees.

Local community of the hotel. This category can be a stake holder through employment opportunities, cultural engagement, supporting local business and sharing resources for mutual benefits.

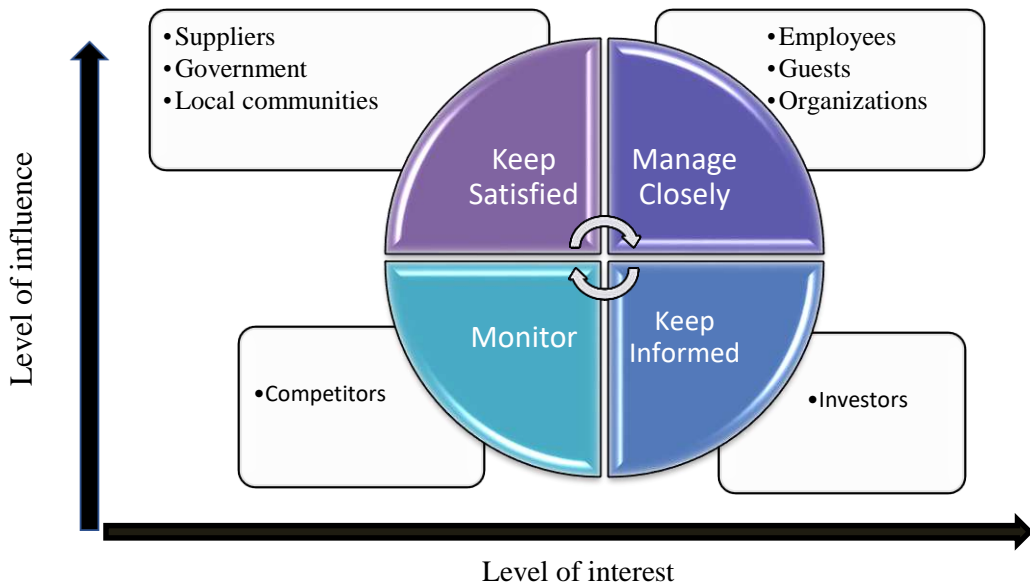
Local suppliers are vital stakeholders for hesitance Tea Factory Hotel, providing resources, products and fostering community relationships for sustainable success.

Service suppliers play a crucial role as stakeholders in the Heritage Tea Factory Hotel, providing essential goods and services that contribute to guest experience and operational efficiency. Their reliability and quality directly influence the hotel’s reputation and profitability.

Government organizations are also a stakeholder who are receiving taxes from the hotel.

Travel Agencies are interested about the hotel because they can have more business contracts.

Figure 2: Stakeholder Mapping



2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

Target market: When consider about the Heritance Tea Factory Hotel's target market, they mainly focus about the high-end customers. Most of their customers are repeat guests. From the local aspect they also target the local high-end customers.

Local communities: local community receives many benefits from the hotel. Specially they are conducting CSR projects for example annual donations, child development projects. And also they offer job opportunities for the community. According to their records more than 70% of staff members are residents. Moreover, the community gets electricity, access to road and water because of the hotel's impact.

Government: government is a main beneficiary of the Heritance Tea Factory Hotel. They receive income from the arrivals of foreign guests to Sri Lanka. Also the hotel pays taxes on time to the government.

Aitken spence hotels: this is the mother company of Heritance Tea Factory. It receives revenue from the hotel.

2.8 Partners

Heritance Tea Factory didn't have any partnership with other companies

2.9 Finances

They receive funds for the sustainability development from Aitken Spence Hotels, their mother company.

2.10 Human resources

They have a particular team for the sustainability development in the hotel consist of president and advisory committee.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

All the marketing and communication activities are done through the mother company of the Heritance Tea Factory Hotel. They promote their brand trough platforms like booking.com, trip Advisor and also through their hotel's website

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

The Heritance Tea Factory in Sri Lanka stands as a beacon of sustainability, leaving a profound impact on its target market. By weaving eco-friendly practices into

its operations, the hotel not only captures the hearts of conscious travellers but also sets a precedent for responsible tourism. Tourists seeking immersive experiences that align with their values are drawn to the hotel's commitment to energy efficiency, waste reduction, and community support. This distinct focus enhances the hotel's appeal, attracting a niche market of environmentally mindful visitors who appreciate the authentic and responsible approach to hospitality.

Moreover, the ripple effects of the Heritage Tea Factory's sustainability efforts extend beyond its doors. By showcasing successful sustainable practices, the hotel inspires other businesses in the region to follow suit, catalysing a broader movement toward environmental responsibility and fostering a more resilient local economy.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

The Heritage Tea Factory in Sri Lanka places a strong emphasis on sustainability, with a range of stakeholders playing pivotal roles in its impact. The local community benefits from increased economic opportunities through employment and engagement in various tea-related activities. The factory's commitment to sustainable practices contributes to the region's environmental well-being by promoting responsible land use, water conservation, and waste reduction. Additionally, the engagement of tourists not only supports the factory's operations but also raises awareness about sustainable practices and local culture, positively influencing the broader community.

Overall, the Heritage Tea Factory's sustainability engages stakeholders in a balanced way, fostering economic growth while preserving local heritage and environmental integrity.

3.3 Impact for the environment

The Heritage tea factory contributes positively to Sri Lanka's sustainability efforts through measures such as water management, biodiversity conservation, carbon footprint reduction, soil health, waste reduction and environmental protection.

- **Water Management:** Reduces water consumption and pollution of local water resources by implementing efficient water use and waste management practices.
- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Maintaining biodiversity in a tea garden protects local flora and fauna by conserving natural habitats and reducing the use of harmful pesticides.
- **Carbon Footprint Reduction:** Adopting renewable energy sources and reducing carbon emissions in the manufacturing process can contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of the industry.

- **Soil health:** Using sustainable agricultural practices to maintain soil health and prevent soil erosion ensures the long-term productivity of a tea garden.
- **Waste reduction:** Implementing recycling and waste reduction strategies reduce the impact of waste generated during the tea production process.
- **Environmental Protection:** Protecting nearby ecosystems and water bodies from pollution and runoff will positively impact the local environment.

By addressing these environmental impacts, Heritance Tea Factory contributes to the conservation of Sri Lanka's natural resources and biodiversity and to maintaining its economic viability.

3.4 Impact for the company

The sustainability efforts undertaken by Sri Lanka's Heritance Tea Factory have multiple organizational implications. By prioritizing responsible practices such as ethical sourcing, fair labour conditions and social engagement, the company enhances its reputation and brand value. Consumers are increasingly attracted to businesses that prioritize sustainability, leading to increased customer loyalty and market competitiveness.

Also, incorporating sustainable strategies can result in cost savings through reduced resource consumption and waste management. This financial capability can boost the company's bottom line and create a competitive advantage in the industry. Therefore, the positive company impacts of embracing sustainability in the Heritance tea factory include enhanced brand value, financial stability and strengthened market position.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The Heritance Tea Factory in Sri Lanka operates with its Centre of Excellence (CoE) Sustainability, which can include a range of positive impacts. These include initiatives to reduce carbon emissions, implement environmentally friendly agricultural practices, promote biodiversity conservation, engage with local communities and support fair labour practices. The CoE will contribute to the adoption of sustainable technologies, waste reduction and resource efficiency, and improve the overall well-being of the environment and surrounding communities.

Annexures

Figure 3: Photo Gallery



CASE STUDY 34

Sustainable Whale Watching in Sri Lanka: A Case Study on Sayuri Whale Watching

Weerabandhu, W.T.A., Bandara, P.A.U.S., Prabodima, P.G.D., Rathnayake, R.M.U.K., Epitawala, E.A.M.I. and Nawarathna, A.M.D.B.

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

The case study in the context of innovative tourism initiatives leads us to the lovely island nation of Sri Lanka which is known for its beautiful coastline and diverse marine life. And Sri Lanka is famous for the marvellous whale sightings seen around its oceans surrounded. All of these facts creates a great setting for this case study aimed at the sustainability of the whale watching industry its potential to elevate the country's economy.

“Sayuri Whale Watching Private Limited” is a well-known whale-watching enterprise in Sri Lanka. Established in the year 2012, “Sayuri” is situated in the coastal town of Mirissa, which lies along Sri Lanka's southern shores. Mirissa, with its tranquil beaches and warm waters, has gradually evolved into a hotspot for marine-based tourism activities.

Currently boasting a fleet of two boats they revolves around collaboration with travel agencies. By partnering with agencies, the company taps into a wider network of potential customers, both domestic and international.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision: To lead in sustainable marine tourism, offering extraordinary whale watching experiences.

Mission: Our mission is to create unforgettable connections between humans and the marine world while upholding the principles of sustainability and conservation. Through our exceptional whale watching services, we aim to grow as a respected industry leader, nurturing enduring customer relationships, and promoting the preservation of marine ecosystems for future generations.

1.3 Products/services

Sayuri, a whale watching service provider, will provide a range of products and services to tourists interested in experiencing the unique opportunity to observe whales in their natural habitat. Some of the main products/services they offer are :

Whale watching tours: The primary service they provide is the guided whale watching tour. These tours take tourists out to sea on whale-watching boats. The institute's knowledgeable guides accompany tourists to provide insights into whales and the marine ecosystem. Additionally Sayuri Whale Watching provides on-board snacks, refreshments and breakfast for tourists during the whale watching cruise. This is actually an industry standard.

1.4 Target market(s)

Mirissa is one of the best locations for whale watching in Sri Lanka. However basically the tourists who visit Mirissa to see whales are usually the target market. They include both local and foreign tourists. However, as compared to the number of tourists visiting other down south locations, Mirissa has a lower capacity because except for whale watching, Mirissa has no other activities or developed tourism attraction. Therefore, Whale watching tour operators in Mirissa have to put a little effort to attract tourists to the destination. Because of that, Mr. Prabhanath, always keep his antenna tuned to the tour operators and travel agencies, to get a flock of tourists on board.

1.5 Organization and management

Sayuri Whale Watching PVT. LTD. is a small scale company and therefore they do not have a very well organized organizational structure. But, according to Mr. Prabhanath he is the Chief Manager who primarily deals with tour operators and who does the managing part, and they have four other captains for boat operating and seven other helpers including a chef.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

1.6.1 Cost structure

- 1. Boats and equipment:** The initial cost of starting Sayuri Whale Watching PVT LTD was to purchase suitable boats for whale watching. Boats should be equipped with safety gear, communication devices and viewing platforms to ensure a comfortable and safe experience for tourists.
- 2. Staff and guides:** Recruiting and training experienced guides and staff members with knowledge of whales, marine life and safety protocols is essential. Salaries for crew, including captains, guides and customer service personnel, are a significant part of the cost structure.

3. **Operating expenses:** Includes various day-to-day operating expenses for boats such as fuel, maintenance and repair expenses, and utilities. Also food ingredients are purchased on a daily basis.
4. **Marketing and advertising:** Basically this is discounts and commissions for the travel agencies, transportation costs and telecommunication charges.
5. **Permits and permits:** It is essential to obtain the necessary permits and licenses from the relevant authorities (from the government) to conduct whale watching tours. This includes paying fees and meeting regulatory requirements.
6. **Training and sustainability initiatives:** As previously mentioned, the agency incurs costs in educating staff and implementing sustainability initiatives to promote responsible whaling practices.
7. **Taxes:** Per each tourist they have to pay a tax daily to the Wildlife department.
8. **Repair and maintenance:** Repairing boats usually cost a lot since needed materials are not available.

1.6.2 Sources of income

1. **Whale watching tour tickets:** The primary source of income is selling tickets for whale watching tours. 4000 rupees are charged from Sri Lankans and 12,000 rupees from foreigners.
2. **Seasonal variations:** Certain times of the year attract more tourists interested in whale watching, revenue streams fluctuate due to seasonal demand.

1.7 Other information

It's essential to remember that Mirissa's current infrastructure facilities are relatively minimal, with even basic amenities like proper toilets being insufficient. This existing infrastructure shortcoming emphasizes a critical problem that requires attention and development. Improving infrastructure, especially facilities such as public restrooms, is critical not just for tourist convenience and comfort, but also for the general growth and sustainability of the area's tourism business. Mirissa can create a friendlier environment for guests and ultimately increase its tourism potential by resolving these issues and investing in better infrastructure. It's important to realize that Mirissa's current infrastructure is relatively limited, with even basic conveniences like adequate toilets lacking. This present infrastructure deficiency highlights a crucial issue that requires attention and growth. Improving infrastructure, particularly public restrooms, is crucial not just for tourist convenience and comfort, but also for the overall growth and sustainability of the area's tourism industry. By correcting these challenges and investing in better infrastructure, Mirissa can create a more welcoming environment for visitors and, as a result, increase its tourist potential.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

We were able to identify a few challenges faced by whale watching businesses based on our research. A major challenge is the decrease of marine biodiversity. Mr. Prabhanath established the Sayuri Whale Watching Company in 2012, and the whales that were present when Mr. Prabhanath started the company are no longer visible, in his experience. The decrease in whale population is believed to be caused by boat operators' unsafety tourism practices. Further some boat operators do not adhere to some of the rules imposed by the government.

Although the government has taxed whale watching companies to protect the whales, the government has not yet implemented any program to preserve the whales. Additionally, the Mirissa Sea is surrounded by an international shipping line, which means that ships frequently pass through it. We believe that this is one of the causes of the current decline in the whale population.

Threats affecting whales and marine ecosystems if not adequately controlled, whale watching activities have the potential to disrupt the natural behavior of whales and other marine animals. When exposed to regular boat traffic and noise pollution, whales can become stressed, have communication problems, change their migration patterns, and even collide with boats.

Furthermore, poor waste management and boat emissions can lead to water pollution and endanger marine biodiversity. Mr. Prabhanath said that in the last period of 2012 and 2013, whales would come back without being able to see them for about 6 months. But today tourists are not able to see whales 5 or 6 days a month. Many whales appear to be in distress.

Due to these reasons, when the number of whales in the sea around Mirissa decreases, the arrival of local and foreign tourists also decreases. Therefore the company is unable to operate the boats and the sustainability of the company gradually decreases.

2.2 The business/project idea

Whale watching is an important tourism activity in many coastal regions, including Mirissa. Apart from whale watching, Mirissa can further increase its tourist attraction if people can do other recreational activities. The revenue of Mirissa will rise along with the number of tourists if the tourism attraction is enhanced in the future by giving tourists greater facilities and the below-mentioned recreational activities.

1. In some countries provide the experience with swimming the whales and dolphins.

In here many people get the experience and some of people are like to do that. But in Sri Lanka there is no that kind of facility and for that reason some of tourists such as Chinese people not satisfy with the service in Sri Lanka. But most of animal lovers and the people who love to care those animals and thing, actually they don't like to go near to the whales also. They like to see the whale in such kind of distance, because they think when the boats near to the animal, it is not comfortable and not good for the animals. But in other hand in Wild life Enthusiasts, Scuba Divers and Snorkelers, Adventure Seekers, Nature Photographers and also Eco-Tourists are wish to swim with whales but as an industry Sri Lanka can't provide that experience.

2. Sustainable practices could be applied creating job opportunities.

In the whale watching industry "Going Green" is hardly possible. But still the industry can initiate various actions to protect and minimize negative impacts on natural environment. Mainly by properly disposing operational waste which are fiberglass, plastic, regiform and nylon. In the Mirissa fishing harbor this was not in practice. Mr. Prabhanath said even though they inform urban council to collect that disposal, they intentionally avoid that and also the boat operators do not urge to take any action to remove those disposal. On that note, we are suggesting to establish a proper mechanism to collect disposing fiberglass and grind up into very small particles converting it to a powder and use to make thermoforming molds or other structures. Also we can grind up into small pieces for about 2 cm squares and use as fuel for concrete furnace. This will minimize the final wastage by reversing the logistics.

3. Diversification of offerings

Expand the industry with adding various types of eco-friendly activities such as bird-watching, coastal tours, and visits to marine conservation centers. In Mirissa area, tourists can go to Koggala forest area, Kanneliya forest reserve for watching birds. Yala National Park and Bundala National Park are not far from Mirissa and offer opportunities to learn about marine conservation as well as terrestrial wildlife. Visit nearby sea turtle conservation projects, such as the Kosgoda Sea Turtle Conservation Project, where you can observe efforts to protect and rehabilitate sea turtles. Those type of diversification we can expand the industry.

2.3 External analysis

Political factors: Sayuri Whale Watching Private Limited follows government regulations that govern the tourism industry and protect marine habitats. Compliance with these regulations is critical to the company's operations. It is critical that they obtain the proper permits and licenses to ensure the validity of their whale watching

tours. Furthermore, the government's engagement in conservation and protection measures has a direct impact on whale population health. Supportive policies that support sustainable practices can help to a company's long-term prosperity, whereas ineffective enforcement might have severe environmental implications.

Economic factors: Sayuri Whale Watching's performance is heavily influenced by the economic situation. Domestic and international economic fluctuations might have an impact on the demand for leisure activities such as whale watching. Increased disposable income during periods of economic growth can translate to larger tourism numbers, but economic downturns may result in decreased travel and leisure spending. Furthermore, exchange rate fluctuations influence international tourism. A good exchange rate might make tours more desirable, whilst an unfavorable one may repel potential visitors.

Social factors: Sayuri Whale Watching's offerings are intended to meet the needs of a wide range of tourists. While some people want the thrill of swimming with whales, others choose to observe them from a safe distance in order to protect the creatures' well-being. Maintaining a positive reputation and attracting a diverse group of guests requires striking a balance between adventure and appropriate wildlife contact.

Technological factors: The use of technology is critical to the success of Sayuri Whale Watching. During tours, cutting-edge communication technology enable effective coordination and safety, enriching the whole experience. By embracing technology improvements for environmental monitoring, the organization is able to collect real-time data on marine ecosystems and whale behavior. This knowledge not only enhances travelers' educational experiences, but it also contributes to the region's continuing conservation efforts. But since all the whale watching service providers in the area is small scale, they do not have a feasibility to afford such tech. Here government, should take the initiative to incorporate such technology. As Mr. Prabhanath also mentioned, if Coast Guard could inform them the daily whale habiting areas, it is easier for both boat operators and on the other hand tourists also will be satisfied.

Environmental factors: Mirissa's marine biodiversity has a direct impact on the success of Sayuri Whale Watching. Boat traffic pollution and noise can have a negative impact on marine life, especially whales. The boat operators' commitment to responsible practices and reducing its ecological footprint helps to ensure the survival of these species. Therefore adhearncce to rules and regulations is a must. Also Disposing repair materials in a proper way is also a must.

Legal factors: Sayuri Whale Watching occurs under the legal framework of wildlife conservation regulations. Compliance with these laws is mandatory, as the

corporation must ensure that its operations do not affect marine life. The acquisition of whale watching permits and licenses displays a dedication to both legal compliance and environmental responsibility. Furthermore, conforming to legislation that require environmental impact studies for expansion or new initiatives demonstrates the company's commitment to long-term growth and its part in conserving the maritime ecosystem.

2.4 Internal analysis

We were able to identify some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Sayuri Whale Watching Company.

2.4.1 Strengths

There are several strengths of this company has in whale watching in Mirissa. Among them, We identified the main strength of Sayuri Whale Watching as having better management than other companies. Mr. Prabhanath, who has excellent management skills, is the owner of this company and has a group of talented and reliable workers. Further they give good service to their customers. This company is manned with experienced and knowledgeable boat operators who are familiar with marine life. Their knowledge guarantees tourists a respectful and safe whale watching experience while minimising animal disturbance.

2.4.2 Weaknesses

We identified financial problems as the main weakness of this company. Despite the significant revenue from whale watching, there are high taxation and boat maintenance costs. Due to the government's regulations on whale watching, the company is required to pay a high taxation to the wildlife department. It is a disadvantage for their business to have to travel at higher cost during the off seasons with less tourists. Some months there are no cruises without tourists. Thus, this company is lack of financial stability is considered as a weakness

2.5 Activities

Key activities required to implement sustainable tourism practices for this new initiatives are:

Planning and research: Conduct extensive research to learn about potential travellers' tastes and needs. Also we have to examine the viability of introducing additional recreational activities such as whale-watching, coastal tours, and visits to

conservation facilities. This will help figuring out needed infrastructure, resources, and laws related for each activity.

Participation of stakeholders: Collaborating with local communities, businesses, and government officials to obtain support and gather information is another major action that must be taken. Involve boat operators, wildlife experts, environmentalists, and local groups to ensure their expertise in creating and carrying out environmentally responsible activities.

Permits and regulations: Following these have to obtain the necessary licences and licenses from the appropriate authorities before beginning new activities such as swimming with whales or creating marine conservation centers. To avoid unwanted effects on the ecosystem, ensure that environmental legislation and norms are followed. Here Environmental Impact Assessment could be performed too.

Infrastructure development: Create the required infrastructure for new activities, such as specific locations for whale swimming, bird-watching platforms, and conservation centers. Upgrade existing waste management and disposal systems, including procedures for appropriately handling and recycling waste products.

Education and training: Provide responsible whale watching instruction to guides and personnel, emphasizing the necessity of keeping a safe distance from whales and adhering to ethical norms for animal observation. Educate travellers on the necessity of responsible wildlife engagement, environmental conservation, and sustainable tourism.

Promotion and marketing: Create a marketing strategy to promote the new activities and experiences. Emphasize the environmentally friendly character of these activities, as well as their good impact on the environment and local people.

Waste collection and recycling: Implement a waste management system that encourages the collection, separation, and correct disposal of garbage created by tourists and tourism-related activities. Form alliances with recycling facilities to assure the appropriate recycling of materials such as fiberglass, plastic, and nylon.

Evaluation and monitoring: Monitor the impact of new operations on the environment, local residents, and wildlife on a regular basis. Collect feedback from travellers to determine their level of satisfaction and areas for improvement.

Collaboration with environmental organizations: Collaborate with local and international conservation organizations to ensure that the new activities sustain local ecosystems while also fitting with conservation efforts. In order to create awareness about wildlife and habitat protection, combine educational components into the activities.

2.6 Stakeholders

1. In The Sri Lanka Coast Guard is in charge of enforcing maritime laws, guaranteeing marine safety, and preventing unlawful activity in Sri Lankan waterways. They play an important role in ensuring the safety and compliance of whale watching tours, particularly in terms of navigation and safety requirements.
2. The Sri Lanka Wildlife Department is in charge of conserving and protecting the country's wildlife and natural environments. They give permits and manage marine tourism activities such as whale watching. Their work is ensuring that businesses such as Sayuri Whale Watching operate in an environmentally appropriate manner, preventing disruption to marine life and ecosystems.
3. The Tourism Development Authority is responsible for promoting tourism and ensuring that tourist activities adhere to national norms and regulations. They seek to encourage responsible tourism growth and may engage with firms such as Sayuri Whale Watching to improve the tourism experience.
4. The local community in Mirissa is an important stakeholder because the operations of Sayuri Whale Watching have a direct impact on them. Positive relationships with the local community are critical to the company's reputation and long-term viability. Engaging with the community, creating job opportunities, and supporting local development initiatives can all help to create goodwill and collaboration.
5. As clients of Sayuri Whale Watching, tourists are a significant stakeholder. Their experiences and feedback have a direct impact on the company's performance. Meeting their expectations for a safe, instructive, and entertaining whale watching experience is essential for repeat business and favourable word-of-mouth referrals.
6. Environmental Organizations Play a Watchdog Role: Environmental organizations operate as watchdogs, advocating for sustainable and responsible tourism activities. They can work with firms like Sayuri Whale Watching to ensure that their activities are in line with conservation goals and provide feedback on best practices for minimizing ecological damage.
7. Local governments, including municipal councils and regional government officials, are in charge of overseeing various areas of tourism operations. They may issue licenses for onshore facilities, provide sanitation and waste management services, and contribute to the area's overall infrastructure and development.
8. Scientists and marine biologists and because of their knowledge in marine ecology and conservation, marine biologists and scientists play a vital role. They can give vital insights on best practices for wildlife interaction and educational content during whale watching cruises. The educational and conservation aspects of the excursions are enhanced through collaboration with scientists.

9. Other whale watching and tourism ventures in the region are stakeholders since they share the same customer base and compete for tourist attention. Sayuri Whale Watching can be inventive and sensitive to shifting demands by closely monitoring rivals' methods and market developments.

2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

The proposed initiatives and additions to Mirissa's tourism offers have the potential to benefit a wide range of stakeholders, adding to the region's tourism industry's overall growth and sustainability. These efforts aim to give exclusive experiences, promote sustainability, and expand the range of attractions beyond whale watching.

Tourists: Wildlife enthusiasts, scuba divers, snorkelers, adventure seekers, nature photographers, and eco-tourists will cherish the opportunity to swim with whales. This unique experience has the potential to attract a niche group of visitors and enhance their spending on local lodgings, food, transportation, and other services, so benefiting the local economy.

Environment: By appropriately disposing of operating waste, such as fiberglass, plastic, regiform, and nylon, these activities aid in pollution reduction and contribute to a healthier marine habitat. As a result, a cleaner and more ecologically friendly destination generates a more appealing community environment, which improves the quality of life for local residents.

Local community: Tourism diversification, such as bird-watching, coastal tours, and visits to marine conservation centers, benefits both tourists and the local population. Visitors will have a greater selection of eco-friendly activities to choose from, which will appeal to birdwatchers, environment enthusiasts, and those interested in protecting the oceans.

Economy: This diversification can lead to longer stays and repeat visits, ultimately boosting the local economy. Additionally, the expansion of eco-friendly activities creates job opportunities within the community, from guides to hospitality staff. This not only provides economic benefits but also encourages skill development and fosters a sense of engagement within the local population.

2.8 Partners

Sayuri Whale Watching Private Limited intends to work with a Sri Lankan Government authority, mainly Wild Life department and Sri Lanka Coast guard. Also have to partner with a variety of local partners, including housing facilities, tourist

attraction managers, transportation businesses, and bicycle repair/maintenance shops, and the local community to build the new sustainable tourism endeavour.

2.9 Finances

Because of the broad scope of the programs, state leadership is critical in their execution in Mirissa. Government funding is essential for infrastructure, waste management, training, conservation, marketing, and community engagement, assuring successful and environmentally sustainable tourism while coordinating with broader development goals.

2.10 Human resources

Although the execution of the new initiative/business on sustainable tourism is primarily concerned with transferring internal activities, certain initiatives will be required expertise that necessitated the use of specific human resources. Projects involving trash management, marine conservation, and eco-friendly activity supervision, for example, need skilled people ranging from expert to labor positions to ensure the successful implementation of these programs.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

The government would play a key role in communicating the new sustainable tourism program. They can use a multifaceted strategy, disseminating information through both online and physical venues. The government have to prioritize improving its online presence through official websites and social media platforms, making it easier to obtain itineraries and bookings. Offline initiatives could also include the distribution of educational leaflets at tourist offices and participation in major international tourism exhibitions.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

The idea has an added advantage for the tourists who are the target demographic. For example, it provides unusual and fascinating methods to explore the surrounding area, providing a new perspective on the site. Being connected to the environment not only enhances the entire tourism experience, but it also improves physical well-being through the use of biking. Tourists can now interact with the place in a sustainable and immersive way that corresponds to their passions and desire for responsible travel.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

The effort has a good impact on the many stakeholders engaged. It contributes to the region's economic vitality by supporting slow and sustainable tourism practices. Tourists that remain longer to take advantage of the increased options benefit local motels and businesses. Indicators such as increasing overnight stays and longer average stays demonstrate this. Furthermore, the initiative's emphasis on local cultural assets elevates attractions such as museums and monuments, resulting in increased visitor traffic. The additional tourism services boost destination desirability and visibility, as seen by increased social media participation and TripAdvisor reviews.

3.3 Impact for the environment

The project shows its environmental commitment by encouraging soft mobility techniques. The effort reduces the carbon footprint associated with tourism activities by promoting biking and other sustainable transportation choices. This helps to preserve the local environment by ensuring that tourism development works in conjunction with ecological conservation.

3.4 Impact for the company

This effort may have a revolutionary influence on Sayuri Whale Watching Private Limited. Strategically, the corporation diversifies its product line by entering previously untouched market sectors. This results to a stronger competitive advantage and greater exposure in the tourism business. Economically, the initiative's variety of income streams decreases risks associated with seasonal changes or market demand fluctuations.

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The program benefits the CoE by creating new training materials that are consistent with the spirit of sustainable tourism. This, in turn, accelerates the creation of internships and career opportunities inside partner companies, contributing to the industry's growth of competent people. Collaborations on communication strategies and the co-development of innovative products and services broaden the CoE's influence and contributions to sustainable tourism practices.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

4.1.1 What worked well

Diversification of offerings: By expanding tourism experiences beyond whale watching to include activities like swimming with whales, bird-watching, coastal tours, and visits to conservation centers, the initiative enhances the value of tourists' experiences. This diversification aims to attract a broader range of visitors and potentially extend their stay, ultimately benefiting the local economy.

Environmental considerations: The initiative prioritizes environmental sustainability, waste management, and responsible engagement with wildlife. This focus aligns with conservation efforts, ensuring the preservation of marine biodiversity and minimizing adverse effects on the ecosystem.

Strategic use of technology: While acknowledging potential limitations in technological accessibility, the proposal suggests leveraging technology for improved communication and environmental monitoring. Collaborations with organizations such as the Coast Guard can enhance safety measures and overall satisfaction for tourists.

4.1.2 What could be improved

Financial sustainability: Despite innovative ideas, addressing the financial challenges faced by Sayuri Whale Watching and other operators remains crucial. Finding solutions to mitigate high taxation, seasonal fluctuations, and maintenance costs is essential for enhancing the initiative's long-term sustainability.

Infrastructure development: Acknowledging the necessity for improved infrastructure, particularly waste disposal facilities and public restrooms, the proposal should outline detailed plans for funding, implementation, and maintenance. This added information would strengthen the plan's feasibility.

Local engagement: Although the case highlights collaboration with the local community, further insights into how their needs, concerns, and ideas were integrated are necessary. Especially considering the current scenario of limited collaboration, actively engaging with the community early on is vital for the initiative's success.

In the present context, challenges persist regarding the lack of collaboration from government, stakeholders, and the local community, as mentioned earlier. Adapting the initiative to this reality is crucial for success. Additionally, despite these challenges, the initiative can still pursue diversified offerings to enhance the tourism experience and contribute positively to the industry.

4.2 Possibility of replication

Mirissa's innovative sustainable tourism plan offers as a great example for replication in other areas challenged with similar problems. Several aspects of the initiative are adaptable to other contexts as well:

Collaboration: To ensure well-rounded and sustainable solutions, the collaborative approach engaging multiple stakeholders, including government entities, environmental organizations, and local populations, can be implemented in other regions.

Offerings diversification: Diversifying tourism offerings to cater to different types of tourists is a notion that may be utilized in a variety of destinations. Identifying one-of-a-kind events and activities can increase tourist engagement and duration of stay.

Environmental focus: Any destination with natural features can emphasize environmental sustainability and responsible wildlife participation. Incorporating educational components and conservation activities can benefit both tourism and environmental preservation.

Technology integration: Integrating technology for communication, safety, and environmental monitoring can improve the visitor experience where appropriate. Governments or other appropriate authorities may be involved in the implementation of such technology.

Involving stakeholders: Participation of local communities, businesses, and professionals in planning and decision-making is critical for successful implementation. Building strong connections and considering regional requirements may enhance the initiative's impact.

Annexures

Figure 1: Photo Gallery



CASE STUDY 35

Nature-Culture-Human Connectedness for Sustainable Tourism: A Case Study of Hirivadunna Village, Sri Lanka

Wimalaweera, R.G.P.S., Dasanayaka, D.A.G., Dunuwila, D.C.S., Wijesundara, W.M.N.S., Umayangana, H.K.A. and Wijesundara, W.G.S.R.

1.0 Case Context

1.1 Introduction

Hirivadunna Village is a small village located in Anuradhapura in the Central Province of Sri Lanka and is about 175km from Colombo. This area is quite arid and you can experience the rural village life of Sri Lanka first hand, spend a whole day like a Sri Lankan villager, participate in some great activities and visit their village home and gardens and paddies. Vegetable gardens can be seen here. Tourists can also visit the plantations and enjoy a traditional meal using vegetables brought from the plantations. This Hirivadunna village is a village where sustainability is at the top. Similarly, the limited number of tourists who come to the village get the opportunity to go on a journey by bullock carts. During the journey by carts, we can see beautiful rice paddies and canals. The paddy area of this village is about 3 hectares and it is used for crop cultivation.

This area is quite arid. Natural plants such as Kumbuk, Veera, Palu, Cork, Teak, Nadun, Buruta and Kon are found all over the village to retain the water in the village lake and keep the village cool. A boat ride is also organized for the tourists from the numb lake, where the boatman creates natural lotus leaf and flower motifs and amazes the tourists with his craftsmanship and creativity.

Hirivadunna Sri Bodhiraja Aranya Senasanaya in Hirivadunna village is located in the middle of the village. Not only that, according to a research paper published in Daily Science in 2013, it has also been reported as the place with the lowest gravity in the world.

1.2 Vision and Mission

Vision : “Grow together with own people”

Mission : We care people in local way”

Figure 1: Heritage Tea Factory Hotel

source: www.beautylankatravels.com

1.3 Products/services

Hiriwaduuna village as a rural tourism destination offers a diversified bundle of touristic products and services to its customers from all over the world. The tourists who intend to visit the village are able to use either public transportation or private transportation as they wish. Once they reach the entrance of the place, a representative from the operation will give a warm welcome, and then join to the entire journey of the tourists being a guide or an interpreter. The below listed are the products and services offered by the village to meet the requirements of its customers.

Traditional bullock cart ride: There are around 12 block carts parked at a place just 100m away from the entrance. Each facilitates maximum 04 passengers. Majority of the block cart riders are the people over 55 years, wearing sarongs and shirts. The carts ride on a muddy and narrow road till it falls to lake. During the journey which passes by the cart, visitors can see beautiful paddy fields, lakes etc.

On-site temple tour: The bullock cart ride ends just after 2KM distance at the entrance of the temple. It is one of the oldest temple which popular among some of the book writers and Buddhists as they believe that temple has a link for Buddha's enlightenment. According to a research paper published in Daily Science in 2013, it has also been reported as the place with the lowest gravity in the world

Figure 2: Traditional Bullock Cart Ride



Source: Hiriwadunna Case Challenge Team

Figure 3: Traditional Bullock Cart Ride



Source: Hiriwadunna Case Challenge Team

Figure 4: Bullock Carts



Source : Hiriwadunna Case Challenge Team

Figure 5: Hiriwadunna Temple



Source: Hiriwadunna Case Challenge Team

Boat ride in the lake: After like 1 hour temple tour, visitors go through the green forest to reach the lake in the middle of the village. Each boat can carry nearly 08 passengers per drive. Boat riders are hospitable person and make all efforts to satisfy their customers on board. While driving through, visitors can feel the gentle breeze, listen to the village stories, learn, create and wear “water lily hats” and “water lily garland”, picking water lilies, photographing in the lake, drive the boat using “Habala” etc.

Figures 6: Hiriwadunna Boat Ride Experience



Source : Hiriwadunna Case Challenge Team

A moment of tree house: A tree house Built on abundant trees, the tree house in Hiriwadunna village provides an unparalleled view of the surrounding landscape. This

can be made wooden staircase, the sounds of nature surround you, creating a symphony of birdsong and rustling leaves. The tree house is constructed with a blend of traditional and modern architectural techniques, ensuring both comfort and harmony with the natural surroundings.

Figure 7: Tree House Experience



Source : Hiriwadunna case challenge Team

U-Pick: Villagers provide ‘Pan’ bag for tourists to pick vegetables from the garden by themselves.

Figure 8: Getting a Cooking Experience



Source : Hiriwadunna Case Study Team.

Traditional food experience: One of the highlights of the traditional food experience is a cooking demonstration. Tourists can learn how to prepare traditional Sri Lankan dishes, such as rice and curry, using age-old techniques and locally sourced ingredients and how to grinding spices and making coconut milk from scratching.

Live in “Gami Gedara”: These houses typically have a simple design and are built using local materials such as wood, clay. And tourists can get a good experience of living in a rural village.

Figure 9: Gami Gedara



Source: Hiriwadunna Case Challenge Team

Figure 10: Gami Gedara Kitchen



Source: Hiriwadunna Case Challenge Team

Journey end with: End of the full journey finally tourists can move on their locations using Safari jeep ride and tractor ride.

Village as a film location: In this hiriwadunna village have a good scenic views in nature. And that beautiful village life is using to make the film shooting. As the example “Araliya Mal” is the film shooted in this village.

Other than the listed products, village provides guiding and interpretation service, parking facilities, connecting food suppliers for additional requirements, information on tourist attractions nearby etc.

1.4 Target market(s)

The target market of the Hiriwadduna Village can be categorized mainly into 04 groups.

- 1. Leisure travellers:** Local and International tourists who come to experience the village; eco-tourists, agro-tourists, culture enthusiasts
- 2. Destination management companies:** Sunjana travellers, Aitken Spence can be taken as few examples.
- 3. The artists:** This includes photographers, filmmakers, content creators etc.
- 4. Travellers for education:** Researchers, School students, university undergraduates.

The below figure shows the demand from main 04 groups of travellers to the village. The highest demand comes from leisure travellers and lowest demand come from travellers for education and equal demand come from destination management companies and artists.

Figure 11: Target Market

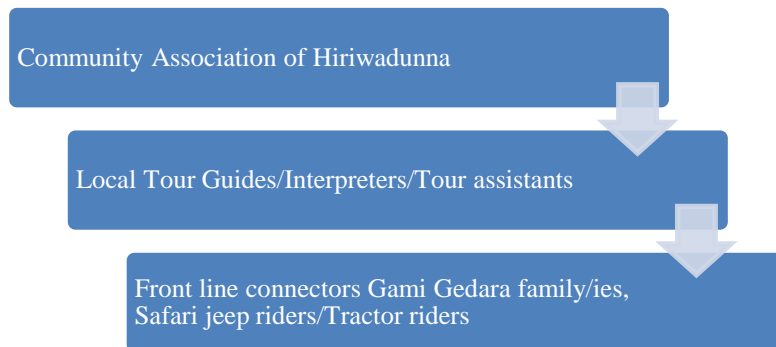


1.5 Organization and Management

Community Association of Hiriwadunna: this is the authority who manage the operation at Hiriwaduuna Village (insert their responsibilities/duties here)

Local Tour Guides/Interpreters/Tour assistants: this the middle group of people who link front line connectors and management authority for smooth running of the operation. (Add a description to this as suggested and say what they are doing, duties and responsibilities – contact the customers, get reservations, contact with the front line connectors, ensure safety and security of the customers, provide interpretations, assist with needed information, selling village tour packages etc.)

Figure 12: Hierarchy of the organization



Front line connectors: theses group includes boat rider, cart riders, families in GamiGedra, etc. Tour Guides-Tourists are guided by tour guides. They gives tourists an insight into the history of Hiriwadunna village, Culture of Hiriwadunna village, Crops and attractions of the village.

Boat riders: Those boat riders are usually local people. Who take tourists across the lake Hiriwadunna. Birds species, flora can be seen while on the boat. They are taught to make hats from lotus leaves. Lotus flowers can be picked.

1.6 Cost structure and revenue streams

1.6.1 Cost structure

The overall expenditure of business operation including fixed and variable costs can be known as the cost structure. The cost structure of the Hiriwadunna village consists as follows.

Cost on infrastructure: Development of Roads, Building up sanitary system, Maintenance of Roads, Maintenance of Boats and Boat yards, Maintenance of Village houses and tree houses, look after animals involved in the operation, etc

Staffing: Expenses for employing staff as tour guides, interpreters, cart riders, employees of “Gami Gedara”, tractor riders, fishermen, etc.

Utilities: Costs for providing water, electricity and other utilities to the village and its residents as employees.

Supplies: Expenditures for food, beverages, and other consumables required for running the Entire operation

Transportation: Costs of transporting guests to and from the village or organizing excursions..

Marketing and promotion: Expenses to promote Hiriwadunna as a tourist destination, including advertising and marketing campaigns.

1.6.2 Revenue stream

The different ways that the business might make money through its operation can be defined as the revenue streams

Hiriwadunna Village Tour package: Selling freshly grown vegetables and fruits (they provide the U- Pick experience for their guest)

Selling creative crafts: Other- monetary and non- monetary tips, donations formal external parties, funds through tourism Developments projects

1.7 Other information

Hiriwadunna tourism village situated in Anuradhapura district in North Central Province. This village belongs to Palugaswewa divisional secretariat and 591 Hiriwadunna village service division. This Hiriwadunna tourism village via destination management companies.

2.0 Innovation in Sustainable Tourism

2.1 Sustainable tourism challenge description

Other sustainable tourism villages in the surrounding areas of Dambulla are the strongest challenge for this Hiriwadunna village. It's because travellers are drawn to certain locations. Due to the current development in this community there is no human lineage to care for cattle.

Along with education, nowadays there is no generation after generation to run this industry. The current generation is turning to modern modes of transportation (using safari jeeps instead of carts) and the reduction of cattle population due to cattle diseases has become a challenge for this village. The village does not have any support from the government and the host communities. Although it is written that the government will provide support to clean and develop the lakes and canals in this tourist village, Due to the current political instability in the country, these developments are not being implemented. Due to COVID 19, there is unemployment and poverty in this village, Due to this Covid 19, the tourism industry in Sri Lanka became inactive and due to this the activities of this village were hampered and the villagers of this village turned to other employment industries, some people did not get any job.

Due to climate change, the village is in need of water. The water sources in Hiriwadunna village are under threat due to climate change in Sri Lanka.

1. **Appearance of healthy competition:** There are few sustainable tourism villages in the area to compete with Hiriwadunna Village with similar attributes. Due to the development of the current society, youngsters does not like to involve with taking care of cows.
2. **Decrease of front-line connectors to take over the business:** Education, employment in urban areas, receipt of comfortable jobs, migration, searching better social recognition, shifting to other areas etc, have been caused to decrease of front-line connectors like cart riders, boat riders etc.
3. **Decrease of cattle population:** Due to many reasons like cattle diseases, lack of interest, etc people reluctant to look after cattle population, hence it has become a huge challenge for operating bullock cart tours.
4. **Social protest for temple tour and interpretation of the location:** In the centre of the village stands Hirivadunna Sri Bodhiraja Aranya Senasanaya. There are many tales and traditions concerning Bodhi in this temple.
5. **Lack of government support for development:** Although government has promised to provide the support to develop and maintain the lakes and canals of the village, due to the political instability these promises and actions were not implemented.
6. **Lack of sufficient water:** The village is in need of water for smooth operation. The water sources in Hiriwadunna village are under threat due to climate change in Sri Lanka.

2.2 The business/project idea

This section brings specific business ideas for the challenges listed under “sustainable tourism challenges description” in order to overcome them.

1. New product development and product diversification

Currently the village offers only the village tour for the customers. And this is the main income source for the business. Considering the available resources in the village, it can come up with new products under few areas;

Accommodation facilities: homestay development, use of tree house, use of “Gami gedara” for accommodation, promoting camping nights on the site, floating rooms on the lake etc.

Creating local handicrafts with available materials

Expansion of organic farm with more locally grown items.

2. Train the youth for taking over the operation

Motivating potential workers for the operation is essential to sustain the business. Hence, it requires providing proper awareness on tourism industry. Some of the suggestions for this,

Conducting physical training programmes/workshops

Organizing awareness program on the importance of local culture in tourism

Create additional income sources using the talents and skills of the people; performance events, cultural events

Provide license or permit to carry out the tasks

3. Establishing a livestock unit in the hamlet and breeding cows.

2.3 External analysis

Political	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government rules and regulations related to the tourism sector. • The village does not receive government assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange rates have an impact on foreign travelers’ visit arrivals. • Exporting the village’s agricultural products. • There is no effective tourism management in Hiriwadunna village.
Social	Technological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising interest in food that is produced locally and organically. • Changing customer attitudes in favor of food items made in an ethical and ecological manner. • Covid-19 pandemic. • Economic crisis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural technology advancements and automation for more efficiency. • Access to agricultural information and best practices online resources. • There is no information about the village on social media. • Information and activities of this Hiriwadunna tourist village is not properly disseminated in the social media

Environmental	Legal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change's effects on weather patterns, agriculture output, and water availability. • Sustainable farming methods to protect the environment and preserve natural resources. • Sustainability and environmental protection strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The observance of tourism-related laws and license requirements. • The existence of sustainable tourism villages in Sri Lanka like this village

2.4 Internal analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the village economically. • The village will be economically strengthened by creating jobs for the unemployed people living in this village through this tourist village. • Using new techniques for farming in the village. Machineries and techniques used in the present world are used in farming in this village. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, the life of the people in the village has been disrupted. Due to this epidemic, the normal daily life activities of many people have been disrupted. • Unemployment and poverty in Hiriwadunna village is a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. • Instead of using carts, tourists instead use safari jeeps. Instead of using carts, some tourists have turned to safari jeeps. It is caused by animal cruelty.

2.5 Activities

There are several activities that a tourism site can provide for its guests. The term “activity” refers to several pursuits, including travelling, swimming, going out, participating in sports, and taking picture.

1. Determining what activities will be carried out in the village, and the target market.
2. Attracting tourists by making packages.
3. Creation of village environment with government support.
4. Construction of facilities for visitors and travellers to the village
5. To maintain the village using human resources.
6. Village maintenance for human resources.
7. Teaching local village games to visitors

2.6 Stakeholders

In Hiriwadunna village, the stakeholders typically include the local community members, government authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), businesses operating in the area, and any other relevant parties involved in the village's development and well-being. These stakeholders play a crucial role in shaping the village's future by contributing their resources, expertise, and support to various

initiatives and projects. It is important to engage and collaborate with these stakeholders to ensure inclusive decision-making and sustainable development in Hiriwadunna village.

Local residents: The people living in Hiriwadunna Village, Village Council- They govern and make decisions that impact the village and its development.

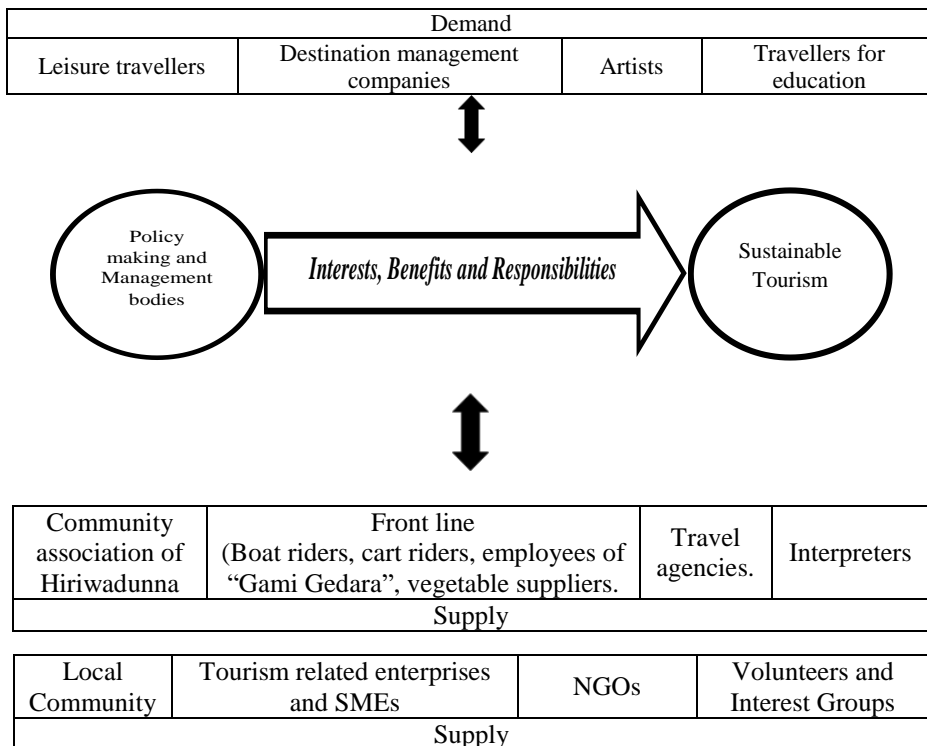
Community organizations: Local government- The local government officials and authorities who are responsible for the governance and development of the village, Non-governmental organizations or community based organizations.

Farmers and agricultural workers: The individual engage in farming and agricultural activities such as farmers, laborers and farm owners.

Business owners: Local entrepreneurs and business owners who operate small business.

Tourism Industry: Stakeholders involved in the in tourism industry such as tour operators, guides, and hotel owners, as Hiriwadunna village is a popular tourist destination.

Figure 13: Stakeholders



2.7 Target market(s) and beneficiaries

To focus on a new target market in Hiriwadunna village, it is essential to conduct market research and understand the needs, preferences, and demographics of the local population. This information will help identify potential customer segments that can be targeted effectively. Additionally, it is important to consider the village's unique characteristics, such as its cultural heritage, economic activities, and infrastructure, to tailor products or services that align with the local context. Engaging with the community and seeking their input can also provide valuable insights for developing strategies to attract and serve the new target market in Hiriwadunna village.

Domestic tourists: Families, village attracts domestic tourists who are looking for a unique cultural and nature based experience- They seek authentic experiences, away from the popular tourist hotspots and are willing to immerse themselves in local community.

International tourists: International tourist who are interested in off- the-beaten- path destinations and experiencing local culture. These tourists often nature enthusiasts, adventure seekers, or cultural explorers. They are interested in exploring the traditional way of life, engaging in activities like bullock cart rides, boat rides, and farming experiences. They are also keen to learn about traditional Sri Lankan craft and arts.

2.7.1 Beneficiaries

Farming Families

Benefits

- Access to agricultural resources and support.
- Potential for increased income and improved livelihoods through farming.
- Community development programs related to agriculture.
- Infrastructure improvements that enhance farming activities.

Monks in the Temple

Benefits

- Spiritual and religious support from the local community.
- Donations and offerings from villagers.
- Support for temple maintenance and development.

Tour guides/interpreters

Benefits

- Income generation from providing guiding and interpreting services to tourists.
- Economic opportunities from tourism-related activities.

- Support for training and skill development in the tourism sector.

Business operators outside the village

Benefits:

- Opportunities to cater to the needs of the local community.
- Access to potential customers from the village.
- Economic growth and expansion of business due to the village's activities.

Other

This category may encompass various individuals or groups with different needs and benefits, such as:

- Students attending local schools.
- Local government officials and employees.
- NGOs or charitable organizations working in the area.
- Environmental groups interested in preserving the village's natural resources

2.7.2 Families with children

- **Activities:** Hiriwadunna village is a great place for families with children to enjoy nature and culture. You can offer family-friendly activities like guided nature walks, bird watching, and cultural experiences like traditional Sri Lankan cooking classes.
- **Accommodation:** Provide comfortable and family-friendly accommodation options, such as cottages or family suites.
- **Special offers:** Consider family packages, discounts for children, and tailored experiences for kids like wildlife spotting tours or educational workshops about the village's history and ecology.

2.7.3 Artists (Film and Tele-Drama Makers)

- **Location scouting:** Promote Hiriwadunna village as a picturesque location for film and tele-drama shoots. Highlight its natural beauty, traditional architecture, and unique landscapes.
- **Production services:** Offer production services such as equipment rental, local crew, and permit assistance for filmmakers.
- **Collaboration:** Partner with local artists and craftsmen to provide props and set design elements for productions.

2.7.4 Presenters of TV programs

- **Nature and Adventure Shows:** Position the village as a hub for outdoor and adventure TV programs. Arrange activities like jungle safaris, river canoeing, or hiking.
- **Cultural Insights:** Offer cultural experiences and insights into the daily lives of the villagers. This can be showcased in travel and lifestyle TV programs.

2.7.5 Honeymooners

- **Romantic Packages:** Create romantic packages that include private accommodations, candlelit dinners, and intimate experiences like traditional Sri Lankan dances or boat rides on the lake.
- **Spa and Wellness:** Provide spa and wellness services to pamper honeymooners, including couples' massages and yoga sessions in serene natural settings.
- **Hidden Getaways:** Highlight the village as a hidden gem for honeymooners seeking a tranquil and off-the-beaten-path experience

2.8 Partners

Government agencies: Local government bodies such as local councils or departments of agriculture, government-funded program.

Non-governmental organizations: Community development project, improve access to education.

Businesses: Private companies, health programs, livelihood generation opportunities.

Community based organizations: Women empowerment, youth development, environment conservation.

Research and academic institutions: Research project, provide technical expertise. **Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Partnerships:** Hiriwadunna's natural beauty and cultural heritage make it an attractive destination for eco-tourism. Future partnerships may involve collaboration between local authorities, tour operators, and environmental organizations to promote sustainable tourism practices that preserve the village's natural resources and support the local community.

Educational Initiatives: Partnerships with educational institutions or NGOs may develop to create educational programs and workshops that help villagers acquire new skills and knowledge. This could include English language classes, vocational training, or initiatives to enhance agricultural practices.

Agricultural Partnerships: Given the village's agricultural heritage, partnerships with organizations focused on agricultural development could provide training and

resources to improve farming techniques, increase crop yields, and explore organic farming practices. This can contribute to economic growth and food security.

2.9 Finances

1. Support from Tourism Development Projects Launched by the Government:
 - The government can play a significant role in financing new proposals in Hiriwadunna Village through tourism development projects.
 - Identifying Potential Projects e.g., building roads, bridges, or tourist facilities
 - Allocating Budgets
 - Collaboration with Local Authorities
 - Implementing and Monitoring
2. Support from Community Development Programs Funded by Foreign Governments:
 - Foreign governments often offer financial support for community development programs in developing countries. Here's how this option can work:
 - Grant Applications: The village can work with local NGOs or government agencies to identify relevant community development programs funded by foreign governments.
 - Proposal Development: The village or its representatives would need to develop a well-documented proposal outlining the specific project or initiative they seek to finance.
 - Application Submission: Once the proposal is ready, it can be submitted to the relevant foreign government agency or organization overseeing the community development program.
 - Grant Approval: If the proposal is approved, the village can receive the necessary funding to implement its project
3. Establishing a Donation Point at the Site:
 - Creating a donation point at the site can be a practical way to raise funds directly from tourists and visitors. Here's how it can be done:
4. Selecting a Strategic Location: Identify a location within the village that attracts tourists and is easily accessible.
 - Setting up Donation Facilities: Create a dedicated area with clear signage.

2.10 Human resources

The human resources in Hiriwadunna village encompass various sectors of expertise, particularly in relation to the proposed activities aimed at enhancing the

village's tourism potential. As the village seeks to expand its tourism offerings, there is a growing need for new HR strategies to support and sustain these initiatives. One key aspect of these strategies is the incorporation of trainees from tourism-related educational institutes to provide them with invaluable industry experience.

- 1. Hospitality professionals:** With the influx of tourists, there is a heightened demand for skilled professionals in the hospitality sector. Hiriwadunna village needs to recruit and train individuals who can excel in various roles, such as hotel management, front office staff, chefs, and housekeeping, to ensure that visitors have a memorable and comfortable stay.
- 2. Tour guides:** To showcase the unique cultural and natural attractions of the village, hiring and training local tour guides is imperative. These guides should be well-versed in the history, flora, fauna, and local traditions of Hiriwadunna to provide enriching experiences to tourists.
- 3. Eco-tourism experts:** Hiriwadunna's focus on eco-tourism requires professionals who understand sustainable practices and can educate both tourists and local communities on the importance of preserving the natural environment. These experts play a vital role in promoting responsible tourism.
- 4. Trainees from tourism-related education institutes:** Recognizing the importance of nurturing local talent and providing them with hands-on experience, Hiriwadunna village actively collaborates with tourism-related educational institutes to offer internships and training opportunities. These trainees bring fresh perspectives, energy, and knowledge to the workforce while gaining real-world exposure.

2.11 Marketing and communication activities

2.11.1 Website and social media presence

Create and maintain social media profiles on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Share regular updates about events, promotions, and village life. Showcasing its natural beauty, cultural heritage, and available activities, high-quality images that can be carried out in Hiriwadunna village for marketing and communication purposes.

2.11.2 Online advertising

- **Google Ads:** Run Google Ads campaigns targeting keywords related to ecotourism, village experiences, and Sri Lankan culture. Optimize ad copy and landing pages for conversions.

- **Email Marketing:** Build an email list through website sign-ups and use email marketing to send newsletters, promotions, and updates to potential and past visitors.

2.11.3 Local events and festivals

Set up booths or stalls where visitors can learn more about the village, interact with locals, and experience traditional craftsmanship.

- **Participation:** Actively participate in local events and festivals to promote Hiriwadunna village. Set up booths, offer discounts, and engage with attendees.
- **Hosting Events:** Organize special events in the village, such as cultural festivals, nature walks, or cooking classes, to attract both locals and tourists. Promote these events online and through local channels.

2.11.4 Customer feedback and reviews

Collect feedback from visitors and actively respond to reviews, both positive and negative, on online platforms. Show genuine care and willingness to address concerns, as this will enhance the reputation of Hiriwadunna village as a visitor-friendly destination.

- **Feedback Collection:** Gather feedback from visitors through on-site surveys, email follow-ups, and social media polls. Use this feedback to make improvements and provide better experiences.
- **Online Reviews:** Encourage satisfied visitors to leave positive reviews on platforms like Trip Advisor, Google Reviews, and Yelp. Respond to both positive and negative reviews professionally and constructively.

3.0 Impact

3.1 Impact for the target market(s)

Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
Can get unique experience Can enjoy a nutritional Sri Lankan lunch Helps to develop mental well-being. Get some sort of knowledge about normal Sri Lankan home kitchen operations.	Lack of accommodation facilities. Poor maintenance of sanitary facilities. (lavatories) Can be dangerous to ride a boat.

3.2 Impact for the stakeholders

Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
Being able to interact with people in different societies. Villagers' income will increase. Their business get popular among different societies.	Lack of facilities to operate the business. High maintainers' cost. Less development of the village.

3.3 Impact for the environment

Positive impacts	Negative impacts
Vegetable cultivation by using limited chemicals. Not polluting environment with toxic gases and fuel. Reduction of food wasting.	Limitation of natural habitats and animals. Decreasing the cleanliness of the environment due to visitors' unaccepted behaviour.

3.4 Impact for the company

Positive impacts	Negative impacts
Increase the number of visitors. Earn better income with the limited facilities. Maintaining good image with their unique creativity and hospitality.	Tourists' beliefs and concern about animals. (They believe riding a cart is a torture/harm to the cows). Young generations' preference about the business. (Do not like to be a boat rider or cart rider). Lack of awareness among the tourist because of the location. (transit destination)

3.5 Impact for the CoE

The tourism sector plays a significant role in the world economy, contributing to economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development. The key role of the tourism sector is economic contribution. From this case study we were able to gain plenty of knowledge about this tourism village and how this village applies sustainability towards their organization and business. Especially as students who are studying tourism, we were able to identify how people use our traditional practices, beautiful nature and cultural activities to attract tourists.

4.0 Concluding Remarks

4.1 Reflections

From the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that the existence of tourist villages has a positive impact on local communities. Development of tourist villages also opens new employment opportunities, raises the culture and potential that exist in the area and can accelerate the distribution of development which in turn can increase the income. And welfare of the local community. Lack of cooperation between the state and stakeholders and the local community, particularly in terms of infrastructure provision, quality human resource development and capital, are the obstacles faced by areas used as tourist villages.



EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Case Studies from CESTour's Centers of Excellence

About the Editors



Emma Zavarrone, PhD, is Associate Professor of Social Statistics and Demography at IULM University, Milan where she teaches statistics and textual analysis for social media and where she is deputy Rector for the Third Mission of the University.



Martha Friel, PhD is Assistant Professor of Economics and Business Management in the Faculty of Arts and Tourism at IULM University, Milan, Italy. Her activity focuses on the economy and management of culture, the creative industries and tourism.



JOURNAL PRESS INDIA

Block A, Pocket 4, No. 17, 1st Floor,
Sector - 15, Rohini, Delhi - 110089, INDIA
Mobile: +91 9873434091, 8826623730, Tel.: +91-11-42631517
E-mail: editorial@journalpressindia.com
Website: www.journalpressindia.com

ISBN: 978-81-970159-1-5

