



International Seminar 2017

Sustainable Community Tourism

La Paz, Bolivia

Research Summary

CASE STUDY 1

Youth inclusion factors in community tourism in Pampalarama

CASE STUDY 2

Sustainable Community Tourism and community participation in Chalcataya

CASE STUDY 3

The potential for sustainable and community tourism in Llaullini

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The International Seminar

This document provides a summary of research conducted as part of the 71st International Seminar on Sustainable Community Tourism, held in Bolivia in July 2017. The Seminar was organized by Uniterra, a program jointly implemented by World University Service of Canada (WUSC) and the Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI), and funded by the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada.

The main objective of the International Seminar is to enable young people from various regions of the world to collaborate through a research project with local partners on issues for sustainable development, thus strengthening partners' capacities to improve the socio-economic conditions of women and young people in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

In the case of Bolivia, the work was supported by the Municipal Government of La Paz through its Agency "*La Paz Maravillosa*" and *Universidad Católica Boliviana – San Pablo* through the major of Tourism Administration.

Case study n°1:
“We have places that do not compare to the city”: Youth inclusion factors in community tourism.
Case: Pampalarama.



The Study Area

The Pampalarama lodge is a community initiative established by members of the community of Chacaltaya with a concept of community management.

This initiative is located in the municipality of La Paz, to the north of the city, and is part of the Hampaturi Rural District; in the foothills of the Charquini and Wilamankilisani mountains.

The community consists of 70 families, approximately 48 of which live in the city of La Paz.

The main economic activities of the community include mining, camelid farming and peat (organic soil used as fertilizer).

The Research

The main objective of the research is to describe and analyze community tourism activity in the community of Chacaltaya and in its Pampalarama venture, as well as its influence on the local population.

The research was guided by the following objectives:

- Identify the potential for tourism that is not being leveraged in the study area.
- Identify the perception in the Chacaltaya community regarding tourism, protection and conservation of culture, environment and traditions.

- Identify the level of youth engagement in the tourist activities of Chacaltaya.

The hypothesis that guided the research is *“The tourist activity in Pampalarama can be characterized as community tourism, thanks to the tourism potential identified and the reduction of youth migration through the inclusion of this population group.”*

The following variables and indicators are addressed:

1. Community potential:
 - Tourism (attractions)
 - Tourism (other elements)
 - Environment
2. Youth migration:
 - Employment
 - Sense of belonging in the community
 - Education
 - Sentimental ties and their influence on migration
3. Youth inclusion:
 - Cultural identification
 - Youth and skills development
 - Gender equality
 - The elderly and their ancestral knowledge
 - Employment opportunities

Methodology

To verify the hypothesis, the research was conducted using an inductive method. Information was compiled through direct observations in the selected community, individual interviews, and focus groups with community members. The research has been developed based on the mixed model, since both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in data collection.

Results

Tourism Potential

Structured observation, compared with the results of the community, shows that the region has important tourism potential, part of which is

being leveraged. However, other attractions are not visited by tourists, such as the following:

- Last'ima Hill viewpoint
- Tambo
- Craft Workshop
- Medicinal Workshop
- Visitor Center
- Camelid Care Workshop
- Mining Complex

Elements of Community Tourism

Within the definition of community tourism, only some elements are considered fundamental for this research: *Beneficial and respectful relationship between tourists and the community.*

The study shows that 76% of community members consider an exchange of knowledge, experience and customs with visitors as positive.

70% have a positive perception of tourists, compared to only 2.9% of respondents who have a negative perception; the positive perception is based mainly on the potential to generate an economic gain; 47% of respondents believe that tourists do not get to know the community and go directly to the lodge.

One of the most revealing results indicates that 53% of the respondents perceive that they receive some benefit from the tourist visits, compared to 35% who believe that they do not receive any benefits; demonstrating a very low interrelationship between tourists and the community.

Use and Conservation of the Community's Heritage

An assessment of the attractions was carried out, to generating a ranking to identify the most important attractions for the residents,; Murmuntani Hill, Wilamankilisani Mountain, Patalarama and Encanto lagoons. However, it is recognized that the overall use is very low.

The study shows that the community assigns a greater value to natural and heritage attractions from a tourist perspective compared to other community uses, suggesting that its valuation is subject to a consumptive value, which provides an opportunity to create interesting conservation strategies.

On the other hand, the research found that despite significant migration, community members are proud of their culture and perceive that there are unique aspects to their community.

Youth Migration

Tourism has the potential to reduce migration by promoting sources of employment in the community.

The lack of a secondary school is one of the most complicated barriers to achieving community retention, and impacts the current impossibility of the initiative to generate sufficient income to engage more youth.

On the other hand, research shows that although young people in the community perceive that there are more job opportunities in the city, the quality of life is, according to them, better in the community.

In terms of employment and job opportunities, this is perceived as the only reason to leave the community. All the participants of the study, i.e., youth under 35 years of age, indicate that if tourism activity were greater, sources of employment would increase and this would allow a radical reduction of migration.

We analyzed factors of belonging, including language, which shows that the elderly population uses Aymara as their main means of communication, while its use is decreasing among young people. Although they understand it perfectly, youth tend to communicate in Spanish – a factor that could affect the community, but would also facilitate communication with tourists.

Young people perceive the community as a unique and special place, feel pride in their land and are interested in sharing their experiences with tourists. 89% of young people who were surveyed feel that they are part of the community.

Inclusion and Involvement

Currently, only 6 people from the community participate in tourism activities, and it is perceived as an alternative to rural exodus for young people.

Analysis of the Elements of Community Tourism

It was evident that the management model has not prioritized a wide participation. Community members generally do not perceive opportunities for participation, and even partners directly involved in the project are lacking adequate information.

Community initiatives should provide, in return the use and enjoyment of the territory and its attractions, a benefit that although may not be economic, should reach all members of the community whether they are partners or not. However, it is clear that the community does not receive benefits from the lodge. The only advantage perceived by the community is that tourism has at least led to some people in the city learning about the existence of the community.

In terms of improving the quality of life in the community, this is recognised as a factor in youth retention, yet migration persists because there are no significant changes.

Conclusions

79% of the people surveyed stated that they would be interested in having more tourists in the community, leveraging their natural attractions and way of life to encourage experience-based tourism.

The insufficient income generated by tourism activities does not allow for the development of either greater benefits or employment sources, which consequently has not managed to reverse the trend of emigration.

The lack of communication and information regarding the tourism initiative provided to the community has broken the channels of trust and the perception of transparency.

Although the project may have started as a community tourism initiative, lack of communication and low income generation have damaged the initiative.

Therefore, the proposed hypothesis is not tested since it does not comply with any of the selected variables.

Recommendations

Communication: It is necessary to improve the communication not only between the initiative and the community, but also between the initiative and the tourists.

Marketing: Investments must be made in web marketing. The web page is out-dated, the

Facebook page is not updated, and it is necessary to generate information on Tripadvisor, Booking, etc.

Signage: Signage on the trails as well as road signs are insufficient, and access to the location is difficult.

Administration and New Relationships: There is a pressing need to have specialized personnel in place for marketing to improve communication, as well as working with the student market in La Paz which represents 36% of the market last year.

Infrastructure: It is essential to improve electricity services, the use of dry toilets, and heating in the rooms.

Security: Recreation services must be improved, especially for boats and access to trails.

Transportation: Regular transportation to the lodge should be provided to facilitate the arrival of tourists.

Training: There is a clear need to develop training processes for Pampalarama to be successful, mainly in cooking, hygiene, tour guides and foreign languages.

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Case Study n°2:
Sustainable community tourism and its relationship with community participation.
Case: Chacaltaya.



The Study Area

The community of Chacaltaya is located 25 kilometres away from the city of La Paz, at the headwaters of the Choqueyapu River, the main body of water that crosses the city.

Chacaltaya is an indigenous community inhabited by 70 families of Aymara origin. In 2006, the community started construction of a tourist lodge capitalizing on the beautiful landscape, bringing together the mountains and the Pampalarama lagoon. This project sought to consolidate a community-based participatory economic initiative. The venture so far has not established a position in the market and the low profits generated concern the community members.

The Research

This research's main topic is *"Sustainable community tourism and its relationship with community participation in the case of the community of Chacaltaya-Pampalarama"*.

The hypothesis that guided the research is *"Community tourism practices in Chacaltaya meet the characteristics of sustainability as well as favouring the participation of the community."*

The general objective was to establish the extent to which community tourism practices in Chacaltaya meet the characteristics of sustainability as well as favouring the participation of the community.

For the development of the research, two variables and their respective dimensions were considered: sustainability (economic, social and environmental) and participation (decision-making process, level of participation and equity in decision-making). The results of this research are highlighted below.

Methodology

To verify the hypothesis, the research was conducted using a deductive method. Information was compiled through direct observations in the selected community, individual interviews, focus groups with community members, and a quantitative technique through surveys.

Results Related to Sustainability

The results obtained from the research show that the initiative has not yet achieved sustainability, understanding that it must be based on the following aspects: business-economic, socio-cultural, and environmental.

Business economic pillar: The income earned by tourist activity is not enough to generate economic benefits or profits for the partners or the community.

The administration of the venture falls on a single family; it has been determined that the administration was not formally established within the cost structure and there is no periodic accountability process. As a consequence, this practice generates susceptibility and distrust from the partners and the community.

Methods used for financing the project, including the support of the municipality, have generated an external dependence on economic resources, in particular for investment in infrastructure and equipment, as well as in the subsidization of marketing processes, which has not allowed for the empowerment of the

members to perform these actions autonomously.

The study has determined inconsistency between market objectives and real demand. The current market of the initiative is the internal market, mainly people of La Paz. Nevertheless the promotional marketing has advertised to foreign tourists and has not had the expected success.

Socio-cultural pillar: The venture shows a gap between business management and community dynamics, manifesting itself in an absence of spaces for dialogue, communication, and involvement between the business and community members.

This is an obvious gap. On the one hand, the community presents needs for their livelihoods, especially in basic services such as drinking water, sanitation system, health, road infrastructure, and garbage collection. The business could play a better role in responding to these needs.

On the other hand, if better leveraged, the culture of the community has a high potential to become an asset for tourism. The community also recognizes that tourism would have the potential to value their traditions, ways of life and culture.

Environmental pillar: The community shows an inadequate management of solid waste, which results in a deterioration of attractiveness.

The need to have territorial planning and organization of the economic practices of the community is evidential, particularly as other economic activities, including the extraction of peat and mining, have a negative impact on the environment.

Part of the analysis carried out by the community is that they perceive that national tourists are the ones that deteriorate the environment, including the wetlands of the

community. The perspective is that it is the tourists' garbage that contaminates the rivers and other bodies of water, which has generated an aversion to tourists.

It is important to highlight the sustainable practices that are being carried out in the lodge, including responsible consumption, the use of renewable energy (when the system is in operation), and a sewage management system suitable for the installed capacity.

On the other hand, a fundamental contribution of the community enterprise is the environmental education provided to visitors, showing the importance of conserving water sources.

Results Related to Participation

Community ventures require the active participation of a community interest group, which generates benefits for the inhabitants as a whole.

The processes of decision-making and participatory consultation have been – over time – losing their importance. Channels of communication are closing between the people who perform the administration of the initiative and the community, generating distrust and indifference in the community.

According to the evaluation of the levels of participation of the community, we can observe that the concept of the venture has great acceptance and the potential to generate benefits is valued by the community. We were able to identify a participation interest based on the conviction of the benefits and sources of work that could be generated from this activity. However, a low level of involvement in the provision, administration, and management of services was also identified.

Another element of analysis of participation was equity in decision-making. In tourism, the participation of women is particularly

important, as the sector is often associated with female gender roles, unlike other economic alternatives, such as mining, which are culturally associated with male gender roles.

It should be noted that although there is a clear interest of young people to participate in the initiative, no spaces have been created for them. This makes it impossible for youth to be a part of the decision-making processes.

Conclusions

The variables analyzed show that:

1. The minimum requirements of sustainability have not been met by the initiative.
2. The participation process of different community interest groups is minimal. Therefore the criteria for being a community venture have not been met.

Therefore, the hypothesis proposed for this investigation, "*Community tourism practices in Chacaltaya meet the characteristics of sustainability as well as favouring the participation of the community*" is false.

However, within the management process, there are characteristics that make the initiative potentially sustainable. To achieve sustainability, it will be necessary to make changes in the community engagement process and business management. Market focus must be improved and strategies must be developed to increase the opportunities for participation of community members.

It is also evident that the economic income of the initiative is insufficient to generate greater participation and as such, is affecting its sustainability.

To improve income generation, demand-driven approaches must be developed that allow for improved business management.

In the same way, it is important to think about an equitable development between the community and the lodge, which assures the provision of basic services in the community, approaching the economic venture with the social reality.

In environmental terms, it is necessary to gain greater control over tourist flows in order to ensure sustainable management of environmental resources.

Recommendations

In relation to the receptive tourism market, the location of the community must be considered. The initiative is outside natural tourist routes, which is why it is a priority to work in the national market to identify potential audiences, in order to ensure a continuous flow of tourists. However, the conditions of access to the community must be improved, with a focus on domestic travel routes.

Another fundamental aspect is the improvement of communications between the initiative and the community. Otherwise, the division between the two might grow, preventing further development of the initiative.

The re-establishment of participatory processes between the community and the economic initiative is fundamental to ensuring greater sustainability of the initiative. It is important to ensure strategies for greater participation of all members of the community in the decisions that mainly concern groups such as women and youth.

It is also important to generate and recognize benefits to the community through the tourism initiative. These benefits should not only be economic. Factors such as empowerment, cultural rescue, and others, can be equally important benefits to the community.

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Case Study n°3 :

The potential for sustainable and community tourism in the community of Llaullini.



The Study Area

The community of Llaullini is located in the foothills of the Huayna Potosi mountain, which is 6,088 meters above sea level and has one of the highest tourist flow in Bolivia.

Nearby, along the Viscachani Lagoon (about 25 minutes by vehicle from the base of the Huayna Potosi, in the community of Botijlaca), a simple lodge has been built to accommodate tourists, with the intention of generating a flow of visitors among those who arrive at Huayna Potosí. This shelter has been financed by the Municipal Government of La Paz, through funds from the Municipal Office of Zongo.

The Research

The research was guided by the following objectives:

General Objective

To determine Llaullini's potential for the development of community tourism initiatives, for the purposes of sustainable development and youth inclusion.

Specific Objectives

- Evaluate the level of interest for community tourism, from both the community (executioner of the activity) and the tourist (potential demand) perspectives.
- Determine whether existing activities, basic services, infrastructure, and natural environments could contribute to the

development of an authentic destination for tourists.

- Analyze the tourist situation in the community of Llaullini, regarding ventures (successes and failures) and the current contributions of different actors in the community.
- Identify which improvements must be made in relation to the services, infrastructure, and attractions of Llaullini to enhance the flow of tourists and increase visitors to the community.

The hypothesis that guided the research is “The perception of the community and potential tourists is that community tourism in Llaullini is potentially sustainable and attractive”.

The analysis to test the hypothesis was performed based on the variables associated with the concept of community tourism, which was used in the Seminar:

“Community tourism is a form of organization for the provision of tourism services in which all or a group of members of the community are involved, based on an agreement with the community and complying with community and tourist regulations; which uses tourism resources in a sustainable manner in its territory, promoting the value and conservation of its heritage and generating a specific benefit for the entire community and which allows improving the living conditions of all members, while establishing a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship with visitors.” (Arze, 2016)

Variables that allowed the researchers to uncover the perceptions of the community and potential tourists were chosen from the above concept and include:

- Tourism sustainability
- Community tourism
- Attractive potential

Methodology

To prove this hypothesis, the research was conducted using an inductive method. Information was compiled through direct observations in the selected community and through individual interviews with community members and tourists. The research has been developed based on the mixed model, since both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used in data collection.

Results

The research revealed trends in the perception of the community in relation to tourism. The majority – 58% – of people surveyed expressed a high interest in participating in this type of economic activity, while 34% expressed an average interest.

Training needs that the community perceives as necessary were also evaluated. The most frequently suggested needs were: gastronomy (26%), languages (26%), tourist customer service (14%), and tour guide training (10%), among others.

The analysis carried out in the community shows that there is an interest in potential benefits for the community generated by tourism in Huayna Potosí. 27% of respondents believe that these benefits should be distributed to the community, while 11% say that the benefits are only for certain members of the community. 35% of respondents state that tourism does not generate profits.

Analysis was also carried out with tourists: 100% of respondents expressed interest in living a community tourism experience.

Results Related to Community Tourism

It was determined – based upon the results of the research – that the tourism activity carried out in the study area cannot be considered community tourism, due to different factors,

including the low participation of the community, in particular low level of youth engagement. An equal distribution of benefits that generates an impact in the communities simply does not exist.

While there is a willingness in the community to develop tourism in a sustainable manner, there is an expectation regarding basic services, access to potential of tourist attractions in the area.

Results Related to Sustainability

The sustainability analysis was carried out taking into account the potential of tourist activity:

Environmental: The residents expressed concern about the environmental degradation caused by tourism, due to the absence of good practices and adequate planning.

Economic: The analysis shows that the level of poverty is not critical and that tourism has the potential to become an engine of economic development.

Social: There are sufficient social practices that could contribute to decision-making and project development with a perspective that favours inclusion.

Results Related to the Potential of Tourist Attractiveness

The study shows that tourists consider a visit to the community of Llaullini as an interesting complement to their travels. They value environmental awareness and protection, hospitality and quality of services as key factors for success. Meanwhile, the community considers itself as a tourist attraction and the study reveals a willingness of its members to provide services to visitors.

Conclusions

The research conducted and the hypothesis testing show that there is no local tourism management that complies with the minimum

elements to be considered as community tourism. However, residents believe in the tourism potential of their community for development, as well as an interest on the part of the tourists.

The analysis conducted shows that in order to achieve a successful initiative, the project must: Carry out long-term planning that promotes an authentic and competitive destination, using the community's greatest strengths: the culture and nature.

Generate a gradual implementation scheme, in order to guide the development of all aspects of the initiative in a harmonious manner.

It is essential to consider the central role of youth as catalysts, in the planning, execution and operation of the initiative.

Implementing organizations must promote continuous and committed assistance from the planning stage, through investment and adequate human resources, to avoid scenarios that could hinder the process.

Recommendations for the Community

The budget ought to be used as efficiently as possible, with a focus on a process that maximizes the benefits for the community.

It is essential to promote partnerships and cooperation with the other communities in the area, in order to generate complementary alternatives.

It is important to have regular transportation and communication services in Llaullini.

Determine and develop an authentic attraction that highlights the community, including daily activities as a potential attraction for the tourism experience.

Create and generate spaces to facilitate effective youth participation.

Recommendations for implementers

Conduct long-term tourism planning with the community, which includes an effective marketing and promotion strategy.

Promote inclusion projects among university students and youth from the community.

Intervene in regulation and monitoring from municipal authorities (e.g. charging fees to tourists) and more rigorous control over the certification of mountain guides.

Implement a road signage system and visitor trails.

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Summary of Recommendations



Develop structured plans detailing the enterprises' strategies to make the right decisions and achieve the objectives gradually.



Generate spaces for communication between communities and tourism ventures to improve the participation of communities in the tourism sector.



Strengthen trust between adults and youth to ensure more employment opportunities and reduce the rural exodus.



Establish strategic links with institutions that can support the development of community tourism.



Create strategic links with other communities with which there is a complementarity of services.



Diversify the tourist offer, to attract not only foreign tourists but also Bolivian tourists and guarantee a continuous tourist flow.



Develop a list of interesting tourist attractions in communities (medicinal plants, hot springs, trails, festivals, etc.)



Improve the infrastructure of hostels (electricity, bathrooms, heating) to make the stay more pleasant.



Train community members in areas such as cooking, hygiene, guides and foreign languages to improve customer service.



Raise awareness among the communities regarding the problem of waste management to preserve the environment.



Ensure the safety of tourists, rigorously controlling the certification of mountain guides and improving recreational services.



Use cultural wealth as a tourist attraction and as a tool to revalue the local culture that is being lost.



Develop external communications and online marketing strategies so that information about the community reaches tourists.



Improve transport services and signage to facilitate the access of tourists to communities.