

AGORA

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Work Package 2

Activity A2

Identification of Challenges and Barriers that stand in the way of developing Regenerative Tourism experiences.

**Interviews with individuals and/ or
representatives of organizations / local
authorities / communities / agents that promote
community regenerative tourism experiences.**

Reporting Template

Developed by p-consulting.gr.

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Interviews with individuals and/ or representatives of organizations / local authorities communities / agents – Reporting Template

Guidelines for conducting Interviews with project stakeholders / individuals and/ or representatives of organizations / local authorities / communities / agents that promote community regenerative tourism experiences to support the creation of the Sustainability Guide

Here are comprehensive guidelines for conducting interviews with stakeholders in the context of creating a sustainability guide for addressing challenges and barriers for promoting collaboration between community agents and other stakeholders that support and implement regenerative tourism experiences involving local communities:

- **Identification of relevant stakeholders – Interviewee's profile:** The key participants of this series of interviews for the support of regenerative tourism experiences, are **individuals and/or representatives of organizations / local authorities / communities / agents that promote community regenerative tourism experiences**. You should ensure representation of perspectives and expertise.
- **Interview Objectives:** The objectives of the interviews, are gathering insights on challenges and barriers, understanding stakeholders' perspectives on sustainability practices and implementation of regenerative tourism experiences, and identifying potential solutions. This will help focus the interview and ensure relevant information is gathered.
- **Development of Interview Questions:** We have prepared a set of open-ended questions that encourage participants to share their knowledge, experiences, and suggestions. There is a **generalized set of questions**, and **a set of questions tailored to the specific challenges and barriers** identified in the context of regenerative tourism experiences involving participants/interviewees. However, **partners** conducting the interviews, **should bear in mind the local context, which might lead them in identification of additional challenges that have not been listed herein**. In this case, **they can add questions, if they consider them to be relevant for the purpose of finding out more about specific situations**.
- **Conduction of the interviews:** You are proposed to schedule interviews with participants and ensure a comfortable and conducive environment for open discussion. Use active listening techniques, probe for deeper insights, and encourage them to share their experiences, ideas, and suggestions.
- **Establishing Rapport:** Begin each interview by introducing yourself, explaining the purpose of the interview, and emphasizing the importance of the participant's perspective. Establish a friendly and open atmosphere to encourage honest and meaningful responses.
- **Document the answers:** You are suggested to take detailed notes during the interviews. Transcribe or record interviews (optionally with the use of a consent note when anonymity is not an issue) to ensure accuracy. Also, if feasible, ask for photos or/and a short bio of your participants. Otherwise, ensure participants' confidentiality and anonymity, if desired. Assure them that their responses will be aggregated and anonymized to protect sensitive information.
- **Follow-up and clarification (optional):** If needed, follow up with stakeholders to seek clarification or gather additional information after the initial interviews. This can help ensure a more accurate understanding of the challenges and barriers.

- **Follow-up and Gratitude:** Send a follow-up email or letter expressing gratitude for the stakeholders' participation. Offer to share the project's findings and demonstrate how their input contributed to shaping the sustainability guide.

Generalized interview questions

1. *The most common definition of regenerative tourism is "leaving things or a place in a better state than visitors found them or it" and most recently it has been stressed that "it is not just about visitors having a positive impact but also for hosts to play an essential role in the process". What do you think regenerative tourism experiences are all about?*

Answer:

Regenerative tourism is a positive experience because it offers the opportunity to benefit from the beauty of places and artworks while also allowing others to enjoy these beauties. In other words, the meaning of regenerative tourism experiences goes beyond mere tourism. Indeed, in my opinion, a regenerative tourism experience is a life experience that doesn't end when the tourist returns home but continues over time and can generate a lasting relationship between the community hosting the tourist, the people, and the tourist themselves. However, it should be emphasized that this term remains challenging for operators and providers of experiences and services in the tourism sector to fully understand and define.

2. *How do you see the future of regenerative tourism?*

Answer:

I believe that regenerative tourism is the tourism of the future and the future of tourism. With the need to manage the planet's resources, respect the places we visit, and preserve the heritage created by human genius over the centuries, it is the only way for these assets to be enjoyed by future generations. Furthermore, forms of regenerative tourism and, more generally, rural tourism, sustainable tourism, and ecotourism are offerings that can capture the evolving and changing tourism trend, especially in the post-Covid period, and the needs of an audience that has fundamentally shifted in its habits and interests.

3. *How do you perceive the importance of sustainability and regeneration in addressing long-term environmental, social, and economic impact?*

Answer:

Today, many people often talk about sustainability, sometimes even without substance. I see this especially in the world of wine and wine tourism; this term is often overused, loses its meaning for consumers/tourists, and does not constitute a real strength of the offering. The word sustainability should indicate more than just the possibility of taking an action today; it should reflect the ability of that action to endure over time and should be perceived and considered in its broadest sense.

4. *What role do local associations, authorities, and infrastructures play in supporting regenerative tourism experiences?*

Answer:

The role of local associations is fundamental in understanding the true needs of a territory. Often, so-called authorities promote actions that are disconnected from the real needs of the users who should



benefit from them. Therefore, the task of authorities and infrastructure should be to facilitate the growth of local initiatives, making it easier for them to operate both in terms of regulations and in terms of coordination and network building. This doesn't always happen, but some municipalities and regions are working against the old ways of doing things.

5. What improvements or collaborations and co-design initiatives, would you suggest in supporting regenerative tourism experiences?

Answer:

Bringing together multiple local entities and promoting moments of interaction and participatory workshops/meetings to encourage the sharing of ideas and objectives is essential. Every entity/organization should have the opportunity to contribute to increase the strength of projects and their ability to impact the territory. Furthermore, it would be important to have a support service that helps initiatives grow, achieving economic sustainability and, especially, overcoming knowledge limitations that hinder their resilience and/or development.

6. What are the main challenges you have encountered in developing and implementing regenerative tourism experiences through collaborations with peers, local authorities, community agents and/or associations and other relevant stakeholders in your area, if any?

Answer:

The most challenging task is making the importance of a project understood. Often, the authorities with the resources to support an initiative are tied to belonging and/or logic that only leads to the immediate support and development of initiatives, ignoring that substantial and lasting change must begin with projects that may not necessarily yield short-term results. Furthermore, the challenge lies in guiding and involving the local socioeconomic fabric, which is often fragmented and insensitive to medium/long-term projects.

7. Would you have suggestions and solutions to share for successfully addressing such challenges?

Answer:

I have to repeat what I said before: building a network. Bringing together individual skills or collective experiences to enrich projects.

8. Can you share any specific environmental impacts that you have identified and the measures you have taken to mitigate them?

Answer:

In the initiatives I have undertaken, environmental impacts have always been carefully monitored and mitigated to ensure sustainability. During our events, mobility is centrally coordinated and optimized, and venues are selected based on specific indicators (such as partial or total energy independence). All catering is designed in collaboration with Slow Food to ensure seasonality and a short supply chain.

9. In your experience, what are the key barriers to involving the local population to participate in regenerative tourism initiatives?

Answer:

Helping them understand that regenerative tourism is a valuable resource and a significant opportunity for everyone and that we need to embark on a journey to improve the tourist's experience, making them part of the community, at least for a few days.

10. What strategies or initiatives have you found effective in educating visitors about sustainable practices and ensuring their active participation in maintaining the area's cleanliness and good practices?

Answer:

It is crucial that event organizers themselves prioritize environmental respect. This, in turn, encourages users to follow the guidelines set in place.

Specific interview questions for individuals and/or representatives of organizations / local authorities / communities / agents that promote community regenerative tourism experiences

- What sustainability challenges or barriers do you currently face in your role/industry/community?

Answer:

For now, there are no specific barriers related to sustainability. The most significant barrier is establishing a constant and lasting dialogue with authorities and institutions.

- Can you provide examples of successful sustainable initiatives or practices you have implemented or observed?

Answer:

An initiative that has been highly successful, where sustainable practices are respected by all visitors and the organization itself, is "Vini D'Abbazia." This event takes place every year at the Fossanova Abbey in the municipality of Priverno, in the province of Latina. Thousands of people participate, and the sacred sites and the village are respected, experienced, and not exploited. The event hosts local producers associated with the Slow Food network, and next year it will include those from the Confederation of Farmers of the province of Frosinone, as well as wineries from the provinces of Latina and Frosinone, and over 50 producers from Italy, France, Georgia, and the Moselle region, all linked to the wine production sector in the abbey. Touristic experiences related to the Slow Food travel universe and slow tourism offerings are integrated for village visitors who stay in the area to discover traditions and routes, deepening their knowledge of wine culture at the Fossanova Abbey.

- What are the key motivators or incentives for your organization/community to embrace sustainable practices?

Answer:

The most significant incentive is that respecting the environment benefits both ourselves and others. Additionally, there is a need to align with the current trend in the tourism industry, where consumers are seeking sustainable and authentic experiences.

- *What obstacles or resistance have you encountered when trying to implement sustainability measures when implementing an event/activity/training?*

Answer:

The key is to make them understand its importance.

- *Are there any specific regulations or policies that hinder or facilitate efforts towards your end?*

Answer:

Bureaucracy and complex rules and regulations are often the biggest obstacle. Furthermore, bureaucratic processes for various matters, such as logistics or the authorization process for space usage, frequently have extended timelines, creating difficulties and delays for the organizer.

- *How do you measure or assess the impact of sustainability initiatives? What metrics or indications do you find most valuable?*

Answer:

The most important indicator is the satisfaction of the people who participate in the event and the number of interactions with visitors, even after the event has ended. An important indicator for our event is media exposure; each year, we set specific targets for the number of appearances and mentions in newspapers, industry publications (wine and tourism), and on the main national television networks (both public and private). This exposure allows local tourism activities and accommodation facilities to continue operating throughout the year. Furthermore, it indirectly encourages collaboration and co-design of specific initiatives.

- *Are there any innovative or emerging technologies that you believe could significantly enhance sustainability efforts?*

Answer:

The possibility, through digital tools like targeted apps, to keep track of various activities, assisting us with the development and monitoring of activities, for instance. If we consider all the aspects related to the organization and positioning of the event, we hold each year with Vini d'Abbazia, there are clearly many vital tools for our work. From marketing the experience to marketing and visitor loyalty, almost all activities are managed digitally. These technologies significantly contribute to the sustainability of events like ours and make management easier for sellers, as well as improving the understanding and purchase experience for buyers.

- *In your opinion, what role should collaboration between different stakeholders play in advancing sustainability goals when implementing activities/events/trainings?*

Answer:

Collaboration and the exchange of experiences play a fundamental role. The network must actively involve and include diverse skills and expertise. However, the fragmentation of the social fabric and the lack of coordination are significant limitations in our reference area.

- *In your opinion what could be preventing collaboration efforts and initiatives?*

Answer:

Believing in self-sufficiency is indeed a challenge. As I mentioned earlier, the lack of coordination and support has led to the absence of a culture of collaboration. Nevertheless, what is a risk for us is mitigated by the media exposure that the event provides. This helps us overcome initial distrust.

- *Do you have any ideas about how to co-design experiences and who might be the parties involved?*

Answer:

Various stakeholders from the territory should be involved, coordinated by the event organizer and assigned clear roles and potential benefits related to the development of a specific part of the initiative. This can lead, in the medium to long term, to the construction of a proactive system and relationship that can effectively lead to participatory processes in the development of experiences.

- *How do you engage and educate your employees/community members about sustainability and regeneration? What strategies have been successful?*

Answer:

Today, it is easier than in the past to convey the importance of sustainability. The term has become part of the common discourse, and it is not challenging for us to communicate this value, especially through social networks and the creation of targeted messages for traditional media. All organizations within the event network are either part of or have connections with the wine industry, which has gradually aligned with sustainability principles over time. As a result, the employees within the network are well aware of these principles.

- *Are there any financial or resource constraints that prevent you from implementing more regenerative practices/experiences? How do you overcome them?*

Answer:

The resources provided by public entities for regeneration projects are still insufficient. Opportunities, primarily linked to European Union funds but managed by the regions, often do not focus on this specific sector and can be difficult to access. To overcome these constraints, we have built a network of private entities that trust us and invest in organizing the event, in addition to the Frosinone/Latina Chamber of Commerce, which provides both technical and financial support.

- *What kind of support or assistance would be most beneficial in addressing sustainability challenges and barriers?*

Answer:

Having the opportunity to engage with professionals who have made sustainability their field of expertise and can address it from various angles is essential. In my opinion, the primary support should still come from local authorities, which need to have a clear mission of coordinating and supporting initiatives in the regenerative and sustainable tourism sector.

Possible additional interview questions, bearing in mind identification of additional challenges, for individuals and/ or representatives of organizations / local authorities / communities / agents that promote community regenerative tourism experiences

▪?

Answer:

▪?

Answer:

(You can add here lines)

Summary of the main points reported by interviewees.

(Please summarise here the main deducted results/points/suggestions of the answers given by your interviewee)

The interviewee offers insights into the world of regenerative tourism, emphasizing its positive impact. They view regenerative tourism as more than just a typical travel experience; it extends into a broader life experience that continues even after the traveller returns home. While acknowledging the term's complexity, they see it as the future of tourism, aligned with the growing need to manage the planet's resources and preserve cultural heritage.

Sustainability is a central theme, with the interviewee cautioning against the overuse of the term, which can dilute its significance. They stress that sustainability should encompass actions with enduring effects across environmental, social, and economic domains.

Local associations and authorities play a vital role in supporting regenerative tourism, with local associations understanding the true needs of their territories. Authorities are encouraged to facilitate the growth of local initiatives, making them more accessible, though challenges may exist.

Collaboration and co-design are highlighted as strategies for enhancing regenerative tourism. Combining local capabilities and fostering interactions through workshops and shared objectives are seen as essential. A support service for initiatives is proposed to promote sustainability and knowledge sharing.

Challenges in regenerative tourism include persuading authorities to prioritize long-term projects and engaging the local socioeconomic fabric. Collaboration is suggested as a way to address these challenges effectively. Mitigating environmental impact is a key focus, with careful monitoring and sustainability measures in place, covering areas such as mobility coordination, venue selection, and sustainable catering. Bureaucracy and complex regulations pose barriers, with extended timelines leading to difficulties in organizing initiatives.

Measuring sustainability initiatives involves assessing participant satisfaction and media exposure.

Collaboration among stakeholders is essential for advancing sustainability goals, though the fragmented social fabric and coordination issues can be challenging. Media exposure is seen to



overcome collaboration challenges, building trust among stakeholders. Co-designing experiences should involve various stakeholders, each assigned specific roles and potential benefits to foster a participatory process.

Sustainability education within the community is aided by the term's integration into common discourse, aided by social networks and targeted messaging.

Financial constraints may hinder regenerative practices, often due to insufficient public resources. Building networks and seeking support from entities like the Chamber of Commerce can mitigate these constraints.

Ultimately, while collaboration with professionals specializing in sustainability is valuable, local authorities are expected to play a pivotal role in coordinating and supporting regenerative tourism initiatives.

