



United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation

With the collaboration of



Experiences and Practices

on Inclusive Sustainable Tourism in Cities and
Localities in the Context of South-South and
Triangular Cooperation

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Foreword

As the world ushers into a magnificent era of profound transformation, UNOSSC and UNESCO present the inspiring compilation "Experiences and Practices on Inclusive Sustainable Tourism in Cities and Localities in the Context of South-South and Triangular Cooperation". This pioneering work sheds light on an increasingly important aspect of our modern, interconnected world - inclusive sustainable tourism. The nexus of culture, economics, and sustainable development is more pertinent than ever, particularly for the cities and localities that can benefit from South-South and Triangular cooperation.

This knowledge product serves as an exploration, a voyage, into the rich tapestry of experiences and practices that various local partners across the global South have employed in their quest for sustainable tourism. It describes how both large and small cities and localities from different regions have navigated the intricate path of preserving their unique cultural heritage, boosting their local economy, and safeguarding their natural environment, all while ensuring inclusivity in their practices. This knowledge product highlights how they have turned the challenge of sustainability into an opportunity for reinventing their identities and amplifying their appeal to international travellers.

In this globalised age, cooperation between nations has taken on a new significance, particularly in the arena of sustainable development. South-South and Triangular cooperation provides a unique framework for such synergies because it is rooted in the principles of solidarity, equality, and mutual benefit. The experiences documented in this knowledge product reveal how these cooperative mechanisms are being leveraged to exchange knowledge, share experiences, and build capacity in the realm of sustainable tourism. In addition to this, the knowledge product displays how these mechanisms enhance the resilience, inclusivity, and sustainability of every locality that uses them.

Through these illuminating narratives, the knowledge product documents the initiatives taken by different Southern cities and localities to promote inclusivity, making tourism accessible to all regardless of physical abilities, age, or economic background. We will traverse the road less travelled by delving into how these localities are promoting indigenous culture and observing how technology plays a pivotal role in fostering sustainable tourism practices.

However, this anthology is not merely a recounting of experiences or a catalogue of practices. It is a dialogue, an invitation to city partners of the global South to engage with these narratives, apply the lessons that were learned here and reach out to other cities through South-South and triangular cooperation. The diversity of experiences serves as a mirror that reflects the collective wisdom and innovation that these southern places have demonstrated in their pursuit of sustainable tourism.

As we turn these pages, we are reminded that sustainable tourism is more than just an industry or an economic driver. It is a commitment to future generations, a testament to our resolve to live in harmony with nature and culture. It is a beacon of hope that reaffirms our belief in a more equitable and sustainable world.

This knowledge product aims to inspire city partners, invite them to think, and spur them into action. It stands as a testament to human resilience, and it represents a shared vision of a future where every city and locality can harness the transformative power of inclusive sustainable tourism. With this knowledge product, we explore the incredible world of sustainable tourism in cities and the great advantages and possibilities of South-South and triangular cooperation.

Introduction

Tourism has become a key player in international commerce, outpacing global economic growth. In 2019, tourism injected \$8.9 trillion into the global economy, 10.3% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The cultural sector depends greatly on the tourism industry (UNESCO, n.d). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, global tourism was experiencing a strong increase in growth over several decades. Since the late 1990s, destinations earning \$1 billion or more from international tourism have almost doubled that number today.

However, the tourism sector has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It exacerbated socioeconomic challenges, such as unemployment, inequality growth, and poverty, and has profoundly impacted the global tourism industry. The Global South experienced significant problems since it relied on tourism as a major economic driver. These circumstances compounded the existing socioeconomic challenges in these countries, cities and localities in which tourism is a significant source of income and employment. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, tourism contributes to about 9.5% of the world's GDP. With travel restrictions and lockdowns, there has been a significant loss of income and employment in these sectors, which led to increased poverty and unemployment rates. According to UNESCO, throughout 2020, international arrivals plunged by 74% worldwide. This dealt a massive blow to the tourism industry, which faces ongoing precarity and unpredictability (UNESCO, n.d).

Many developing countries rely on tourism for foreign exchange earnings. The drastic drop in international travel has resulted in a considerable reduction in these earnings, inhibiting many countries' ability to import necessary goods and decreasing the value of their currencies. However, sustainable tourism has demonstrated its capacity for resilience and adaptability.

The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities". In the process of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, countries of the Global South looked to tourism as a strategic path for reinventing their cities' economies.

Inclusive tourism can generate a series of social benefits that need to be considered beyond immediate income generation. Sustainable tourism is increasingly expected to provide possible pathways to economic growth, cultural development, and social cohesion. This could potentially be done through inclusion, gender equality, poverty reduction, peace, urban development, or sustainable use of biodiversity.

Thus, many cities and localities in the Global South have focused their efforts on reactivating responsible and inclusive sustainable tourism aimed at economic growth (the creation of jobs and economic gains generated by the consumption of goods and services) and the creation of ecosystems that benefit different territories and their communities.

UNOSSC and the South-South Cities Project, in partnership with UNESCO Mexico, implemented the pilot project "South-South Cooperation on Sustainable Tourism Development in Mexican World Heritage Cities". This project was created to develop Mexican world heritage cities by focusing on increasing each city's capacity for sustainable tourism and digital transformation. However, it also aims to strengthen knowledge-sharing, partnership-building, and mutual learning with other cities of the Global South. This is an effort to invite cities to use digital platforms to promote sustainable tourism while cultivating heritage and cultural diversity and taking advantage of the opportunities of South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

As part of this project, the present knowledge product explores and highlights innovative experiences and practices on inclusive tourism that contribute to recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. These experiences and practices are built on the harmonization between tourism and cultural sectors via creativity and digitalization. This knowledge product showcases initiatives that have revamped their tourism policies and models according to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the "Sustainable Development Goal 11: "Sustainable Cities and Communities".

This knowledge product intends to inspire and invite relevant stakeholders and partners working on tourism initiatives in cities and localities across the Global South to increase dialogue, engagement, and mutual learning through sharing and replication of practices, technology, expertise, and knowledge.

More concretely, this knowledge product pursues the following:

- (1) To provide an unprecedented source of examples and reflections on sustainable tourism in Southern cities. These examples include a positive influence on the social well-being of people in cities and localities, following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- (2) To generate synergies between cities via South-South and triangular cooperation and produce positive impacts on the social well-being of local communities.
- (3) To show that local communities are an important part of the development of sustainable tourism by giving examples of how they can participate in the value chain, decision-making, and governance of tourism at the sub-national level.

The process began with a call for submissions that was organized by UNOSSC and UNESCO in June 2022. The submission topic was "Experiences and Practices on inclusive sustainable tourism in cities and localities in the context of South-South and Triangular Cooperation". Around 32 applications were received from the following 22 countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Guinea Equatorial, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Pakistan, Portugal, Somalia, Spain, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

In addition to the diversity of their geographic regions and thematic areas, the selection relied on three main criteria and principles:

- (1) Innovation: new solutions to face challenges and rethink the models of development;
- (2) Sustainability: especially linked to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- (3) Replicability: for the purpose of the South-South and triangular cooperation.

As a second step, the representatives of the selected proposals participated in a technical webinar in September 2022. This was done to present their cases and discuss key questions related to the sustainability, replicability, and possible South-South and triangular cooperation of their projects.

This fruitful exchange highlighted how, despite their diversity, Southern localities can learn from their respective experiences and enhance their local strategies by adopting replicable methodologies and key takeaways.

This knowledge product will also be available on the South-South Galaxy (the UNOSSC digital platform for global knowledge sharing and partnership brokering) and its section for cities, South-South Cities Clusters.

Executive Summary

This knowledge product is part of a series of knowledge products developed by UNOSSC in partnership with UNESCO Mexico and the South-South Cities project. The knowledge product was made to document and exchange experiences and practices of localities on sustainable tourism in the Global South.

This knowledge product specifically showcases sustainable tourism and digitalization strategies that said localities have adopted to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. These strategies converted challenges into opportunities and involved rethinking development models.

The primary aim of this knowledge product is to capitalize on the lessons learned from localities that had to rethink their tourism policies to address the new paradigm shifts that resulted from the COVID-19 crisis.

10 cases from 7 countries make up the core of this knowledge product. These cases cover cross-cutting topics, such as sustainable tourism, tourism for the promotion of diversity, sustainable development through digital cultural tourism, and tourism as an axis for inclusive economic recovery in cities. The 10 cases include the following:

1. Salvador da Bahia, Brazil: The Afro Feminine Walk;
2. O'Higgins Region, Chile: The Adaptation to climate change for cattle herders;
3. Henan Province, China: Henan's practice of developing digital tourism in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic;
4. Hubei Province, China: The Mining and Metallurgy Industrial Heritage Protection Volunteer Service Model;
5. Cantarranas, Honduras: Inclusive tourism and its post-pandemic evolution in a resilient municipality in Honduras;
6. **Himachal Pradesh and Agra, India: Steps Toward Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism Development;**

7. Hyderabad, Telangana, India: Touristic Walk through tangible and intangible heritage;
8. Mérida, México: A Festival to empower the local communities through the creative economy;
9. Querétaro, México: Agenda Creativa, Querétaro Creative City of Design;
10. Sidi Kaouki, Province of Essaouira, Morocco: Facing new challenges with ecotourism.

Each of these cases is presented with the same structure, answering the questions: where, who, what, and when. Additionally, it addresses which SDGs are examined in each case and how the examination was done. Subsequently, the reader can find the summary, the context, and the description of the project (including approach, methodology, and results). After that, each chapter has a dedicated section that analyzes the balance and replicability of the initiative and a box presenting the cross-cutting topics shown in the project.

The last section of each case offers a summary of the lessons and takeaways that could be replicable to other Southern cities. It then analyzes how each southern locality adapts its models and strategies based on the following criteria:

- Reactivity, creativity, flexibility;
- Circular approach;
- Cross-cutting management;
- Digitalization;
- Replicability;
- South-South Cooperation

The knowledge product concludes with policy recommendations to support and inspire Southern cities to develop similar projects and strategies through South-South and triangular cooperation.

Finally, Southern cities interested in pursuing networking and cooperation are invited to learn more about the products and services of UNOSSC, particularly the South-South Cities Clusters, a digital knowledge-sharing and partnership brokering platform.

Table of Cases

Case Nº	Location	Short Title	Focus Area	SDGs
1	Salvador da Bahia, Brazil	The Afro Feminine Walk	Tourism for the promotion of diversity	5, 11, 13, 17
2	O'Higgins Region, Chile	The Adaptation to climate change for cattle herders	Tourism planning based on local needs and interests	11, 13, 15
3	Henan Province, China	Henan's practice of digital tourism	Sustainable development through digital cultural tourism	8, 11, 17
4	Hubei Province, China	4+5+N: Mining and Metallurgy Industrial Heritage Protection Volunteer Service Model	Heritage protection through education and voluntary services	4, 11
5	City of Cantarranas, Honduras	Cantarranas, a resilient municipality in Honduras	Tourism as an axis for inclusive economic recovery in cities	3,6,8,11
6	Himachal Pradesh, and Agra, India	Steps Toward Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism Development	Tourism for the promotion of diversity	5, 6, 8, 11, 12
7	City of Hyderabad, India	Touristic walks though tangible and intangible heritage	Tourism planning based on local needs and interests	15, 11, 13, 14
8	Mérida, Mexico	Sustainable perspectives from a creative city	The digital environment and the use of technologies for the participation and inclusion of communities in the tourism sector	8, 10, 11, 17
9	Querétaro, Mexico	Agenda Creativa	Creative tourism through community empowerment and digitalization	1, 11, 8, 17
10	Sidi Kaouki, Province of Essaouira, Morocco	Sidi Kaouki Ecovillage	Sustainable development through inclusive and creative ecotourism.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 17

1. Salvador Da Bahia, Brazil

“The Afro Feminine Walk – “Caminhar Afro Feminine”

Where? Salvador da Bahia (Brazil)

Who? Instituto Caminhabilidade (before SampaPé!) - Non-Profit Organization based in São Paulo. Instituto Caminhabilidade (Walkability Instituto) created the project alongside the National Tourist Development Program (PRODETUR), the Secretary of Culture and Tourism of Salvador, and the InterAmerican Development Bank (IADB).

What? Tourism for the promotion of diversity, gender equality, pluralism, languages, and cultural heritage. The initiative promotes a culture of peace and the exercising of human rights as part of sustainable tourism in cities.

When? Ongoing. It is continually implementing solutions through different government partners and looking for funding.

Which Sustainable Development Goals Does it Involve? 5, 11, 13, 17



This project aims to add walkability and public space development to Salvador's Afro-ethnic Tourist Plan. It is focused on the representation of Afro-descendant women's groups, as well as on more sustainable territories. It relies on a replicable methodology that involves different groups of local stakeholders. This allows the project to

analyze the conditions and impacts that walkability in the center of Salvador might have on the city. It also identifies the weaknesses that public spaces currently have, to convert them into opportunities for urban re-design and sustainable tourism development.

Context And Challenges

The Afro Feminine Walk project was conceptualized in Salvador da Bahia by the non-profit Organization Instituto Caminhabilidade. Instituto Caminhabilidade worked with the National Touristic Development Program (PRODETUR), the Secretary of Culture and Tourism of Salvador, and the InterAmerican Development Bank (IADB) to develop the project within the framework of Salvador’s Afro-ethnic Touristic Plan (Prodetur Salvador, 2022).¹

The Afro Feminine Walk project focuses on the importance of walkability and public space development in Salvador da Bahia. More specifically, it focuses on the perspective of Afro-descendant Women’s collectives. “Walkability” is a concept that appeared in the 1960’s, referring to the capacity for people to access amenities by foot. Today, it is a core concept of sustainable urban design and relies on the following criteria: usefulness (accessibility to useful equipment); security (related to infrastructures and delinquency); comfort (related to the state of infrastructures); attractiveness (environment attractions or other opportunities of interaction).



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1 This project was conceived and implemented within the framework of the Action Plan for the development of Afro-Ethnic Tourism in Salvador (2019), which is “the conclusion of a participatory project for the definition of actions that aim to bring together the segment of black entrepreneurs, especially women, providing products and services that make up the most significant in cultural production and tourist experiences in the city, in order to expand the offer of work, employment and income” . Additional information can be found at: <http://www.prodeturssa.salvador.ba.gov.br/index.php/documentos/197-plano-de-acao-para-o-desenvolvimento-do-turismo-etnico-afro-emsalvador-2>

These subjective criteria make the gender perspective a condition of walkability, especially from the point of view of women’s perception of safety. That’s why this topic is particularly relevant in the historic center of Salvador da Bahia, which is also the city’s center of tourism. Since colonial Salvador (1500-1822), black women have been a socio-economic driver. They accomplished this by trading and selling different products and services in public spaces to both locals and tourists.

The data highlights the relevance of this proposal. Women represent 53.3% of Salvador’s population, and 78% of those women are black (IBGE, 2010 Census). According to the Commuting Survey (2012), 38% of daily trips in the city are carried out exclusively on foot, and 32.3% by public transport. 56.35% of these trips are carried out by women. They have always been the most exposed to the risks of occupying public spaces and pedestrian areas. Yet, in Salvador, public authorities haven’t considered this issue a priority concern.

As such, through a holistic approach, this project aims to:

- (1) Assess the weaknesses of walkability in the historical and touristic center of Salvador da Bahia. This is done through a participatory methodology that integrates three groups: public servants, afro-women entrepreneurs, and employees of the tourism sector.
- (2) Propose measures that enhance the tourist experience and the livelihood of local populations. More specifically, it aims to enhance the livelihood of the Afro-descendant Women’s collectives, who are the main beneficiaries of the tourist activity in this area.

The overall objective of the project is to indicate paths for improving the urban space in the Historic Center of Salvador. It aims to generate cooperation and networking with Southern cities that are experiencing similar situations so that they can adopt good practices and replicable effective models.

In this sense, the plan is innovative, as it marks the first time that the Afro perspective has been placed at the center of institutional decision-making. The project intends to transform the objective of tourism plans so that they do not solely focus on consumption. The goal is to have plans that also consider how tourist activities might interfere in the territory, in the public space, and with how local people relate to both things.

Project and Strategies

Touristic sites in Salvador rarely consider social marker intersections such as gender or ethnicity in walkability. These aspects are only considered when participative methodologies are put in place. This project created a space where groups from both the public and private sectors (residents and those in the tourism industry) got to analyze walkability and see how it could help create environments that better welcome and represent black women and support their trades while generating more respectful and inclusive tourism.

This holistic culturally integrated approach also aims to create a sustainable ecosystem that:

- (1) Gives visibility to the demands of gender and race when it comes to public space and walkability.
- (2) Empowers female citizens, mainly black women.
- (3) Builds a legacy to include the perspective of gender and race as a criterion of future projects.
- (4) Expands the link between tourism and walking and the quality of public spaces for residents.
- (5) Strengthens the model of walkable cities and promotes gender and race as a starting point in the transformation of cities.
- (6) Highlights the good practices that can be replicable and promote transformation in other cities.

Concretely, this project aims at building bridges between different actors involved in city planning and decision-making. It aims to create a means and space for marginalized populations to participate actively in territorial transformations. In other words, the project wants to make the planning of touristic public spaces more collaborative by including marginalized populations in the dialogue. The goal is to build fairer, safer, and more welcoming cities, especially for women.

Methodology

There are many methodologies to adapt walkability into a local context and create intersections with other themes and social conditions.



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Evaluating public spaces dedicated to walking is the first step toward assessing the walkability of the city. This helps the city understand its dimensions from the perspective of its urban population and create more humane, democratic, and fair urban spaces.

The methodology developed by the Afro Feminine Walk project is comprised of different stages: analyzing the local context and territory, defining the itinerary, participating in in-person walking workshops, analyzing the results, and recommending changes.

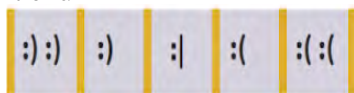
In order to develop a strategic plan and meaningful action steps, participatory processes were carried out. These processes involved workshops that brought together leaders and agents of Afro-ethnic tourism in Salvador, as well as individual interviews and field research with people who work in the tourism sector. The focus was on tourism in the following areas: Pelourinho, Liberdade, Rio Vermelho, Itapuã, and Curuzu.

The invitation to participants was carried out by the PRODETUR Salvador team with the support of Instituto Caminhabilidade. It was addressed to **representatives of government delegations** that could intervene in public spaces, **afro Entrepreneurs** who deal with tourism activities in the territory, and **touristic agents** (such as guides and agency representatives).

Participants filled out a form on the first day of the face-to-face workshop, and their profiles were created in a database. Most of the participants were Afro-entrepreneurs, and since many of them lived in the center of Salvador, they also brought their perspectives as local residents.

This stage of the project was divided into two steps: 1. The Walk of Sensations 2. The Walk to Analyze Walkability with Gender and Race Perspectives.

1. **The Walk of Sensations** was the face-to-face workshop on the first day, and it aimed to reflect the emotions and subjective sensations experienced by the people participating. It went through the nighttime route of interest. At this stage, the itinerary was followed by the group, but the analysis was done at a personal level. For this, the participants were asked to walk in silence, pretending they were alone, and use the following "sensation recording scale" to indicate how they felt in each section of the walk:



Source: Instituto Caminhabilidade.

In addition to the scale, each participant could also describe and report any possible racial and gender discrimination or violence they experienced or witnessed. This was analyzed in detail in the next step.

2. **The Walk to Analyze Walkability with Gender and Race Perspectives.** For this walk, five participants were selected from the first workshop: the two with the most negative analysis, the two with the most positive analysis, and the participant with the most neutral analysis. These participants were divided into six groups of about 5 people and were asked to analyze the itineraries based on the following six perspectives:
 - (1) Power to walk: basic conditions of walking safely.
 - (2) Power to arrive and leave: accessibility.
 - (3) Power to see and be seen: transparency to see and to take refuge.
 - (4) Power to be: rain and sun protection, as well as safety.
 - (5) Power to belong: representativeness through information and symbols.
 - (6) Power to feel and interact: relationship with senses, space, and diversity of people.

Graphs and maps were produced for the walk and, together with qualitative justifications of the evaluations, were tabulated for further analysis.

Results and Lessons Learned

Maps were superimposed on the results to find which areas had more negative or positive incidents. This was done to find the best solutions and strategies for improving walkability in the historic center of Salvador. The goal was to bring more visibility to gender and race demands and tourism development.

As a result, the project proposed 20 replicable solutions to the city, inspired by initiatives developed in other cities both Southern and Northern. The solutions are as follows:

1. **Physical activity programs for women** to promote safety in public spaces (inspired by "Women's Gym Project, Marabá, Brazil).
2. **Streets, monuments, and black women signs** to counterbalance the under-representation of black women in public spaces (inspired by and paying tribute to Mercedes Baptista, the first black dancer in the Theatre of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil).
3. **A readability system** that includes the implementation of signs that represent and highlight the stories of black people (inspired by Jardim Nakamura, South Zone of São Paulo, Brazil).
4. **Campaigns against harassment and racism** to generate security by learning about representativeness (inspired by a local campaign in Buenos Aires, Argentina).
5. **Anti-racist and anti-sexist refuges spaces.** These are created by engaging local private sector companies to declare themselves environments free of racial and gender prejudice (inspired in Curitiba, Brazil).
6. **The Planting of vegetation in the center** to make the environment more welcoming, especially given Salvador's climate (inspired by a campaign in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil).
7. **Level travels and following "desire lines".** This is done by enhancing the connections and making equipment and important areas more accessible (inspired by Santo André city, Sao Paolo, Brazil).
8. **Sun and rain protection structures** to meet the pedestrian's needs (inspired by the Municipal Association of Victoria, Australia).

9. **Furniture for sitting.** This guarantees the permanence and diversity of people in public spaces (inspired by the CityBench Program in New York City).
10. **Sidewalks and floor maintenance.** This is done through partnerships with local businesses and residents who can quickly indicate where maintenance is needed (inspired by the Sao Paulo Plan, Brazil).
11. **Stimulus for commerce and night activities.** This helps ensure safety (inspired by the *Women's Safety Night Charter*, London City, UK, and the "*Night Mayor*" function in Amsterdam, Holland).
12. **Infrastructure for bicycles.** This is done through bike lanes and bike-sharing systems for tourists and residents (inspired by Ciclorouta Petrópolis, Brazil).
13. **Commerce, art, and vegetation in blind façades.** This enhances security through the presence of people (inspired by the Blank Walls project, Charlotte, USA).
14. **Shared streets** that give priority to those walking in the middle of shared streets (inspired by "5 new areas with pedestrian priority", Buenos Aires, Argentina).
15. **Play areas for children** with art and ludic structures (inspired by the City of Jundiaí, Brazil).
16. **A street parking arrangement** that reduces physical and visual barriers, which can increase the feeling of insecurity (inspired by Whangārei District Council, New Zealand).
17. **Touristic Information Centers** that serve as support equipment and create more security (inspired by Accessible Tourism Centres in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil).
18. **Visibility and structure for women's street trade** (inspired by "Google Maps creates a seal to promote the visibility of black merchants).

19. **Quality public bathrooms** (inspired by Washmatters – Wateraid – UNICEF report).

20. **Retrofit and social housing in commerce.** This helps unite historic revitalization (inspired by the city of João Pessoa (Brazil)).

The main challenges faced by the project were the issues involving walkability, public spaces, and gender and race perspective that require the engagement of cross-cutting public administration to combine competencies and financial sourcing. The integration of different governmental levels (Municipal, Bahia state) and segments is essential to promote transversal territorial transformation.

In this sense, the project built a legacy for public servants' technicians. Considering problems from the perspective of both gender and race will be intrinsic elements for future projects. The Afro-descendant women participating in the workshops were strengthened and empowered with both the tools to influence the city's transformation.

Regarding the methodology, the challenge was to mediate groups of participants of different backgrounds. Through this process, the methodology appeared to be not only a tool for analysis but a means of creating connection. It was a tool for communication and empathy between different groups. Despite schedules, restrictions, and immunization protocols, this connection promoted greater resilience in the communities in touristic areas.

This explains why these workshops indirectly built relationships between 35 people from three different groups (public servers, afro-women entrepreneurs, and tourist-receptive workers) that were not connected before. They brought mutual understanding and long-term interaction. Ultimately, these workshops helped solve urban touristic challenges while creating a good practice model that utilizes participatory processes to transform cities.



Replicability

Replicability has been demonstrated throughout this project, as it was created by people inspired by previous initiatives of and references to the “Walkability process”. The methodology used is authored by Instituto Caminhabilidade and based on two of the organization’s methods to assess walkability and gender in other Brazilian localities: Women Walkers! (São Paulo) and the Gender-Sensitive Walkability Technical Index (Curitiba). Both methods were developed after an extensive theoretical and methodological review. They were further developed through empirical use and the accumulated knowledge of the organization.

The 20 recommendations proposed by the project have been inspired by cases and policies from other Southern and Northern cities of the world with approaches to urban planning with a special focus on safety, inclusivity, and walkability. These are essential components of contemporary city planning and design.

- Walkability Index of ITDP Brazil: The Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP) Brazil focuses on promoting sustainable and equitable transportation worldwide. Their Walkability Index focuses on the city’s pedestrian-friendliness and considers factors like the availability of sidewalks, the availability of crossing points, and the connectivity of walking routes.
- The Guide for Building a Safe Urban Environment: This plan focuses on city designs that reduce crime and promote the safety of residents. This can involve things like improving lighting, implementing more security measures, and designing spaces to encourage community interaction and natural surveillance.

- The Women and Cities program: A program of this kind looks to make cities safer and more inclusive for women, addressing issues like safety, accessibility, and equality in urban spaces.
- Habitable Entornos: Translating to “Habitable Environments”, this Spanish resource explores how to create urban environments that are pleasant and appealing to live in. It focuses on aspects like green space, building design, and community facilities.
- Spaces for Everyday Life: Urban Quality Audit from a Gender Perspective: This resource is concerned with ensuring that urban spaces cater to the needs and experiences of all genders. It takes into account several aspects, such as safety, accessibility, and the availability of facilities like toilets. All of these can disproportionately affect different genders.

For South-South cooperation, this project is replicable, as the methodology can be adopted by other cities facing the same challenges. It could be upscaled to other neighborhoods, cities, or regions, particularly in the Global South.

2. O'higgins Region, Chile

“Adaptation to climate change for cattle herders”

Where? O'Higgins Region, Chile

Who? Universidad Tecnológica Metropolitana (Metropolitan Technological University) in Santiago, with the support of the Regional Government of O'Higgins, 7 municipalities, Codelco, El Teniente Division, Tourism companies in the mountain range territory, and several related companies (hotels, restaurants, tour operators, and commerce companies that participate in the tourism production chain and make it possible for tourists to visit the area).

What? Climate change adaptation framework for muleteers-ranchers

When? Ongoing. The project is in its 2nd year of execution. According to the work plan, the term is 3 years of execution. It has financing from the Regional Government of O'Higgins.

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are involved? 11, 13, 15



© Rodrigo Suazola

Funded by the Regional Government of the region of Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins, this project involves the co-construction of a climate change adaptation framework developed with the muleteer communities from seven municipalities in the Andean sector of the O'Higgins region in central Chile. The project focuses on the adaptive management of ecosystems, tourism, culture, and governance. It aims to be replicable in other localities of the Andean regions in Chile, Colombia, Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, and/or other mountain areas of the Global South affected by the same issues.

The project builds a framework for adaptation to climate change for the muleteers and ranchers of the foothills of the O'Higgins region. The goal is to strengthen the resilience of the territory by implementing governance schemes for the regional ecosystem, designing technical and productive solutions for mountain livestock, constructing and integrating base information on the territory, defining a land use cycle, and improving competitiveness.

Context and Challenges

Muleteers (or "arrieros") are the persons who transport goods using pack animals, especially mules. They have been part of the Andean ecosystem for five centuries, transferring their traditions from generation to generation.

However, the central zone of Chile has experienced a 12-year-long mega-drought due to climate change, which has affected the ecosystem and many services related to it. Muleteer activity in the O'Higgins region decreased by 92% between 1990 and 2022. This gradual loss of livelihood leads to a sustained loss of community and the social construct that allows for collective use of the territory for muleteer activity. This situation requires adaptation measures to persist in the face of environmental changes.

Tourism has been identified as something that can (re)activate the value chain and enable the implementation of a holistic system. Naturally, this system would include agricultural production that is adapted to the characteristics of climate change. It would also involve the creation of a new tourism product that will encourage young people to maintain the muleteer traditions.

The decrease of the muleteer activity could be a consequence of several factors:

1. The lower availability of water resources (there has been a 70% decrease in rainfall), which impacts the availability of feed for livestock and threatens the existence of the mountain ecosystem, limiting its resilience.
2. The lower profitability for these activities in a regional market that has increased due to urban consumption patterns.

3. The lack of a model of governance to enable the surveillance and monitoring of the mountain ecosystem. This would allow the construction of new rules between the different actors that belong to and participate in the territory.
4. The effects of climate change in the O'Higgins region, which threatens livestock activity and the livelihood of entire families. These effects also threaten the traditional cultural activity of the muleteer communities, which is a part of the region's heritage and identity.

At the same time, there is a worldwide growing interest in a type of rural tourism that is more respectful of the natural environment and local populations. This new demand provides new opportunities for the O'Higgins region. However, it is necessary to reorient the territory's tourism sector and industry, which is irregular. Since before the COVID-19 pandemic, there hasn't been much to draw tourists in the high Andean sector. This is due to many diverse factors. Two of these are the authorities' limited knowledge of how to leverage the territory's attractions and the lack of innovation to attract investors that could develop the area's infrastructure and quality services.

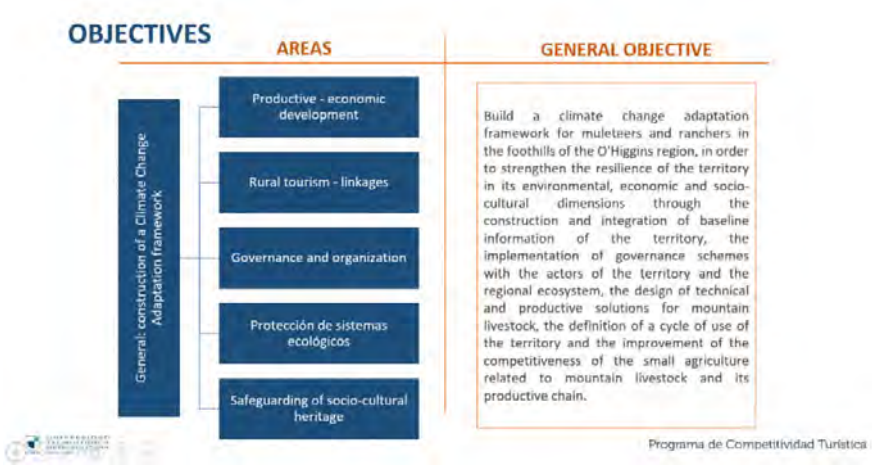
Until COVID-19, the only tourist activity in the region was a residual demand from occasional tourists and local excursionists interested in the muleteer traditions. Concretely, there are about 10 private sector companies that are formally present or in the process of being present in the territory. Each of these 10 companies provides horseback riding for tourists to the Andean sector in the O'Higgins region, but no customer surveys have been made to measure the actual demand.

Project and Strategies

The project "Transfer of adaptation to climate change of muleteers-ranchers"¹² aims to help the muleteers and ranchers of the foothills of the O'Higgins region by building a framework for adapting to climate change. The goal is to strengthen the resilience of the territory in a sustainable manner. This will be done through the construction of a regional database, the implementation of governance schemes for the regional ecosystem, the design of technical and productive solutions for mountain livestock, the definition of a cycle for the use of land, and the improvement of touristic competitiveness. The project aims to provide answers to both environmental and economic challenges by developing sustainable tourism with a strong social-human focus. It strives to improve coordination between the muleteers' communities, the private sector, and the local, regional, and national touristic government representatives.

This project is motivated by the evolution of touristic demand at the global level. The demand for more cultural, personalized, and authentic experiences is rising. This has forced public institutions (both national and subnational) to reorient their strategic plans and support the development of experiential tourism experiences, particularly in rural areas. The current overgrazing and the scarcity of water make it very hard to make a living as a muleteer. These challenges have led to fewer and fewer people dedicated to *muleteering*, which weakened the area's regional touristic activity. If this continues, the O'Higgins Region will lose an important part of its cultural heritage and identity.

The project seeks to advance the co-construction of a framework for adapting to climate change via different dimensions of the muleteer activity. Its main



Source: Programa de Competitividad Turística/UTEM Chile

strategic focus is on utilizing both local and scientific knowledge to improve the tourism dimension of the muleteer activity. It aims to design and implement products related to rural tourism. This would act as a complementary activity for muleteers and ranchers of the region. With this type of productive chaining, the project aims to rescue the existing tourism activities and create new experiences. This strategy has the added benefit of providing enabling equipment for the muleteers and ranchers. At a micro-level, the project aims to communicate to the local communities (particularly the youth) the importance of transitioning to a cultural tourism model. A cultural tourism model would safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of the muleteer and livestock activity and maintain the value of existing agricultural heritage practices as regional territorial assets. Additionally, it would rescue a part of their cultural heritage and propose relevant linkage mechanisms and activities with communities, which would ensure knowledge-transfer between generations. This project suggests that useful information should be constructed and collected at the local level and utilized for political decision-making. This could be replicable in other territories, both in Chile and in other Latin American countries,

that share similar challenges and opportunities.

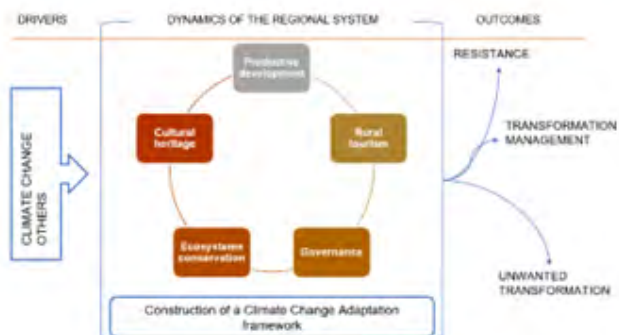
The relevance of the project relies on creating a systemic touristic model built from the communities' knowledge. At the same time, it needs to develop pilot activities that fit with new touristic demands and have results that can be measured through indicators.

For that reason, the preliminary stage of the project focused on mapping community-identified areas that have shown significant changes in biodiversity and a decline in muleteer activity. The information collected included indicators of the use of natural resources and the region's biodiversity.

- **At the first level**, the project considers stimulating the production of food for animals (hydroponic green fodder). This would address the loss of competitiveness that the livestock activity has faced due to droughts and the lack of food.

- **At the second level**, rural and special-interest tourism will be strengthened and promoted, particularly touristic activities carried out by muleteers exploring the mountain range.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES



In base at Chapin et al. (2009)

Programa de Competitividad Turística

Source: Programa de Competitividad Turística/UTEM Chile

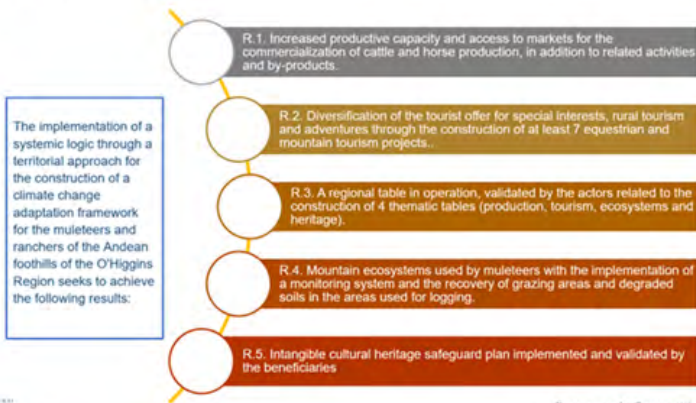
Pilot rural tourism activities were co-created by muleteers and ranchers to improve existing ones. Existing activities that were improved included things like horseback riding, informally managed touristic services, and underutilized natural and cultural touristic resources.

As an example, beneficiaries were trained on how to co-design a “glamping” experience that was targeted at regional and international tourists. The project covered the cost of materials, training courses needed to lead the experience, and other training courses on entrepreneurship. Pilot projects like this are organized in partnership with SERNATUR (National Tourism Service of Chile).

These trainings led to the development of better interpretive trails, which act as a greater monitoring tool of the mountain ecosystem. Better interpretive trails also help deliver quality scientific-based information to visitors, as demonstrated in other popular natural areas (i.e., National Parks in Patagonia).

The project aims to enhance the governance between the beneficiaries and the institutions that are directly involved. This will strengthen the social fabric of the community and inform all partners about the direct threat that climate change presents.

EXPECTED RESULTS



Programa de Competitividad Turística

Source: Programa de Competitividad Turística/UTEM Chile

Results and Lessons Learned

This project has been fostering the awareness and engagement of the muleteers' communities and its younger generations, who did not perceive its entrepreneurship potential. The participatory methodology enabled them to be involved through the training and co-creation of the tourist experiences. It also raised the regional and local authorities' awareness of climate transition and alerted them to the need for a holistic sustainable tourism model.

Digitalization tools were used to reach target groups during the lockdowns, which were a challenge for the older generations. But provided a great opportunity to reach younger population groups. This process also helped preserve the collective memory of the muleteer's traditions through interviews and participatory mapping exercises. It identified the indicators that would help define adaptive management mechanisms for the use of resources in the mountain range.

The transdisciplinary approach of using co-creation

workshops contributed to the construction of a framework for adapting to climate change. This framework was made to help the area overcome poverty and access knowledge and other resources to improve both muleteer and livestock farming activities in a sustainable way. Among the results and proposals, the idea of gender mainstreaming has been suggested. This would incorporate a different way of managing the territory as a whole, allowing both the women and youths of the muleteer community to participate.

In addition to positively impacting the local communities, replicability is one of the main purposes of this project. The designed methodology could be implemented in other regions of the world with similar characteristics. The results are public and freely accessible. The goal is to generate conversation between decision-makers and deliver project information to municipalities and other institutions.



© Gonzalo Perez

Replicability

The project has participated in exchanges with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and with universities in Argentina, Peru, and Uruguay. It has generated an Andean region working group that includes representatives from muleteer organizations, local governments, development agencies, academia, and the private sector in the region. Gender mainstreaming and gender and climate change analysis have been incorporated throughout the entire intervention process. This was done to find different ways to manage the territory as a whole and allow greater participation of the women and the youth of the muleteer communities.

The established work mechanisms aim to contribute to capacity development at the local level. One of these mechanisms' goals is to help the area overcome poverty and provide access to knowledge and other resources that could improve muleteer and livestock farming activities in a sustainable way. The activities have made it possible to carry out workshops with the rural community, including young people, which helped avoid selective migration. The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) participated in this initiative. They are represented in all the countries of Latin America, and their participation gave the project access to various mechanisms for technical transfer in the field of agriculture.

A network on climate change was coordinated by the University of Buenos Aires. This project took part in that network and interacted with and shared knowledge with several different countries in Latin America, such as Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile.

The project participated in the community practice called "Adaptation in the Andes" organized by the United Nations Program for Environment (UNEP) and other partners. Through the community of practice, the project exchanged experiences and knowledge with other institutions in the Andes Region in Latin America, which was an important step toward replicability.

3. Henan Province, China

“Henan’s practice in developing digital tourism in the context of the pandemic”

Where? Henan Province, China

Who? Foreign Affairs Office of the People’s Government of Henan Province, China

What? Sustainable development through digital cultural tourism

When? Ongoing.

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are involved? 8, 11, 17



Located in the central part of China, the Province of Henan³ stretches over an area that is 167,000 km wide. It is the third-most populous province in China and has a population of over 99 million. Its capital is Zhengzhou. Henan is a cultural landmark as it is the birthplace of the Han Chinese civilization.

It has over 3,200 years of history and is home to many heritage sites, including the ruins of the Shang dynasty capital city Yin, and the Shaolin Temple. More recently, Henan has focused on making digital cultural tourism a driver of its economic and social development.

Context and Challenges

China's cultural tourism industry has been strongly affected by the pandemic. According to the Statistical Report on Cultural and Tourism Development by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China,⁴ by the end of 2021, the cultural tourism industry had lost 118,900 employees (compared with the previous year). Due to the pandemic, both the number of tourists and the revenue produced in 2020 were a third of those recorded in 2019. During the "May 1st" International Labour Day holiday in 2020, Henan received a total of 16.92 million domestic tourists and achieved a revenue of 7.926 billion yuan (1.087 billion USD). During the "May 1st" holiday in 2019, Henan received a total of 36.3912 million domestic tourists and produced 23.037 billion yuan (3.1607 billion USD).⁵

In response to this situation, the Eleventh Henan Provincial Congress (September 7th, 2021) established the goal of promoting modernization through the Ten Strategies of High Quality.⁶ Culturally inspired products were included, making tourism a major strategy.

Project and Strategies

The 5th Strategy referred to the "implementation of the strategy of integrating culture, tourism, and creativity". This involved constructing a differentiated tourism sector, built and based on cultural content. Additionally, this strategy aimed to use technology to face the challenges imposed by the pandemic, particularly the mobility restrictions. It also aimed to design an innovative draw for tourists. This draw can be content created by technology or the technology itself.

The goal of this new cultural tourism attraction is to reactivate and strengthen the full chain of the cultural and creative industry. Ultimately, the goal is to convert this industry into a driver of the creative economy and to position China (and Henan in particular) as a pioneer in the digital tourism field, strengthening it as a tourism destination.

To implement these strategies, the Henan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism coordinated a specific Plan for the epidemic prevention and the business development of cultural tourism enterprises.

The plan is based on 3 main axes:

- **The first axis is the direct implementation of policies.** More than 40 work measures have been developed at the provincial government level for the benefit of the cultural and tourism industry and its stakeholders. With this in mind, the Henan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism will coordinate cross-cutting public departments to build a framework and implement policies that directly benefit cultural and tourism enterprises. These policies will often be in terms of tax measures and include things, such as legislation, cost reduction of essential resources, employment support, and more.

- **The second axis is the establishment of a mechanism for provincial and municipal collaboration.** This mechanism aims to optimize territorial management, following the requirements of the provincial ministry. In this way, the Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism will help cultural and tourism enterprises adapt epidemic prevention/control measures that follow the Ministry's Guidelines. This assistance will take the form of advice, supervision, daily inspection, and the allocation of workforce and materials necessary for the prevention/control of epidemics.

- **The third axis is based on digitization.** Since the pandemic, digitalization appears to be the only means capable of maintaining tourist activity. So, Henan will focus on using its digital technology to develop cultural tourism.

The first stage of the program defined by Henan aims at the digitization of society in general and the use of big data. This will help tourism in several ways such as improving public transport to better link with scenic spots and streamline the flow through tourist destinations.

4 Government of China, 2021

5 Ibid

6 Ibid

The second stage of Henan's program makes the digital space a driver of innovation that will profoundly change their mode of production, their way of life, and their tourism. In this vein, smart cultural tourism platforms have been set up to cover three functions:

- (1) to offer online cultural tourism content.
- (2) to promote destinations on a global scale.
- (3) to build a framework that allows them to structure and potentiate the sector of digital cultural tourism, converting it into an engine for the rest of the economy.

1- Regarding online cultural tourism content, with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, digital tourism overcame the limitations of traditional tourism **by providing better and more diversified online services and culture and tourism content for the global audience.**

The traffic on live webcasts and videos has greatly increased. Users of new formats are on the rise. These formats include mediums, such as cloud entertainment, cloud exhibitions, and live broadcasts. The viability of digital tourism has been demonstrated in many ways, like the many local museums that have launched online exhibitions or the scenic spots that have opened online tour functions and cultural tourism products. People can enjoy the great rivers and mountains and rich and colourful cultures of a place without leaving their homes.

To implement this strategy, the Province of Henan focused on the general policy of "*Creativity leads, Digital first*". They did this by building a cloud platform to promote their local culture. The platform broadcasts content from culture and tourism institutions, creative entrepreneurs, craftsmen, and many more businesses. These contents can be shared and reused to promote the cultural and creative resources of Henan.

As an example, on the Labour Day holiday in 2022, Henan launched "Cloud Show" and "Cloud Tourism" and held a series of online performances under the background of normalization of pandemic prevention and control. The WeChat public platform launched online promotion activities, allowing the public to enjoy the unique scenery of Jianghuai. Throughout the rural tourism season, Guangzhou invited netizens, bloggers, travel experts, photographers, and media representatives to go to its villages for an in-depth exploration. Guangzhou also showed the beauty of its villages through live broadcasts. Many scenic spots in Beijing, Liaoning, Shaanxi, and many other places opened live broadcasts on TikTok, AAuto

Quicker, and other live broadcast platforms. They led tourists on a "cloud tour" with plenty of "commentary while touring".

One relevant initiative was undertaken by the Luoyang Museum, which was founded in 1958 and situated in the Yellow River valley. Their initiative showcases the historical past of Luoyang, from Neolithic times up to 937 A. This history is shown using high-techs services, such as multimedia projection walls, multimedia interactions, and virtual reality projections. They converted the "Highlights of Heluo Culture Exhibition" into a variety of immersive interactions and experiences.

Another example of this digitalization strategy is the "*Longmen Grottoes Intelligent Cultural Tourism Digital Platform*". It brings different panoramic immersive experiences to tourists through the virtualization of cultural heritage. At the same time, the platform relies on the influence of the Longmen Grottoes to create an ecological industry chain. It utilizes spatio-temporal data that provides a comprehensive monitoring system and an analysis of data, such as passenger flow, facility utilization, commercial sales, and visitors' behaviour in the scenic areas. This effectively promotes the scientific operation and optimization of scenic spots.

More generally, Henan wants to seize the trend of the "meta-universe", to create an online space for cultural tourism that combines the virtual with the real.

As an example of this, on June 1st, 2022, the theatre "Unique Henan-Land of Drama" showcased 39 pieces replicated from 12 different museums, such as the Henan Museum, the Luoyang Museum, and the Kaifeng Museum. They offered an immersive experience to tourists in a field of golden wheat, converting it into a virtual "museum in a field of golden wheat".

2- Smart cultural tourism platforms were also used to globally promote Henan as a destination "driven by creativity and digitalization". Specific campaigns were launched, focusing on forging the brand of "Henan, Cradle of China". These campaigns were completed through the platform via interactive and participatory features. Thus, the Henan province allocated rewards and subsidies for the digital exhibition project to the top 100 logos with the theme: "Henan, Cradle of China". These rewards and subsidies were also given to research trips and operations aimed at positioning the brand: "Walking in Henan and understanding China". This was a successful integration of culture and tourism.

-Intending to use technology as a tool to promote the destination, Henan launched campaigns on new media platforms, such as Douyin and Kuaishou. This was done with different themes and target audiences like the “Global Culture and Tourism Creators Conference”, the “Third Kuaishou Culture and Tourism Influencer Conference”, the “Xinyang for a Better Life”, and the “Shibanyan Alumni Gathering”.

At a local level, this promotion also focuses on domestic tourism, specifically through rural revitalization plans. These include campaigns like “Travel to Henan, Henan people love Henan», which aim to activate cultural tourism consumption and guide the transformation and upgrading of the cultural tourism industry.

3- The 3rd axis consists of drawing up a framework of cooperation that will allow the consolidation of innovative cultural tourism, making it a driving force for other economic sectors. Data collection is one pillar of this strategic development. Henan is the first province in China to build a smart tourism platform and achieve connectivity and data sharing with aviation and railway information networks.

To foster the communities’ engagement, the Henan Smart Tourism Conference (March 12, 2022) adopted the “meta-universe space, online+offline, virtual+reality”. This equipped everyone with a preliminary understanding of the new technological scene that is cultural tourism, and it let them experience the meta-universe space.

All these actions are fostered by strategic cooperation like the agreement Henan signed with Huawei, a privately owned company. The two parties agreed

to give full play to Huawei’s technological advantages, bolster top-level design, create a “5G + Smart” benchmark, and promote the digitalization of the industry.

To comprehensively improve the service efficiency of Henan’s culture and tourism industry, multi-level and all-around cooperation will be carried out. This cooperation will take place in all fields that involve cultural tours and smart cultural equipment (museums, libraries, and scenic spots, especially those that have red tourism, which means it has historical significance for communism in China).

The two sides will promote the development of Huawei’s industries and their related businesses in Henan according to the principles of “complementary advantages, voluntary equality, openness and fairness, mutual benefit and win-win”. They will further cooperate when it comes to the computing industry, artificial intelligence, digital energy, the intelligent automobile industry, and digital government construction. At the same time, the two sides will make use of their experience, accumulated technology in the digital economy, and new infrastructure construction to accelerate the digital transformation of cities and industries.

Among these initiatives is one to support the construction of the Henan Provincial Industrial Research Institute and its implementation at local and municipal levels.



Results and Lessons Learned

The pandemic highlighted several weaknesses in the sector. The Province of Henan identified the main flaws so that they could turn the crisis into an opportunity:

- The fragility of the cultural industry. The impact of the epidemic on traditional cultural and tourism enterprises was quite noticeable. Space-intensive and crowd-intensive cultural and tourism projects were the first to bear the brunt. Take the film industry as an example. Many local theatres were unsustainable during the pandemic, and the national box office decreased by 70% between 2019 and 2020.⁷ Similarly, COVID-19 revealed vulnerabilities in the cultural industry which is linked to tourism. The cultural tourism product chain is a process of consumption of cultural tourism products, which is extended by the market demand chain. This includes all aspects of food, accommodation, transportation, travel, purchase, and entertainment. At present, the innovation and development of cultural tourism in Henan is still at a relatively basic stage. Additionally, there is much more room for improvement where the infrastructure of the industrial chain is concerned.

The epidemic blocked the tourism flows, thereby blocking the whole cultural tourism industry chain. This revealed a valuable lesson: the cultural tourism chain needs to be diversified and extended. For example, this year, with rising summer temperatures, many cities launched night activities to lengthen their cultural tourism industry chain. According to the survey data of the China Tourism Academy, more than 200 cities all over the country have launched nighttime cultural tourism revitalization plans. These plans included things like night tour routes and nighttime performances. This presented another lesson to learn: the province needs to fight against the homogenization of tourism products that result from mass tourism. This kind of tourism, which does not bring any value to the territories, showed its limits during the pandemic.

On the other hand, tourism products that are rich in local characteristics foster innovation and creativity. The regional spread of the epidemic and its consequences on the industry highlighted the shortcomings of Henan's cultural tourism. Relying on its empirical experience and policies, the Province of Henan is proposing a series of measures that could be replicated in other Southern localities:

- (1) Implement an administrative frame with fiscal and legal measures that incentivize enterprises to enhance the development of digital cultural tourism.
- (2) Identify the new trends of tourism development, and seize opportunities to acquire new technologies such as 5G and Ultra HD. This should be done to accelerate the supply-side structural reform through new types of businesses and entrepreneurial innovation.
- (3) Expand the supply of high-quality digital cultural tourism products and incentivize the immersive cultural tourism experience and new modes of that experience such as online consumption.

Seize the opportunity to develop the digital economy, strengthen the construction of new infrastructure, promote the deep integration of cultural tourism with the digital economy, and promote the digitalization, networking, and intelligent development of the cultural tourism industry.

Replicability

In this sense, Henan Province has been involved in South-South and Triangular Cooperation projects for years, sharing both their knowledge and good practices.

Among many actions, in October 2019, the Henan province jointly established the "Air Silk Road" South-South Partnership Alliance with the UNOSSC and the Finance Centre for South-South Cooperation. Leveraging South-South and Triangular Cooperation among civil aviation hub cities along the silk road, this partnership alliance was created to discuss strategic partnerships in the hopes of advancing sustainable development. The air economic corridor currently covers more than 100 cities and 24 countries in Europe, the Americas, and Asia.

On July 21, 2020, Henan participated in the city exchange webinar: "Travel South Over Cloud – South-South and Triangular Cooperation on Leveraging Digitalization for Tourism". The webinar was held by UNOSSC and shared a good practice for developing digital tourism considering the COVID-19 pandemic. Henan Province considers South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a strategic modality that creates opportunities to increase knowledge, exchange expertise, encourage technology transfer, and improve capacity development.

4. Hubei Province, China

“4+5+N: Mining and Metallurgy Industrial Heritage Protection Volunteer Service Model”

Where? Hubei Province, China

Who? The Yanguichao Tourism Volunteer Service Team of Hubei Normal University and the Huangshi Cultural Heritage Protection Center (the “Joint Team”), Hubei Province, China

What? Mining and Metallurgy Industrial Heritage Protection Volunteer Service

When? Since 2013, ongoing.

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are involved? SDG4, SDG11



Context and Challenges

Huangshi's mining and metallurgical industrial heritage mainly consists of the Tonglvshan ancient copper mine site (the second batch of national key cultural relics protection units), the Hanyeping coal and iron plant mine site (the sixth batch of national key cultural relics protection units), the Huaxin cement plant site (the seventh batch of national key cultural relics protection units), and the Daye iron ore east open pit site (the sixth batch of cultural relics protection units in Hubei Province). These mining and metallurgical sites involve mineral mining, smelting, manufacturing, and processing. They have a long history filled with rich connotations, distribution, and complete preservation. They represent the ancient Chinese bronze period and the beginning of the modern industrialization period, the highest level of technology for mining and metallurgical industrial production.

There are three main challenges to the development of Huangshi mining and metallurgical industrial heritage education. First, due to the influence of the regional economic development level and social productivity, the development and activation the Huangshi's industrial heritage is still at a primary stage. It is not attractive enough for the public to want to participate in its protection. Second, the relevant government departments have not created a strong atmosphere for the protection and utilization of Huangshi's industrial heritage. Third, there is a lack of teachers that can effectively educate people about this heritage.

Project and Strategies

The Yanguichao Tourism Volunteer Service Team of Hubei Normal University and the Huangshi Cultural Heritage Protection Centre (hereinafter referred to as "the joint team") are both committed to educating people about mining and metallurgical industrial heritage. They are also committed to spreading and explaining the universal value of this heritage, and ultimately, learning, creating, and sharing a better life.

The joint team includes government agencies, experts, university students, volunteers, and other members of the public with knowledge of tourism, culture, and industrial heritage protection. After nearly 10 years of exploration and practice, the joint team gradually formed a sustainable development strategy for promoting the protection and inheritance of Huangshi's mining and metallurgical industrial heritage. Their strategy utilizes volunteer service, industrial heritage education, and building a new model of "4+5+N" volunteer service.

This model relies on Huangshi's mining and metallurgical industrial heritage to do several things: tell the "Chinese mining and metallurgical industrial story", spread the value of this industrial heritage, and inherit/promote the Chinese mining and metallurgical industrial culture.

"4"- In the process of cooperating with various partners, the joint team integrated multiple resources and built a new four-way cooperation framework that included the government, enterprises, schools, and social volunteer service teams. Beyond this, they established the following:

1. A new cooperation mechanism (the Huangshi Cultural Heritage Protection Centre).
2. Several enterprises (mining and metallurgical industrial heritage sites) that provide a mining and metallurgical Industrial heritage education platform.
3. Schools to recruit and train volunteers for industrial heritage education.
4. Other social volunteer service teams to help with the in-depth cooperation and industrial heritage education happening within the new cooperation mechanism.

The new cooperation mechanism addressed the challenges presented by the unclear direction of industrial heritage education, a single source of funding, a single source of volunteers, and the fact that only a small area is educated when it comes to mining and metallurgical industrial heritage.

“5”-The joint team considered this small area that is educated about Huangshi’s industrial heritage to have the most potential for volunteer service. So, the joint team carried out the following “5-in” activities: “into the campus, into the community, into the countryside, into the scenic spot, into the station”. Additionally, the joint team organized various types of scientific popularization. They also organized service activities that cover industrial heritage protection and safety knowledge for scenic spots, stations, and commercial areas of 3A and above every year. The Heritage Protection Centre provided teaching materials for classrooms and published popular science books related to Huangshi’s mining and metallurgical heritage. Both primary and secondary schools now use the Centre’s teaching materials, and the popular science books have been well-received by the public. Relevant universities in China and abroad have been invited to host joint designs focusing on Huangshi’s industrial heritage and publicize them on the official website for Asia-Pacific Heritage. On the “5.18” International Museum Day, experts and scholars were invited to carry out various mining and metallurgical industrial culture lectures and other public participation activities. The public response to this has been very good.

“N”- This project has accomplished so much in the past 10 years. More than 100 service activities have been carried out. More than 40,000 people have been served. More than 600 people have participated in the mining and metallurgical industrial heritage education volunteer services. More than 1,000 copies of the various promotional and popular science manuals have been issued. During these activities, over 1,500 letters (from volunteers) and 3,000 visitor evaluation forms have been received. In addition to the joint team’s official microblogging, an official QQ, an official WeChat public account, and an official TikTok account were created. These activities have been reported by Huangshi Radio and Television, Huangshi Daily, Hubei Daily, Jingchu.com, Sohu.com, People’s Daily Overseas Edition, UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Centre, and other official media outlets. Altogether, the media has covered the project more than one hundred times and it has had a good social impact.

Results and Lessons Learned

In the past 10 years of operation, those working on the project found that the project could not rely solely on single-party resources. It needed to innovate and integrate the resources of all parties to provide high-quality heritage education services to the public. It needs to respond to the interests of all parties to achieve a win-win situation for everyone. So, it is imperative to obtain an understanding of the public and the support of relevant government departments and enterprises. Only in this way can the project help develop volunteerism and society as a whole.

Innovation and Service

The joint team created an initiative to innovate mining and metallurgical industrial heritage education. This initiative had the following approach: “volunteer service + heritage education”. Volunteer service allowed the public to spontaneously carry out mining and metallurgical industrial heritage education. This enabled them to learn by themselves first, then teach others, changing “passive learning” to “active learning” with “enjoyable learning”. This process infuses the concepts of “promoting the spirit of mining and metallurgical industry and practicing the concept of volunteer service” into the heart and actions of every volunteer involved. The core of the volunteering service is popularizing the knowledge of this heritage and explaining the value of mining and metallurgical industrial sites.



In terms of the education model when it comes to the mining and metallurgical industrial heritage, an innovative volunteer service model was used. This is the “4+5+N” model. It was adopted to build a new four-way cooperation framework that includes the government, enterprises, schools, and social volunteer groups. This ensured the optimal allocation of policies, funds, and manpower, which guaranteed

the sustainability of these volunteer services. Social volunteer groups were integrated to jointly carry out "mining and metallurgical industrial heritage education" and "into the campus, into the community, into the countryside, into the scenic spot, and into the station" volunteer services. This expanded the area that was educated about mining and metallurgy industrial heritage and helped the public to understand this heritage by entering it. The education and volunteer services also enabled the public to spontaneously promote mining and metallurgy industrial heritage.

Public Participation and Sustainability

To ensure the sustainability of mining and metallurgical heritage education, the joint team used volunteerism. This combined the "spirit of volunteerism" with the "spirit of heritage education". The joint team used volunteerism to educate the public about the mining and metallurgical heritage. The public then was able to use their time, skills, resources, and goodwill to work together and make the community, the country, and the world a better place.

To this end, volunteers continue to promote the culture of the mining and metallurgical industry. The public continues to experience a deep sense of pride and happiness that comes from knowing and appreciating their culture and history. The strength of the public and the joint team continues to bring sufficient funding for these services. This funding comes from government project funding, corporate (meaning mining and metallurgical industrial heritage sites) activity project funding, school club activity funding, and social donations. Other projects also

help with funding like the conducting of study tour education for primary and secondary schools and the selling of cultural and creative products. All of this works together to ensure the sustainability of the mining and metallurgical industrial heritage volunteer services.

Replicability

The "Hubei Huangshi "4+5+N" Volunteer Service Enabling Mining and Metallurgy Industrial Heritage Education" model is highly operational, not very difficult, and highly replicable. It can be used by cities in central China with mining and metallurgical industrial heritage. But it can also be used by other cities in China and Asia-Pacific that have a rich cultural heritage, active grassroots volunteerism, and high government-led participation. In the early 21st century, these countries and cities are already dealing with the issue of cultural heritage re-education and the corresponding social volunteerism needed. This model is precisely what can promote both things.



5. Cantarranas, Honduras

“Cantarranas, a resilient municipality in Honduras. Inclusive tourism and its post-pandemic evolution”

Where? Cantarranas Municipality, Francisco Morazán Region, Honduras.

Who? Alcaldía de Cantarranas (Cantarranas Municipality), in partnership with Honduran Institute of Tourism (IHT), the National Commission for Accessibility of the Sector for Persons with Disabilities, the Honduran Sugar Cane Agroindustry Foundation (FUNAZUCAR), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI). Most of the partnerships are formalized through 18 months agreement with the Municipality.

What? Tourism as an axis for inclusive economic recovery in cities

When? Ongoing (Started in 2019)

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are involved? 3, 6, 8, 11



This case highlights the resilience and innovative approach of the Municipality of Cantarranas, located in the Honduran department of Francisco Morazán, about forty kilometers from Tegucigalpa. With around 16,000 lower middle-class inhabitants, this city has been mostly dedicated to agricultural activity, mining, and traditional candy production since its foundation by the Spaniards in 1667. But in the 2000s, it made the innovative choice to start betting on tourism. In particular, it chose to focus on cultural tourism as a way to diversify its economic activity and generate

an ecosystem that would benefit the quality of life of its local population.

How did a city with an agricultural and industrial vocation position itself on the international artistic scene and become a benchmark for artistic events? The project in Cantarranas developed strategies to convert an industrious location into a culturally attractive site for tourism, now promoted at the national and international levels.

Context and Challenges

Today, Cantarranas enjoys wide media exposure and is known internationally as the "*Village of selfies*". Once centered on agricultural production (sugar cane, seeds, and coffee) and mining activity, this municipality evolved by emphasizing and embracing cultural tourism.

In the early 2000s, when the economic activity of Cantarranas was still centered on agriculture and the sugar cane industry, it was called the "Sweet City" due to the value chain created around candy production. The Tres Valles Sugar Company S.A. located in the Municipality of Cantarranas was called "Azucarera Cantarranas"(ACANSA) up until 1975. This company has been the main source of permanent and temporary employment in the city. In addition to the jobs involved in harvest and production, the traditional sweets made by the company were marketed locally and nationally, especially by women, which improved the social economy by providing a source of employment with flexible working modalities.

However, despite this almost monographic activity, the municipality was already open to transversal collaboration models between local organizations and companies from different sectors. These companies/ organizations include the Honduran Sugar Cane Agroindustry Foundation (FUNAZUCAR), mining companies, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Due to that, the idea to reorient the economic and social development of Cantarranas (from the agricultural and industrial sectors to that of culture and tourism) developed naturally and gradually.

Project and Strategies

In 2011, the municipality celebrated the 12th edition of the "Festival of Food and Traditional Games in Danger of Extinction". In addition to demonstrating that sustainability was already part of its DNA, the municipality accepted the Honduran muralist Javier Espinal's proposal to invest in the beautification of the small city. This mostly involved murals with the motto that "art belongs to the people". The first aim of this beautification was to use art as a tool to curb violence/delinquency and integrate vulnerable groups through artistic learning. However, it was also perceived by the municipality that this open-air museum could become a tourist attraction in a city that was only occasionally visited by tourists.

Through an open call to artists and budding artists, Cantarranas turned into "The largest open-air museum in Central America" and the "City of selfies". Today, it has more than 300 murals with scenes from Honduran daily life. Almost simultaneously, a similar strategy was initiated with sculptures. The city invited artists to create sculptures with local stones, and more than 100 works of art were placed in its streets. In 2018, an international event, the *International Sculpture Symposium*, was launched to position Cantarranas onto the world art scene. Sculptors from different countries arrive every year to participate.

In October 2022, a School of Art opened offering classes of dance, music, theater, and other types of art. Thanks to this school Cantarranas was assigned host of the 2023 UNESCO International Dance Contest, in which groups from different countries around the world will participate. These types of international events give the city considerable international projection and provide opportunities for the education and empowerment of its local communities, particularly its youth.

The free, open-air museum aims to create awareness and art sensitivity and prevent violence and delinquency. More concretely, workshops and courses have been created for groups of all ages (kids, teenagers, adults, etc.). Most of them are free and run all year long. As a result of these efforts, the Sculpture Workshop School for children and adults was inaugurated in 2021. In October 2022, the Music, Dance, and Sculpture Workshops of the Municipal School of Arts of Cantarranas was inaugurated. This was the fruit of a multi-faceted partnership between La Alcaldía Municipal de Cantarranas, Casa Taller Sindamanoy, the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI), and the Ministry of Education.

In recognition of the virtuous evolution of the city, the National Congress of Honduras (CN) approved a decree to grant the Municipality of Cantarranas the title: "Historical and Cultural City". The municipality has managed to achieve economic and social development in a comprehensive way that involved both art and culture.

The National Congress recognized that Cantarranas was drawing national and international attention from its tourist attractions and local development. They

further recognized that the strategy of the Municipality was generating foreign exchange, providing direct and indirect jobs, and developing a special and important heritage. In the same decree, the old quarter of the Municipality of Cantarranas was declared a Historical Centre. This was done to protect the environment and urban image of the area, as the cultural heritage of the city is made up of cultural assets that have special value due to their historical and anthropological importance.

Regarding touristic activity, given that a destination is not only defined by what it can offer tourists but also by its infrastructures and services, the Municipality has implemented a series of actions aimed at improving accessibility to public infrastructures and train populations in the attention of tourists. This was done to reach professional standards of tourism. Interestingly, the COVID-19 pandemic made it easier to move in this direction. During this period, Cantarranas enhanced its infrastructure by creating new access points, ramps, signaling, etc. This brought them into line with accessible tourism standards, enhanced the quality of their tourism services, and benefited their inhabitants.



Thus, training in business creation, marketing, communication, packaging, and promotion via social networks, has been offered to the entire population. That way everyone can become entrepreneurs in tourism, art, culture, agriculture, commerce, or industry. This allows the local population to be part of the value chain that guarantees the touristic quality of the destination. Cantarranas demonstrated that tourism can be a lever for growth and social development. In regard to the quality of services, online training was given to the inhabitants, many of whom had never been trained in tourism-related services and activities. Most of the entrepreneurs involved in tourism activities were farmers, craftsmen, industrial workers, and merchants, who only had an empirical experience in tourism.

The lockdown has made it possible to offer virtual training, helping to meet professional standards and keeping in line with the municipal strategies. Workshops in branding, digital marketing, advertising, product packaging, customer service, and food safety enabled the locals to enhance the quality of the tourist services. These services include everything from retail packaging to marketing. The Municipality and local stakeholders have relied on this training to foster the local communities' empowerment and enhance capacities to implement the strategies they have developed.

The Municipality has followed a clear strategic line. They have been focused on creating sustainable development through a creative economy. The approach has been so far relatively empirical and it now requires the definition of a strategic plan. This needs to be done to reinforce the achievements that resulted from practical cases and integrate them into future measures. Through this, they aim to reach the following goals:

- (1) Promote socioeconomic development with less disparity.
- (2) Protect the environment.
- (3) Foster equality in education and entrepreneurship.
- (4) Promote artistic, cultural, and entertainment growth.

The Municipal Corporation of Cantarranas has agreed to develop a Municipal Development Plan that will create several opportunities to improve Cantarranas in the following areas: formal and technical education, varied training, the motivation of entrepreneurship, economic growth, and community resilience. The Municipality of Cantarranas is currently designing a Strategic Municipal Development Plan for the year 2026, which will promote the growth of the city. These are their goals:

- Permanent support of the formal educational system by guaranteeing equal access among citizens, establishing strategic alliances, and improving facilities, teaching materials, and educational technology.
- Promotion of artistic activities and sports through the Municipal Institute of Sport, Art, and Culture. This will be done to improve citizen's skills and well-being.
- Creation of an entrepreneurial community that complies with the corresponding regulations/guidelines and has access to permanent training, new technologies, and financial resources.
- Promotion of citizen participation (of all ages), which will contribute to the municipality's sustainable development and community resilience.

Results and Lessons Learned

Cantarranas is called "The City of Resilience" for its quick evolution from an industrious and unsafe town to a distinguished "Historical and Cultural City". Now, it is visited by thousands of international tourists for its cultural attractiveness. This kind of resilience relies on the city's capacity to turn challenges into new opportunities. The city began to convert intangible resources into a differential value for the city. Over time, this made it a sustainable tourist destination. It converted art and culture into a driving force for economic and social development.



The project's sustainability relies on its circular approach of turning creativity and human resources into unique tourist experiences, and these experiences satisfy new travellers' demands and enhance the lives of the local inhabitants. This approach was more relevant than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic. The city used the time in lockdown to train its inhabitants and turn them into tourism professionals.

A great example of their transformation is the fact that in 2011 there was no restaurant or cafeteria in the city, yet today, there are 25 tourist service establishments (lodging, food, and spas). The Association of Artisan Confectioners is also better equipped and marketed. An important factor of this resilience is their model of governance that relies on public and private partnerships from diverse sectors, such as the agro-food industry, the mining industry, the arts, and public administration.

It is precisely this element of convergence that makes Cantarranas's model of development a success. Since the beginning, the project has received the support of organizations that were not directly involved in tourism or the artistic sector. Organizations like the Honduran Sugar Cane Agroindustry Foundation

(FUNAZUCAR), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI), and the Honduran Institute of Tourism (IHT) all helped support the project.

This support applied to concrete actions, such as training (in particular via (KCCP: Knowledge Co-Creation), digitization tools, and the launch of the ONPAKU magazine. The magazine's purpose is to promote the local economy through tourism and the consumption of local products. It was driven by the JICA in collaboration with the Project Management Unit of the Secretariat of the Presidency and the Honduran Sugar Agroindustry Foundation (FUNAZUCAR).

This methodology is partly inspired by initiatives fostered by the Japan International Cooperation Agency in Honduras. One is titled "One People, One Product", and it promotes local economic development through the use of culture, identity, knowledge, and resources that are tangible and intangible. These initiatives empower all members of the community by improving their quality of life and enabling them to grow.

The "*Un Pueblo Un Producto*" initiative (One Village, One Product, OVOP) emerged within the framework of the Semillero Empresarial project in 2013. This movement is promoted by FUNAZUCAR in alliance with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Both partners pioneered this movement in the country. OVOP began in the "Capital of Traditional Games" of Honduras, San Marcos, Santa Bárbara. They started by generating local development through the promotion, production, and marketing of its emblematic product: "Traditional Toys". Due to the success of the project in the western part of the country, the decision was made in 2017 to replicate it in the central zone. The specific focus was the community of Cantarranas. The implementation process began with the support of the sugar mill in the area. Local authorities and members of the community were empowered to highlight these "Traditional Sweets" as products for local economic development.

Taking all of this into account, this initiative covers several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, it involves the goals related to tangible infrastructures and the empowerment of local communities.

Replicability

The experience of Cantarranas was inspired by similar local initiatives in Latin America, particularly those related to muralism and open-air museums. Many cities in Latin America see muralism as a way of expression and have created itineraries

based on wall painting. Any city that would like to use muralism as a vehicle for local government and communities to promote local storytelling can adopt this proposal.



6. Himachal Pradesh and Agra, India

“Steps toward sustainable and inclusive tourism development: Experiences and lessons from Himachal Pradesh and Agra”

Where? Project Implementation: implementation in Lahaul, Spiti & Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh, and Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India

Who? International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC), along with the Sustainable Travel International, Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation, the Government of Himachal Pradesh and The World Bank in Himachal Pradesh and ICSC, India, UP Tourism Department, the Government of Uttar Pradesh under the Pro-Poor Tourism programme, supported by the World Bank in Uttar Pradesh.

What? Heritage conservation and Tourism for the promotion of diversity through the design of thematic walks and proposals.

When? Completed

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? SDG5, SDG6, SDG8, SDG11, SDG12



India acknowledged the importance of tourism for socioeconomic development, early in the 2000s, and launched promotional campaigns at the national level & internal level centred on promoting the attractiveness of Indian culture. With rising popularity of destinations, the need to develop a sustainable model of tourism became pertinent. The importance of involving local communities and striking a balance between the environment and tourist footfalls was felt. Conceptualized in 2012, the International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC) is an Urban Startup and Think Tank, with one of the focus areas being inclusive and sustainable tourism. Their work areas include programs and projects which aim to bridge

the gap between the aspirations and knowledge of the local communities with the decision makers and public bodies at the local, regional, and national levels. These programs typically involve the local populations / host communities, the nodal tourism department, state government and the World Bank.

The initiatives highlighted here include two initiatives, the first, essentially a program involving two districts of the fragile hilly region in the State of Himachal Pradesh and the second a pilot project, located at Kachhpura, Agra behind the Taj Mahal, in the State of Uttar Pradesh..

Context and Challenges

Tourism is one of the largest service industries in India. It plays an important role in livelihood generation, positively affects the local economy, catalyses regional investment, stimulates infrastructure creation and contributes to the overall image building of the destination. Tourism has emerged as an instrument of poverty alleviation, and when done correctly, sustainable, and inclusive development. The Tourism industry contributes up to 5% of the GDP, generates millions of employment opportunities directly, and brings nearly 1.5 million international tourists to India, every year. The indirect benefit of the sector and numerous yet intangible owing to the complexity of this sector and its linkages with almost all other sectors of the economy.⁸

Travel and Tourism created 79.86 million jobs (direct + indirect) in the 2019-2020 year, and this accounted for 15.34% of jobs that year. In terms of GDP during 2019-2020, tourism contributed 5.19% (direct + indirect).⁹

Being a rapidly growing destination, the acceptance and permeation of sustainable tourism concepts in India has been gradual and fragmented. Sustainable tourism involves back and forth integration between the various components like infrastructure, health, education, entrepreneurship, environment, culture, and politics. In a complex geo-political environment, with multiple stakeholders, and with conflicting interests at times, the proposed initiatives need high level of local customization.

On the one hand, tourism can provide a growing source of opportunities for employment and business development, stimulating investment and supporting local services, even in remote locations. On the other hand, unplanned and mass tourism can create immense pressure on fragile ecosystems, causing irreversible disruption to environment and wildlife as well as culture and customs of traditional host societies.

Growth of Sustainable tourism initiatives were integrated with thoughtfully designed tourism campaigns. 'Incredible India!' or 'Bharat Darshan' is one such campaign that was launched by the Government of India in 2002. The strategy focused on showcasing both tangible and intangible assets of India along with experiential themes like yoga & wellness, spirituality, cultural heritage etc.

In 2008, the Ministry of Tourism launched a campaign aimed at promoting domestic tourism, while raising awareness towards the good practices that aid in the sustainable growth of the tourism sector. The campaign focused on the preservation of heritage, culture, centring itself on themes of cleanliness and hospitality. In 2014-15 the Ministry of Tourism, launched the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, a Central Sector scheme focused on the development of integrated theme-based tourism circuits. The scheme aimed to create synergies with other governmental programmes and campaigns. These synergies were designed to convert the tourism sector into a major driver for economic growth and livelihood generation. During the same period the Ministry also launched the PRASHAD Scheme (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive), which aimed at strengthening the pilgrimage sites in India, as spiritual tourism is one of the most prominent subsectors of the overall tourism industry in India. Both these schemes, aimed at supporting states for development of tourism integration along with marketing and promotions support.

Based on the analysis and assessment of the Tourism Policy that has existed since 2005, the state of Himachal Pradesh prepared the 'Sustainable Tourism Development Policy, 2013'. This was done to ensure that the growth of tourism would not affect the fragile ecosystem and would continue in a sustainable manner.

In 2014, the International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC), India was roped in to support the governments of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh on two projects:

- The "Himachal Pradesh Sustainable Tourism Development Policy" " was formulated by the Government of Himachal Pradesh (GoHP), in collaboration of the Department of Tourism & Civil Aviation, supported by the World Bank. The policy was centred around the overall objective of establishing the State of Himachal Pradesh as a leading global sustainable tourism destination. The first goal was to establish Himachal Pradesh's tourism as an international brand in niche tourism. The second goal was/is to make tourism sustainable, with a primary focus on socio-economic growth and employment generation.

⁸ Government of India. India Tourism Statistics, 2022

⁹ Ibid

- The Uttar Pradesh Pro-Poor Tourism Development Project in Agra and Vrindavan". The World Bank-aided Uttar Pradesh Pro-Poor Tourism Development Project is innovative. In this project, two major destinations i.e., Agra and Braj region of state, were selected for poverty eradication and employment creation via activities related to Tourism Development. Along with the creation and development of basic tourist facilities at monuments/sites of selected areas, the project proposed several activities to help the economic/social development of employment creation and society as a whole.

The Loan Agreement and Project Agreement for the above projects were signed by the World Bank and Economic Work Department, the Ministry of Finance, and the Government of India on December 28, 2017, in New Delhi. The total cost of the project was Rs.371.43 crore (or 57.14 million U.S. Dollars). Out of the total cost, 70% was/is to be borne by the World Bank, and 30% by the State Government. Under the above project, work has been started in Agra and Vrindavan in January 2018. The Uttar Pradesh Government has allotted the work in Agra to the Agra Development Authority and the work in the Mathura district to the Mathura-Vrindavan Development Authority.

Project and Strategies

In both projects, the ICSC has relied on 'Community-Driven Initiatives (CDI)', which are supported by the overall knowledge and technical assessment from the top decision-makers (the institutional level). Meanwhile, its implementation comes from the bottom stakeholders (the community level). Thus, policy, financial support, and capacity building are fostered at the state level, and the implementation and networking come from the destination and the district level.

Local communities in both contexts were found to be the key drivers in tourism development. Consultation sessions were carried out in both projects, with different stakeholder groups regional, district and local levels. This was done to incorporate the concerns and needs at every level.

Himachal Pradesh Sustainable Tourism Development Policy

Based on the lessons learned from sustainable tourism initiatives worldwide, the Himachal Pradesh Sustainable Tourism Development Policy is based on three main principles:

- (1) To ensure long-term economic growth, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders.
- (2) To make optimal use of environmental assets, as they are a key element in sustainable tourism.
- (3) To respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities.

ICSC, India in partnership with Sustainable Travel International (STI) were engaged by the World Bank, for the assignment of Sustainable Tourism Action Plan for tribal districts of Kinnaur and Lahaul Spiti, Himachal Pradesh. The action plan was focused on balancing the fragile delicate ecosystem with the increasing tourist footfalls. Both destinations being sites of emerging tourist interest in the state presented a great opportunity to streamline sustainable tourism initiatives before the advent of mass tourism. During consultation and plan preparation, several challenges to the tourism sector in such a context were revealed:

- **Limited Infrastructure:** Because of the sensitive and fragile ecosystem, infrastructural penetrations are one of the key challenges for Himachal Pradesh and other hill stations.
- **Safety & Security:** Providing safety to the tourists is the most important factor. The environmental risks (flash floods, landslides), coupled with poor access and health care infrastructure were found to be critical issues.
- **Inaccessibility:** Due to limited accessibility and connectivity (both physical and telecommunications), and the cost & reliability of transportation remained prohibited.
- **Inclusivity:** The region displayed limited engagement of the local communities in the tourism sector. However few cases of locally driven tourism products, supported by local NGOs were also noted, and found to be highly replicable.

This Plan designed by ICSC and STI, supports the Government of Himachal Pradesh in the following ways:

- **Promoting environmentally sound tourism** and supporting the establishment of an institutional mechanism for the integration of geographic information systems.
- **Making community-driven sustainable tourism one of the prime levers for socioeconomic growth.**
- **Using sustainable tourism as a means to provide better employment and greater business opportunities for residents.**
- **Contributing to the protection of the state's unique heritage (both natural and cultural)** and protecting future generations' quality of life and long-term prosperity.

Kachchpura and Uttar Pradesh Pro-Poor Development Project

In addition to the design of sustainable development policies, the International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC) developed a pilot proposal to help local communities create and market their tourism offers. The pilot proposal also helped them create empirical knowledge, which can be exploited at the local level or through South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

The pilot proposal involved the local community of a small village, called Kachchpura, located in the region of Uttar Pradesh, behind the Taj Mahal, on the other side of the river, in the city of Agra. This region attracts the highest number of both domestic and international tourists in the country. This contributes to the State's economy due to its varied living and cultural heritage. Yet, in terms of poverty, Uttar Pradesh remains one of the most priority states in India. People living under the poverty line in touristic cities do not gain many direct benefits from tourism, but they do bear many of the costs.

Financially supported by the World Bank, the Pro-Poor Tourism project aims at the following:

- ✓ **Unlocking** the tourism potential of the State by addressing the factors that enable it.
- ✓ **Improving** the living conditions of the poor in the city by providing basic services and infrastructure and contributing to the creation of jobs and other opportunities.
- ✓ **Protecting** the state's cultural heritage by including its people in the process of tourism.

Through the Pro-Poor Tourism program, Kachchpura was chosen to take part in the inclusive tourism proposals. Local community members were engaged in preparing a local tourism development plan, which included the following components: improving the road to the village, improving sanitation and waste management, mapping creative products and households, and developing a local heritage walk for visitors.

The International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC) identified and managed three levels of objectives to convert this area into a new sustainable touristic destination:

- **Short-term level:** Meet the basic needs of both tourists and local communities in terms of connectivity, safety, sanity, water supply, and health.

- **Mid-term level:** Enable co-creation between tourists and local stakeholders to convert households into new lodgings. Additionally, design creative activities based on local know-how.

- **Long-term level:** Do destination marketing campaigns at the regional, national, and international levels. This would involve the National Tourism body promoting and marketing the touristic offers that are co-created by local communities and experts.

Results and Lessons Learned

Methodology:

- **Analyzing** key stakeholders' roles.

- **Screening and identifying** the potential environmental and social impacts on physical and cultural resources and recommending measures to mitigate these impacts.

- **Preparing a Cultural, Environmental, and Social Management Plan** that will determine the appropriate measures and actions to avoid.

- **Consultations with various stakeholders** that are directly associated with the projects. Use this to identify their concerns regarding the environmental and social impacts and record their recommended measures to deal with these impacts.

Implementation:

First, the ICSC focused on the urban planning and basic services interventions to increase the overall tourist experience and the quality of life of the residents of Kachhpura. These quality-of-life improvement proposals were related to connectivity, water supply, access to toilets, solid waste management, lodging infrastructures, internet connections, etc.

The following practical infrastructure improvements were proposed: developing visitor parking and facilities, making pedestrian walkways, developing drain liners to street pavements, rehabilitating 3 community basic services (toilets, sanitation, drainage), and designing guidelines for façades, urban design, signage, public spaces, etc.

Second, the project aimed to create more opportunities for visitors to experience local culture and extend their stay at the same destination. This way, tourists would spend more time and money while reducing their carbon footprint. This initiative led to the co-creation of touristic products, catalyzing local identity value adds, such as Chang (local rum) tasting tours, temple festivals, mask making, flower jams, woodworking classes, etc. The innovative approach to the project was based on community participation:

The innovative approach to the project was based on community participation:

- ✓ Women mapping home-based creative activities.
- ✓ Identification of community spaces and community assets.
- ✓ Training and capacity building.
- ✓ Participatory mapping of Village Heritage walks routes.
- ✓ Community monitoring of the work Package.

❖ **The first step** of implementing the project was to get a public **consultation**:

The consultation was done to involve relevant stakeholders from the early stages of the project. Specific attention was paid to Project Affected Persons (PAPs), which focused on those whose livelihood

or sources of livelihood were directly impacted by the proposed sub-project. Several groups took part in the consultation, including community leaders, farmers, shoemakers, women groups, self-help groups, youths, children, and service providers (tea vendors, souvenir sellers, travel agencies, heritage walk organizers, etc.).

❖ **The second step** was to develop **training and capacity building**:

Training and capacity building was done in the local communities to co-create tourism offers and services. This also helped train the staff of the Department of Tourism about safeguarding, regulatory requirements, environmental sustainability, social development issues, project cycles of investments, management plans, and report formats.

❖ **The third step** was to co-create **sustainable tourism packages**:

ICSC helped the local communities to create marketable touristic experiences. These included packaged stays in local households and creative workshops based on their intangible heritage, traditions, and know-how.



❖ **The fourth step** was to focus on **local, national, and international marketing and promotion:**

Once sustainable tourism offers were created, the UP Tourism department developed a portal for marketing and promotion through different campaigns and channels. One of these is the Upper Pradesh official portal: <https://www.uptourism.gov.in/en/page/ongoing-activities>

Replicability

Despite the many challenges generated by the community-based model, the public consultations for both projects contributed greatly to the process of converting challenges into opportunities.

In addition to this, the COVID-19 pandemic did not deter tourism development. As the programs were focused on rural tourism in households instead of commercial hotels, the region was able to maintain several touristic services during the pandemic and became a regenerative tourism destination.



Because they generate direct, short-term benefits for both the population and the environment, these initiatives would be beneficial to other communities of the Global South as long as heritage and indigenous cultures are respected.

The diagnosis, list of criteria, and indicators developed at the beginning of each project can be upscaled from the local/state level to the national level as a

policy intervention. Additionally, these can be replicated in other territories, both in India and other countries. Similarly, countries should consider adopting pilot projects like the one in Kachchpura. These projects have demonstrated their efficiency in reaching short-term goals while generating valuable knowledge-sharing opportunities.

7. Hyderabad, India

“Thematic walks as a driver for sustainable development”

Where? City of Hyderabad, located in the State of Telangana, India.

Who? The project was implemented by the Department of Tourism (DoT) and other departments belonging to the Government of Telangana, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), the Quli Qutub Shab Urban Development Authority (under GHMC), the Tengelana State Dorest Academy, and other educational institutions (colleges and schools).

What? Heritage conservation and tourism that promotes diversity through thematic touristic walks.

When? Ongoing

Sustainable Development Goals involved: SDG 8, SDG 11 and SDG 7



Held in the Indian city of Hyderabad, this project highlights how thematic walks can operate as differential tourist attractions in the city. They can raise the local stakeholders' awareness of natural, cultural, and human resources available for both present and future ecosystems.

This project aims to teach local and international visitors about the interconnectivity of nature, culture, and heritage. The first walking routes were focused

on the pre-historic museum, the historical heritage, the historic market, and the local biodiversity nature in general. However, two new routes were recently created to reflect current areas of interest. These new routes are the craft walk (focused on the local communities' know-how) and the water walk (focused on informing people on the importance of water in sustainable cities).

Context and Challenges

Hyderabad is the largest city in, and the capitol of, the Indian state of Telangana. It is the fourth-most populated city in India. In addition to its tangible medieval heritage, the city highlights its intangible heritage and its artisans' creativity in the fields of painting, handicraft, jewelry, literature, clothing, and gastronomy. The city's economy expanded from the diamond trade (in the 18th century) to digitalization (in the 21st century). This incited the will to preserve tangible and intangible heritage and enhance the quality of life of the local population.

Culture and nature make up the identity of every place in the world. Since heritage cannot be separated from these two things, the city identified cultural tourism as a vehicle they could use to protect their heritage. They saw that it could also be used to create sustainable development that would protect the environment, prevent air and water pollution, and empower local communities.

As the gateway to Southern India, Hyderabad is rich in both natural and cultural heritage. It has been visited by scholars from around the world. As the capital of Telangana State, Hyderabad is not just a city but an entire cultural region. Standing on the Deccan Plateau, it is right on top of the east-west coast trade route. Hyderabad cultural treasures include a centuries-old Deccani fort (Golconda), a four-sided ceremonial gateway (Charminar), and several world-famous bazaars. Known as the city of pearls and a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, Hyderabad is a mosaic of historic heritage.

It is important that locals understand the cultural, architectural, and natural beauty of the city. To promote this, the state government has supported initiatives, such as the Heritage Walk (since 2009, by then Andhra Pradesh State Govt), the Craft Walk, the Nature Walk (revised under CAFE- Children for Forest Education), the Historic Market Walk (by Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation - GHMC) and the Museum Walk. These walks not only attract visitors but have become a source of information for students who study design, art, architecture, history, journalism, hotel management, and tourism. The walks are also very popular with schoolchildren who love to listen to the local history and learn about various crafts.

Project and Strategies

This project was initiated by the Government of Telangana's Department of Tourism (DoT), also known as Telangana Tourism. It was created with the support of both private and public partners. In practice, the goal of the project is to design thematic walks in the city of Hyderabad and the surrounding areas. These walks are created to inform local communities and tourists about the interconnectivity of nature, culture, and heritage. They also educate people on several more topics, such as flash floods, the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage, climate change and its effects on deforestation, and local community empowerment and resilience. Each walk is a tool designed to meet a specific need, offering educational content in a playful format. Some of the walks are guided tours, but others include games. Creative workshops, cooking lessons, and phone apps have also been used in walks.

Type of walks:

• Heritage Walks

Description: This walk is conducted in and around the Walled City of Hyderabad using four different routes. The historic buildings visited on these routes range from 430 to 80 years old and belong to different historic styles. The walk duration is 90 min.

Aim: To educate people about how to use Historic building techniques with natural building materials to fight climate change.

Partners: Architect Madhu Vottery (consultant) and a team of guides trained by her. The walk was implemented by the Telangana Tourism for Education and Institutions for Heritage Education. The Line Departments, GHMC and QQSUDA (under GHMC), both helped Telangana Tourism conduct the walk.

• Nature Walks

Description: This walk is conducted in the Telangana State Forest Academy, Dulapally, which is spread over 75 hectares. The students are taken on a trek through the forest that has a herbal garden. During the walk students learn about the value of waste segregation and how to use compost or how to make a paper bag.

Aim: To learn about native species and regional flora and fauna.

Partners: The walk was implemented by Telangana State Forest Academy officers for Educational Institutions, as well as several schools and colleges.

• **Historic Market Walks**

Description: The Moazzam Jahi Market is considered one of the most beautiful projects in Hyderabad. In the Market Walk, visitors are told about the history of the building and the area around the market.

Aim: To highlight the efforts of local government and revitalize a historic market using a detailed conservation scheme.

• **Pre-History Museum walks**

Description: This walk is about the Pre-history of Telangana. It acts as an important link between the past and present. The students are shown the objects inside the museum and are told about the historic buildings in the surrounding area.

Aim: To learn about the Nature-Culture connection.

• **Crafts walk**

Description: A retreat for groups of students to learn about local crafts.

Aim: To meet traditional craftsmen of Shilparamam (an arts and crafts village located in Madhapu) and learn about their various art forms. The schools are encouraged to hire craftsmen to visit their campus and conduct events.

Partners: Architect Madhu Vottery (consultant), a team of guides, employees of Shilparamam and schoolteachers trained by her). This walk was implemented by Shilparamam and its team of craftsmen.

• **Water Walk (Post-pandemic)**

Description: Designed around a historic temple, a stepwell, and a lake, this walk uses an ancient stepwell as an amphitheater to teach students about Water Conservation.

Aim: To inform students about sustainable cities and water conservation.

• **Heritage city tours (5-6 hours long)**

Description: These tours are customized. Generally, they include a visit to a private garden, hosted by local families who serve local food. Visitors get to participate in the local customs and celebrations, and the host families get to propose visits to different cultural tourism sites. These visits are conducted in chronological order to help the visitors understand the growth of the city in an unbiased manner.

• **GAME: Climate Action by Hyderabad, a Children's Game**

Description: This initiative was a part of the COP 26 report. The idea came after Majnu Ka Tila, a big bastion in the Fortress town of Golconda, suffered major damage from a flash flooding in 2020. Local students set out to understand the problems caused by the natural disaster and see how they could help with the emergency. The investigation led to the design of a board game, in which participants are encouraged to learn good 'green deeds' and get involved in climate action. The entire game, including the game board and cards, is based on components of Hyderabad's local heritage. Through this lens, gamers are encouraged to embrace sustainable building materials and practice the 4 Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Repurpose) in daily life. This includes working to save existing heritage and standing against the demolition of existing heritage buildings. The game helps create awareness about climate change among different age groups and empowers children and youth to gear up for climate action.

By playing this game, children and youth understand how nature and culture connect. It also teaches that climate change can be mitigated by understanding and adopting traditional wisdom (building technology and planting trees). The game has been included in the COP-26 report.

• **Hyderabad Heritage Mobile Application**

Description: the "Hyderabad Heritage Mobile Application" was developed to support the training sessions that thousands of children and teachers have taken part in across India and in a few other parts of the world. The application marks both natural and man-made heritage sites with sketches, pictures, audio files, and video files.

Built on a bottom-up model, each initiative is closely supported by local community participation, be they artisans, merchants, farmers, and local people with other professions and occupations.

While the artisans are directly involved in the walks, via guiding or training activities, other people like the merchants adapt their activity to the walk to enhance the city's local business. Local artisans work in 'Shilparamam' (which means "retreat of artisan"). This is a crafts village conceived by the

state government in 1992. It sprawls over 260,000 square meters and is just a few kilometers away from Hyderabad city. This village exists to create an environment that preserves traditional crafts and celebrates ethnic festivals year-round. Other merchants have adapted their items and schedules to match the times and themes of the walks. So, crafts that are exhibited in the Museum can be purchased in the historic market, which is part of the walks' itineraries.

Local communities are often the driving force behind successful development initiatives, particularly those geared toward sustainable development and economic empowerment. This is even more true when those initiatives involve contributions from artisans, merchants, farmers, and people with other professions and occupations.

Project approaches:

Local Knowledge and Expertise: Artisans, merchants, farmers, and others have a deep knowledge of their specific trade or craft, their local environment, and their community's needs and capacities, often coming from several generations back. This knowledge is invaluable for initiatives that aim to solve local problems or leverage local resources.

Economic Impact: These professions are typically integral parts of the local economy. Artisans may produce goods that draw tourists. Merchants might sustain local supply chains, and farmers can contribute to food security and agricultural sustainability. Initiatives that support these local stakeholders can have ripple effects throughout the local economy.

Community Engagement and Trust: When local professionals are actively involved, these initiatives are more likely to be trusted and supported by the wider community. This can lead to increased participation and cooperation, making the initiatives more successful.

Sustainability: Involving local people with professions and occupations in the planning, execution, and maintenance of initiatives can help ensure that they are sustainable in the long term. These professionals can continue to manage and benefit from the initiatives even after external support or funding has ended.



Results and Lessons Learned

Since 2009:

- More than 20,000 visitors participated in the Heritage Walk routes.
- More than 200 public and private institutions were involved in the Walks.
- The "Water Walks" resumed after the lockdown and have re-ignited the local economy. The Heritage Walks have noticeably improved the local economy and the locals' livelihood. The number of shops that sell crafts and ornaments has increased manifold, particularly in the historic center.

Heritage Walks were highly affected by the pandemic because the number of tourists decreased. The revenue in 2020 was only one-third of that in 2019. The walks restarted on April 18th, 2022, which was the International Day of Monuments and sites. It restarted with the support and involvement of the local government, study tours, shopkeepers, and other local partners.

The main challenge was to convince citizens and decision-makers that the protection of heritage sites and monuments was a necessity. The city needed to promote this with the help of public-private partnerships. Parts of the walks highlight the impacts of both overgrowth and unplanned urban growth.

This case showed that an effective strategy for the promotion of heritage properties is to understand and appreciate its relevance as an income-generating resource (in the tourism industry). Promoting sustainable and creative tourism, while recognizing the importance of heritage, can help mitigate the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It can help address endemic poverty and rampant unemployment among a community's youth.

It is important to better coordinate and align national tourism strategies with state and local initiatives. This creates opportunities to optimize the protection and management of heritage sites and properties.

Replicability

This project aims to generate opportunities for knowledge-sharing (when it comes to public policies) and replicability. The model can be adopted by other localities in the Global South through South-South and triangular cooperation.

The structure of the project, its partnership model, and the fact that it is economically sustainable (the costs are covered by the visitors' fees) means it is replicable in other Southern cities. However, adapting it to each local context is paramount to create a sustainable ecosystem. Adapting the content to the local area is vital as many countries have historic heritage and craft villages where walks could be designed. Adapting the partnering strategies is also important, and should be done with the local strategic partnerships in mind.

This project has several key takeaways. Connecting with schools is vital not only to educate visitors but to guarantee regular visits. Sustainability, economic development, and poverty alleviation could be possible, and replicable, when local communities (especially women) are involved and empowered through the projects.

The craft traditions can continue through the development of curricula in schools at all levels. This helps develop a new generation of craftsmen and encourages people to buy local products. Several educational institutions are working on this already.

The Nature Walk encourages students, teachers, and parents to promote the tradition of planting local plant varieties that are lesser known and close-to-extinct. The planting is done using traditional medicines. This provides an opportunity for students to develop an interest and further research these subjects.

At another level, scholars and academics could also exchange knowledge and communicate with decision-makers in different parts of the world through South-South cooperation.

8. Mérida, Mexico

Festivals that empower communities through a creative economy

Where? City of Mérida, México

Who? Mérida City Council (Subsecretary of Tourism, local stakeholders)

What? The Pueblos de Maíz Festival (Maize Festival) and the Tunich Artisan Fair

When? May 2022 (The Pueblos de Maíz Festival) // Every year since 2000 (Tunich Artisan Fair).

Which Sustainable Development Goals are involved? 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10



Located in the state of Yucatán in southern Mexico, the magnetism of Mérida is linked to its rich cultural heritage. It is a mix of Mayan, Spanish, and African cultures and is influenced by Caribbean, European, and Middle Eastern cultures. Mérida is also known for its dynamism and its ability to innovate while respecting and enhancing its traditions.

Gastronomy is the flagship sector through which the city has been recognized as a Creative City by UNESCO, but Mérida has demonstrated that its

uniqueness comes from a result of synergies between different sectors and its ability to reinvent itself. At present, Mérida is highlighting two initiatives: the Pueblos de Maíz Festival (Maize Festival) and the Tunich Artisan Fair. These two initiatives allowed the city of Mérida to face the crises brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. They even enabled the city to take advantage of the pandemic and create a value chain, putting local communities at the heart of a sustainable tourism model.

1) Festival Pueblos De Maiz / (Maize Festival)



Context and Challenges

The Maize Festival is one of the projects launched within the framework of Mérida the Creative City of Gastronomy. It took on this name when it became part of the UNESCO International Network of Creative Cities¹⁰ in 2019.

While offering its candidacy, Mérida presented the following commitments and initiatives:

- ✓ Adopting a responsible and sustainable management model within the gastronomic sector to support multi-ethnic groups and gender equality.
- ✓ Building an International Centre for Sustainable Creative Gastronomy, and positioning it as a global hub. This will create opportunities to educate and learn from each other via research and co-production schemes.
- ✓ Implementing a creative destination approach based on gastronomy that is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- ✓ Contributing to the creation and implementation of the gastronomic creative brand, and developing the city's first strategy for Creative Tourism.
- ✓ Promoting Mexican gastronomy in international markets by collaborating with other Creative Cities of gastronomy.

Project and Strategies

Held for the first time in the spring of 2022, the Pueblos de Maiz Festival connected four UNESCO Cities of Gastronomy: two from Mexico (Puebla and Mérida) and two from the United States of America (Tucson and San Antonio). This festival highlighted the importance of maize not only as a culinary ingredient but as part of the cultural DNA. It presented maize as a lever to generate a value chain that could benefit local communities. Maize has been the food and the nutritional base for the population of Yucatan for millennia. In terms of their worldview and history, the Mayan people give it a privileged place for its strength and constant presence in the region's culinary industry through the centuries. According to the Popol Vuh, a text recounting the mythology and history of the Mayan K'iche' people, "all human beings are children of the corn". Mérida acknowledges and celebrates this culinary heritage by fostering the work carried out by producers, cooks, and promoters of this ingredient. Mérida is constantly highlighting the cultural value of maize and strengthening the ties it builds among people.



¹⁰ The UNESCO International Network of Creative Cities in 2019 was composed of over 240 cities around the world and focused on six disciplines: digital arts, crafts, cinema, design, literature, and music. It is an international cooperation network that cities apply to with a four-year work plan that is evaluated by a committee made up of cities that are already members.

The Pueblos de Maíz Festival included simultaneous, live-streamed activities in each city. These included street food stalls, on-stage cooking, film screenings, tasting tours, community dining in iconic public spaces (often free to the public), and music demonstrations, presentations, and panel discussions. Each city hosted chefs from the other cities for cooking demonstrations.

The innovative vision of the project relies on a holistic approach. It treats corn as the core of the ecosystem in Mérida, as well as in other cities that share the same appreciation.

In the case of Mérida, the event was divided into **four parts**:

1. The gastronomic corridor

Corn was the main subject of a gastronomic exhibition that was held for two days along a street that connects two iconic neighborhoods: La Ermita of Santa Isabel and San Sebastián. This was done through popular recipes from Yucatecan popular cuisine.

The objective was to make the population aware that by daily consuming corn they help their community in several ways. They support the preservation of local varieties of preparing it and, consequently, maintain and boost work in the community. They also help the community avoid migration, which is triggered by limited job opportunities, and guarantee a positive impact on social cohesion.

To meet this objective, several strategies were developed:

- Educational and creative activities for children and youth.
- Lectures and talks with expert speakers on topics related to maize and its best practices.
- Sale of different varieties of seeds (local creole corn).
- Photographic exhibition.

2. Holistic rural tourism experience around the “milpa” in the indigenous community of Yaxunáh, Yucatán.

During this experience, tourists and locals participated in field works, visited the seed conservators and the orchards, helped prepare a traditional pork stew (the cochinita pibil), enjoyed natural attractions, and discovered both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.



3. Corn beer

Brew masters from the four cities collaborated to brew a commemorative beer with corn.

4. Gastronomy of climate change

A Gastronomy of Climate Change Workshop was held at the Marist University to inform people on how the city can prepare itself to preserve the gastronomic culture for future generations. Using a tool developed by experts from the University of Arizona, the workshop aimed at identifying “which city in the world, 40 years from now, will have the climate that your city has today”. This generated a very interesting dynamic between the UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy. Recipes were exchanged between all the cities.

Results and Lessons Learned

The main lesson learned from the Maize Festival was that it is important to advocate for food sustainability and highlight that it should not be taken for granted. Promoting and consuming local food is a way to support, reward, and recognize the work of local producers. This activates the value chain on the territories, promotes socioeconomic development, and has a positive impact when it comes to reducing emissions and supporting climate action. Additionally, learning creative activities and supporting them offer a good way to reach these objectives in the short, medium, and long term.

The lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic were another challenge. This forced the city to postpone the Festival until May of 2022. But as the festival was a great success, Merida would like to invite more cities to join in the following fair:

2) Tunich Artisan Fair



Context and Challenges

The Tunich Artisan Fair is an event that has been taking place for over 20 years in the locality of Dzitya in Mérida. The event fosters the know-how of its significant indigenous communities who create crafts and produce traditional sweets. This cultural heritage has been maintained and protected for several generations, but it may now be at risk due to the industrial production of crafts and sweets.

The Fair was an initiative created by artisans to disseminate the cultural, gastronomic, and craft diversity of the municipality and its surrounding area. This allows the exhibitors to market their products, generating economic development and providing a space for local, national, and foreign tourism.

This fair showcases how the city converted a traditional event into an opportunity to become resilient and face the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic activities were limited at that time. However, to reactivate the economy and help artisans preserve the cultural and artisanal diversity of Mérida, partners of the fair were encouraged to market their products online for the XIX edition of the Tunich Artisan fair in 2020. This was a virtual version of the fair.

Project and Strategies

The biggest challenge in creating a virtual version of the fair was to train the participants to market online, which involves a different skill set. To this end, a cross-cutting team was formed that was coordinated by the city government sub-directorate of tourism. This team was made to create a productive chain that would walk any artisans who were interested through the entire marketing process: from the digitization of their catalogues to selling on the digital platform to the delivery of the products.

Strategic plan

- **Timing:** The entire process, from conception to launch, lasted only 4 months. This timeframe took advantage of the December period, which normally represents good sales.

- **Engagement of the participants/beneficiaries:** More than 60 artisans attended the first training session, but not all have continued the whole process. To address their apprehensions regarding marketing and digitalization, organizers paid close attention to the participants and tried to boost their confidence. To further encourage participants, organizers presented the several benefits of digitalization to the group.

- **Digital platform:** A supplier was commissioned to virtually recreate the main Dzityá square online. This was done to maintain the fair's identity. During this process, he adjusted the platform in response to the ideas and needs of the artisans.

- **Product delivery:** to ensure online delivery standards organizers did the following:

- ✓ Created an alliance with a local software company that helped develop an application to support artisans. The application helped the artisans formalize their online business and link to the local taxi community, which supported the distribution.
- ✓ Published contact information of the artisans who were not ready to sell online but would deliver products privately.

Results and Lessons Learned

One of the most important lessons of this initiative was the importance of embracing creativity and innovation to build resilience. It is adamant to listen to the communities and respond to their needs during the process of digital transformation. The initiative needs to protect their heritage and their outstanding universal values. By listening to its artisans, the city of Merida raised awareness, developed its capacities, and respected and protected its heritage.

The positive impact of the fair can be seen in the increase in sales, income, and innovation.

The 2022 edition of the Tunch Artisan Fair had 87,461 online visitors, 32 artisan exhibitors, and 9 craft turns focused on several types of crafts. Among other subjects, these included stone, wood, watermark, textile, ceramic, natural products, and glass. In the first week, sales reached 54,000 pesos (approx. 2700 USD), and after six months, sales reached 800,000 pesos (approx. 40276,40 USD).

Regardless of the sales generated, the artisans believe they have taken an important step toward digitization, which today is an indispensable tool for socioeconomic development.

By adapting the fair to a virtual format, Merida opened many opportunities for the community to join e-commerce and new consumption trends. Even after sanitary restrictions were lifted, the fair has consolidated in a hybrid format (both face-to-face and digital) and has broken its sales records.

The fast urgent changes that occurred in those four months at the end of 2020 cemented a digital path and **created the innovative conditions that continue to contribute to the evolution of the fair.** But most importantly, it developed the community's capacity and competitiveness.



Replicability

This project has great potential for replicability, particularly in cities of the Global South with important artisanal communities and crafts. Other artisan communities of the world can link to Merida City

through the South-South Galaxy and Cities Clusters, ensuring traditions and culture are highlighted and respecting the traceability of products during the purchasing processes.



9. Querétaro, Mexico

“Agenda Creativa as a sustainable driver”

Where? City of Querétaro, Mexico

Who? Querétaro Creativa citizens' organization and Creativity Promotion Board A.C. in coordination with UNESCO Mexico.

What? Creative City of Design

When? Ongoing

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are involved? 8, 10, 11, 17



From its Historical Center which was recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1996 to its position as the second-best non-beach tourist destination in Mexico, the city of Querétaro and its surrounding region have always shown great magnetism for creative people. Recently, the city formed its new industrial hub. In 2019, UNESCO recognized it as a Creative City of Design in 2019. This made it possible for the city to generate more synergies at the local and international levels.

The COVID-19 pandemic fueled more changes in the city, thanks to initiatives from the federal government that were promoted by the Creative Querétaro program. The projects showcased here have demonstrated a positive impact on local communities and the power to attract tourists. Additionally, they can be replicable through South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Context and Challenges

Querétaro is one of the most outstanding cities and tourist destinations in Mexico thanks to its Historic Monuments Zone and its creative hub. The latter was fostered by its dynamic industrial sectors, such as its automotive, aeronautics, and agri-food sectors. However, despite their large number and diversity, local creative artists and artisans could use more cohesion and visibility. To support this, the Querétaro Creativo citizens' organization directed the city to apply for the title of Creative City of Design by UNESCO, led to the city's official designation in 2019.

The application process for Querétaro Ciudad Creativa and the subsequent first mapping of creative industries highlighted the great cultural and creative offers of the city. It is one of the cities that hosts the most important festivals in the country and the second city with the most theaters. Currently, the creative industry sector in Querétaro grows by 10% every year. The national average is 3.5% every year.

However, the number, diversity, and quality of services and products offered by creative people were not enough to generate an ecosystem. Recognizing this, Querétaro Creativa citizens' organization boosted

the confidence of local creatives and offered them a new purpose: to co-create a plan with other sectors and with other citizens. The city still lacked the model of governance required to articulate and create synergies between all these stakeholders. This is one of the missions of the Querétaro Creativo citizens' organization: to "create a multi-sector organization that allows the efforts of the city and the Network to be articulated, which will make creativity a strategic factor for sustainable development".

This non-profit organization aims to create a linkage between the local communities and the local governments through a wide array of cross-cutting programs and projects. One of these programs is the HOOKUP Creative Program which helps students, professionals, academics, and researchers to develop skills and execute innovative projects via internships and mentoring. Another program is the Maker Fair. This generates innovations and interest in the development of technologies. "Made by Querétaro" is yet another program that guarantees a seal of quality, competitiveness, and creativity that complies with the attributes and values of the 2030 agenda.



Project and Strategies

Among the 23 projects currently being carried out by the Creative Querétaro program, two are particularly relevant. They help convert the challenges accentuated by the pandemic into opportunities for sustainable development. These two projects rely on inclusive tourism and on South-South and Triangular Cooperation to accomplish it.

The first project is the **Street Design Challenge** co-organized by the UNESCO Creative Cities of Querétaro, Wuhan (China), and Curitiba (Brazil). Celebrated at the COP 26 Global Conference on Climate Change on November 6th, 2021, the International Street Design Challenge raised awareness about the negative impacts of climate change on the urban environment and especially on citizens' quality of life. It also proposed actions to turn cities into more livable, enjoyable, and equitable environments.

Through the event, creativity was seen as the key to converting negative inputs into new opportunities. In this vein, the event involved teams of 4 to 6 bachelor students of design, architecture, and urbanism. Each team was led by 1 or 2 professors from different UNESCO Design Cities. This allowed students to work on issues in foreign streets that had different territorial, social, financial, and cultural backgrounds than theirs. Each city presented one street that would represent their city and could benefit strongly from

disruptive design ideas for a healthy, green, and resilient recovery.

Reciprocally, each city was represented by a group of local participants who developed a design-based solution for another participating city. This took place over three days. Street profiles and ideas were compiled on a website through multimedia content, and the best ideas were selected by a jury. A score ranking determined the winning city of the Street Design Challenge 2021. The challenge ended with an online event that included a keynote talk, a winners' announcement, and a space for students to interact with their peers from around the world.

Created in 2022, the **Queretaro Creative Agenda** acts as a transverse axis that goes through these projects. It was launched during the pandemic as a digital impulse to provide creative experiences to tourists and residents. The Agenda Creativa is a digital platform and a mobile georeferencing application that locates tourist areas and destinations within the metropolitan area of the state of Querétaro. This connects local and foreign tourism with the cultural and creative sector of the metropolis. Using algorithms and geo-positioning the platform shows establishments, experiences, studios, and creative centers within a radius of 200 meters from the users' location.



The initiative gathered all the creative and touristic assets of Querétaro onto a single platform, supporting all kinds of people in the co-creation of creative experiences. It became a great governance tool by facilitating urban management (regarding public-private partnerships) and placing local communities at the center of the project.

In coordination with the Municipal Secretary of Tourism and the State Secretary of Culture, the initiative came from the Querétaro Creativa citizens' organization. This organization activated this bottom-up model through which creators are trained and empowered. Most of the creatives that are part of the platform do not have a previous tourism-oriented business. The members of the initiative are mostly creatives, designers, artists, etc. who provide services to professionals (B2B). The Creative Agenda offers them training to convert their skills into participatory experiences that can be marketed to locals or tourists (especially during the weekend). All the creative experiences are promoted through the platform. Each creative becomes an ambassador and shares creative content globally. This is done through the use of QR codes and other digital means of sharing information.

Results and Lessons Learned

In its BETA stage, Agenda Creativa integrated over 3,000 creatives from the city, generating about 15 touristic/creative activities and events in its first months. It is now in the training stage. In this stage, agents and guides were trained to have a cultural and creative approach to the city.

In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Querétaro showed a 60% drop in its visitors. However, it rebounded in 2022 and generated a significant recovery in the local economy. The cultural and creative industry was one of the industries most affected by the pandemic, but it is also a recovery factor of the tourism industry. According to estimates from the local Tourism Secretariat, in the first quarter of 2022, the tourism sector reported an advance of 63% and was expected to close out 2022 with indicators before the health contingency.

The current context for Querétaro is promising. This is thanks to the innovation and diversification of the cultural and creative offers, which have been increasing in number and are linked to tourism. The Municipal Secretary of Tourism has expressed interest in co-creating a Cultural and Creative Tourism Plan in



coordination with UNESCO MEXICO, the Municipal Secretary of Culture, the Querétaro Creativo Organization, and the Municipal Planning Institute of Querétaro. This would allow greater articulation between the creative community and the tourism sector of the Municipality of Querétaro. In this city, the development of strategies and the management of sustainable tourism could combine and empower local communities through broad participation between civil society, private initiatives, academia, and the government.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the main triggers for rebuilding, rethinking, and innovating tourism. Creativity is a main strategic factor for transformation and evolution. The economic and social impact has made it possible to create unity and strengthen community actions. This will generate synergy in favor of the cultural and creative industry of Querétaro.

Regarding the lessons learned, Querétaro Creativo Organization believes that rebuilding the collective imagination will allow the city to build an ecosystem and actions that generate a greater sense of strength and unity.

Replicability

The Agenda Creativa is articulated locally, nationally, and internationally with the purpose of sharing the value of local unity and creativity with other cities of the Global South. Being a digital project with a clear methodology, it can be added to and replicated in new territories, particularly in other creative cities.

As part of the articulation, knowledge sharing, and South-South and Triangular Cooperation, the Agenda Creativa was presented at the XIV Annual Conference of UNESCO Creative Cities in Santos, Brazil (July 2022). Strategic exchanges and partnerships emerged from there. One particular exchange happened with the City of Fortaleza, Brazil. They shared their experiences and the lessons they learned in their public-private management of creative initiatives.

10. Sidi Kaouki, Province of Essaouira, Morocco

Sidi Kaouki, Eco-Village

Where? Sidi Kaouki Municipality, Province of Essaouira, Morocco

Who? the Province of Essaouira, the Regional Investment Center of Marrakech-Safi, the Urban Agency of Essaouira, the Provincial Directorate of the High Commission for Water and Forests and the Fight Against Desertification, The Municipality of Sidi Kaouki, the Provincial Directorate of State Domains in Essaouira, the Provincial Delegation of Tourism in Essaouira, and the Provincial Delegation of Crafts in Essaouira.

What? Sustainable development through ecotourism.

When? 3 years (from 2019)

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are involved? 1, 17



The creation of the ecotourism village, Sidi Kaouki, was fostered by the Regional Investment Centre (CRI) of Marrakech-Safi Region. This project aims to develop ecological and responsible tourism in a rural seaside area by making the community and its ecosystems interact. A Call for Tenders launched in 2021 strove to allow the local population to work hand in hand

with the provincial institutions to promote local culture and traditions. Moreover, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) awarded Sidi Kaouki the "Best Rural Tourism Village" award. This positioned Sidi Kaouki as an international tourist destination and as a Southern partner ready to exchange good practices and network with other countries.

Context and Challenges

Located 25km from the city of Essaouira, the village of Sidi Kaouki became a paradise for the hippie movement in the 1970s and a surfers hub in the 1990s. Now, the village is focused on ecotourism and is the first biosphere reserve created in Morocco around the Argan tree.

Sidi Kaouki is situated in one of the most precarious areas of Morocco. The COVID-19 pandemic forced the city to rethink its tourist model and make the village a key locality to promote the intangible heritage of the province. By encouraging innovation and artistic creation among young people, this project relies on converting the local know-how into a quality tourist offer.

The village of Sidi Kaouki is integrated into **an area with wider tourist attractions**. The Biosphere Reserve, thematic routes, natural parks, and the inscription of the city of Essaouira in the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites are a few of such attractions. Yet, the city's touristic potential needed to be optimized, and a sustainable model that benefited the inhabitants needed to be developed.

In addition to issues related to COVID-19, the Sidi Kaouki village project had to face several threats:

- The community's lack of knowledge and interest in the project severely affected their perception towards it
- The low level of community implication.
- The conflict over resource ownership.
- The capacity problems of the direct participants and the other partners.
- The incompatibility of policies and legislations.
- The low quality and standard of the products and services offered by the village.
- The weak cooperation among stakeholders.

Project and Strategies

The core of the project was a call for local partners to present the city's most viable ecotourism projects and services, including sustainable accommodation, artist's residences and coding booth camps, wellness/health care centres, theatres, cultural events, eco-museums, art galleries, eco-parks, local product markets, restaurants, surf camps/clubs, souvenir booths, nautical clubs, and recycling units to name a few.

The call strove to support the local communities and guarantee sustainable use of the land and a social balance of commercial activities.

The project used a holistic approach from the identification of resources to the promotion of its initiatives, all of which passed through training, coaching, and funding. Thanks to this, the project provided guarantees to applicants whose initiatives were selected. They would be supported throughout the process until their initiative was fully implemented.

The call for tenders covered all aspects regarding the sustainable implementation of the ecotourism village. It offered a very exhaustive array of tools and support. Among them were the following:

- A model of governance that fosters the cross-cutting of tourism with other sectors, enhancing its chain value. The diversity of the above-mentioned stakeholders and the creation of the Regional Investment Centre, which will personally support the diverse stakeholders throughout the administrative process, enabled the city to be quickly informed of issues and be able to solve them with high reactivity.
- Fiscal and financial policies that help enterprises reduce the impact of the pandemic and enhance their confidence. To reach this objective, the stakeholders blocked off a land base for investors and prepared a set of measures to facilitate the process for tenderers. Venture capital was one of these solutions, but there were many more, including angel investments, business incubators, bank loans, and government grants. Additionally, measures have been put in place to encourage the younger population.

- Selection of a land base for investors and a set of measures to facilitate the process for tenderers. The proposals are studied and rated based on the candidates' profiles and the financial aspects of the project.
- Identification of innovative ideas to be developed as competitive and sustainable products and experiences. In addition to legal criteria, tenderers are obliged to promote new and authentic experiences that are unique to rural areas. This is done in response to travellers' new demands for a more immersive experience of cultural tourism.
- A support and coaching program to train tenders. The project emphasizes the economic and social-cultural aspects of daily life. That's why training and specific attention are given to proposals that encourage the active participation of the local communities and the most vulnerable groups within them.
- Supports and incentives to the most vulnerable groups. This is done through fundraising, which promotes investment dedicated to the social economy and its solidarity. This investment is developed among young people and following a gender approach. For this, the project promotes local entrepreneurship using several programs that have been created since 2006 to support salaried employment.
- The creation of green jobs through the active engagement of the Association of Guides, hospitality entrepreneurs, the High School of Technology and Fine Arts, and various NGOs.
- Reinforcing the tourism chain value by encouraging local professionals to organize themselves into associations that can take part in the Local Tourism Council. This project is the product of a consultation involving these different actors who still act to defend job creation and access to decent jobs in the tourism sector.
- The development of new opportunities thanks to technologies, such as 5G and Ultra HD. These foster new types of businesses and encourage entrepreneurial innovation and international tourist promotion and networking.
- The creation of a digital platform to foster the projects' visibility. This provides opportunities for reducing the digital gap, creating jobs, and facilitating the inclusion of young people (girls especially) who increasingly invest in ecological and responsible projects.
- The control of new eco-buildings. This respects the local architecture in all aspects and is based on the sustainable use of local raw materials, local techniques, waste recycling, and renewable clean energy. A detailed legal arsenal clarifies the measures taken and regulates interventions in the seaside and the use of forest lands. A strong emphasis is placed on the preservation of resources and the use of local products and materials.
- The control of Km0 options in terms of accommodation, gastronomy, culture, and crafts. The same sustainable principles are applied to each element of the value chain to guarantee the authenticity of the holistic experience and the preservation of the village.
- The promotion of the whole destination and each local stakeholder. A platform will be created specifically for the use of the village after the completion of the projects. This platform will promote the village through various campaigns, events, digital positioning through marketing actions, customer experience, partnerships with the Moroccan National Tourism Office, etc.
- Monitoring through a wide array of indicators, particularly those related to sustainability, the Sustainable Goals Developments of the Agenda 2030, and the quality control establishments and labeling (Travel Safely for post-COVID travel). The village implements and advocates for the implementation of quality standards and certification systems for tourism businesses and service providers.

Results and Lessons Learned

The Call for projects of the Ecotourism Village of Sidi Kaouki, in Essaouira, allowed the selection of 38 projects for a total investment of 360 million Dirhams that initially generated 525 direct jobs.

Since the presentation of the concept of the Ecotourism Village (in May 2022), more than 300 investors have expressed their interest in investing in the region. The CRI of Marrakech-Safi recorded 50 actual filings. After an in-depth study of the technical, financial, and administrative files, the pre-selection committee met and selected 38 projects spread over 45 lots, which was more than 80% of the available lots (October 2022).

These projects gathered a total investment of more than 360 million Dirhams, initially generating 525 direct jobs in the sectors of accommodation, catering, entertainment, culture, sports, and leisure. These jobs enabled the creation of a truly integrated and sustainable ecotourism village.

The 38 selected candidates represented national and foreign investors as well as two young entrepreneurs, benefiting from the INDH support program.

Replicability

The project aimed to create an EcoVillage, as a sustainable driver for the territory. It was structured as a tool to empower the local communities and to guarantee the preservation of natural and cultural resources. The project offers a wide array of legal and practical measures that are replicable in other parts of the world.

All the guidelines and follow-up of the project were publicly shared online for the use of other destinations worldwide. The recognition of Sidi Kaouki by the UNWTO Best Tourism Village increased its networking opportunities with other Southern localities that aim to advance the role of tourism in safeguarding their rural villages, landscapes, natural and cultural diversity, and the local values and activities (like local gastronomy).

Sidi Kaouki is interested in participating in more knowledge-sharing initiatives and developing South-South and Triangular Cooperation with other cities of the Global South.



Lessons Learned and Key Takeaways

Several experiences, practices and projects helped develop the key takeaways and lessons detailed in this knowledge product. The cases highlighted, the **exchanges** generated under the Cities Project, the project pilot "South-South Cooperation on Sustainable Tourism Development in Mexican World Heritage Cities", and the technical webinar of September 2022 all provided experiences, practices, and innovative and replicable solutions for inclusive sustainable tourism in cities and localities. This means that they have **the potential to be scaled up**, in line with local needs and circumstances. As such, they can serve as **meaningful references for other cities** and foster networking and cooperation opportunities.

Beyond their diversity, these projects have made it possible to identify common criteria that are essential in the implementation of sustainable development models. Here is a non-exhaustive list of some of these criteria:

1. Reactivity, creativity, flexibility
2. A Circular Approach
3. Cross-cutting management
4. Digitalization
5. Replicability
6. South-South and Triangular Cooperation

1. Reactivity, creativity, flexibility

This is the first takeaway. If cities and localities want to overcome crises and face paradigm shifts, they need to be reactive, creative, and flexible to change. In other words, they need to be able to compose a symphony with their strengths and weaknesses.

2. A Circular Approach

This refers to the circular economy¹¹ approach, one of the models that guaranteed the sustainability of the projects showcased in this knowledge product. A circular economy is an economic model that seeks to decouple economic activity from the consumption of finite resources. Its main purpose is to design waste out of the system, and it is based on three principles: a) Design out waste and pollution. This involves creating processes that minimize waste and pollution from the onset rather than dealing with them after they have been created, b) Keep products and materials in. The goal is to create a system where there is no waste, so everything has a purpose, c)

Regenerate natural systems. This principle focuses on returning valuable nutrients to the environment to support its natural systems.

localities is how they responded to the crisis. In a self-sufficient situation, Southern cities not only overcame the crisis, but they designed more sustainable models for their future. They did this by relying exclusively on their resources. Each destination had to react to limitations linked to the crisis and they did it by seeking solutions in a short circuit, relying on three pillars: infrastructure, values, and governance.

In this context, infrastructure refers to urban access, mobility, and housing infrastructures. It also refers to the cultural, health, and social facilities. All of these are generally suitably developed in territories that claim to be tourist destinations. Even so, the initiatives presented have demonstrated cities' efforts to improve these infrastructures and meet specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 6, 7, 9, and 11). Several cases provided very innovative examples. Salvador da Bahia (case 1) aimed to develop a study and a proposal on the connection between walkability, tourism, business, and entrepreneurship. The study and proposal were developed through a perception sensitive to gender and race and was specifically centered on black women.

Henan Province (Case 2) is another good example. Most of the issues in this case are related to mobility infrastructure and were solved by using technology and digital tourist offers. Another great example is Cantarranas (Case 5). Here, the creation of accessible infrastructures for disabled people not only attracted a new tourist segment but enhanced the inhabitants' livelihood. Also, their creation of open-air museums (murals and sculptures) guided visitors through itineraries that generated a more balanced distribution of people. In the city of Hyderabad (Case 7), the thematic walks aimed to make residents and visitors aware of the importance of their cultural and natural heritage when it comes to the city's present and future ecosystem. In the same way, the Agenda Creativa in Querétaro (Case 9) brought digital tools for geo-localization of cultural and creative experiences. Finally, the development of the ecovillage Sidi Kaouki (Case 10) is focused on the sustainability of these infrastructures using local and ancestral know-how and raw materials (enhanced by today's knowledge).

Values (including outstanding universal values) have been integrated into destination management more recently, which is in line with the emergence of the social and solidarity economy. They are now playing an essential role in the fulfillment of the SDGs. The values refer to soft skills, the places' DNA, the cultural and social background, the inhabitants' feelings, and their degree of involvement in tourist activity, among other intangible concepts. For this reason, taking care of the values involves the management of human values and resources, which is even more subtle. Most of the destinations showcased in this knowledge product have demonstrated that a bottom-up model is generally essential. It is needed to foster the communities' engagement and empowerment and optimize the city's assets. This approach is present in almost all the cases presented in this knowledge product. The O'Higgins case (Case 2) is a good example. The muleteers' know-how was turned into a new model of rural tourism as well as a tool to anticipate climate change. In Mérida (Case 8), popular knowledge and skills were used to recreate a value chain based on the corn's culture and the indigenous crafts of the city.

However, as demonstrated in most of the projects, training is essential to empower the local communities. This is particularly true for empowering more vulnerable groups (like women, young people, and seniors). Hubei Province (Case 4), Cantarranas (Case 5) and Mérida (Case 8) are great examples of this. The respective Municipalities utilized the lockdown to provide digital training to its workers from the agriculture and crafts sectors, which enabled them to reorientate their professional activity to the digital marketplace and tourism. This recommendation helps accomplish SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG5 (Gender Equality), SDG8 (Decent work and economic growth), and SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities)

The third pillar is governance, which is as difficult to manage as values. It refers to the manner of governing. In most of these cases, that meant the subtle orchestration of public-private partnerships or the connection between public administration departments. Many of the case studies demonstrate how challenging this factor can be to a project. Be they based on a bottom-up or a top-down model, the level of the challenge is determined by the respective involvement of the public and private stakeholders. This implies a change of mindset.

In recent years, the bottom-up model has emerged in many parts of the world. It has been driven by new technology and its ability to convert citizens into "prosumers", individuals who both consume and produce. This paradigm shift is very challenging for both private and public stakeholders, who have to rethink their respective prerogatives. For the bottom-up model, some of the cases demonstrated how private bodies can gather the local communities around a collaborative project, which mobilizes the necessary public support for carrying out innovative solutions. These models are described in the Hyderabad case (Case 8) and the Querétaro case (Case 9). The projects in both cases were fostered by private initiatives.

Governance can also be made up of a top-down model. Here, entities draw the strategic lines and missions that need to be carried out. Empowered private groups or individuals then carry them out. That's why these communities are generally offered specific training, enabling them to manage such projects collaboratively. This is represented in the Salvador de Bahia case (Case 1), the Cantarranas case (Case 5), the Mérida case (Case 9), and the Sidi Kaouki case (Case 10).

In some instances, the support offered to these private stakeholders by different bodies can also be holistic. The creation of the ecovillage in Sidi Kaouki, Morocco (case 10) is a good example. This case showed how a local government can craft policies, programs, and tools that design the strategies for the whole destination and accompany each stakeholder to the implementation and the follow-up of their sustainable business. In each case, not-for-profit structures and individual experts and practitioners acted as an in-between by optimizing resources and connections (e.g. Cases 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10).

3. Cross-cutting management

In this idea of circular economy, another takeaway is cross-cutting management. This generates synergies by creating bridges between sectors like agriculture, crafts, art, trade, and tourism. Given all the projects presented, it seems that the segmentation that had prevailed before has been shaken up by the fact that the territories had to close in on themselves. Thus, they had to generate their activities by combining resources from their sectors. They did this according to their needs and degree of creativity and innovation.

Creativity and innovation are the most powerful allies in times of crisis. This is due to their capacity to transcend traditional ways of thinking and acting. With these two things, cities can develop new ideas, methods, or objects from existing resources. Many localities had to identify the natural, cultural, and human resources at their disposal to create new and rich interactions.

With this in mind, tourism should be considered as a transversal vector of development. This is particularly highlighted in the cases of Cantarranas (Case 5), and Mérida (Case 9). In these cases, agricultural products (sugar cane, and corn, respectively) were converted into cultural tourist products and, thus, into new economic and social drivers. A similar model was used but adapted to crafts by the cities and localities of Hyderabad (Case 8), Mérida and Querétaro (Case 9), and Sidi Kaouki (Case 10). These involved the craftsmen converting their craft products into creative tourism activities, which made them able to attract new targets.

On the whole-of-government level, the cross-cutting approach has produced innovative solutions by providing policymakers with relevant information based on the cross-referencing of data.

4. Digitalization

The importance of digitalization is one of the most important takeaways. This is a transversal driver in all the showcased projects. It made it possible **to create or re-create virtual communities** among people who were not familiar with digital media. Digitalization has also made it possible to fight against social isolation. It helped integrate people with professionals. Despite their skills and their will, these professionals were marginalized from certain circles because of the technological barrier and their professional obligations. Cantarranas (Case 5) and Mérida (Case 8) are particularly good examples of this. However, the virtual format has also been used as a last-minute solution to proceed with projects that were started before the pandemic. This was the case in Salvador de Bahia (Case 1) and O'Higgins (Case 2).

Digitization has made training more accessible among all cities and countries of the Global South. The pandemic has created this opportunity, and it is an important one to perpetuate so that cities can maintain an interaction channel accessible to all. Another function of digitalization has been the creation of digital tourism experiences themselves. The projects presented by the Province of Henan (case 4) and the city of Querétaro (case 9) are thought of as "digital tourism".

Digitization has also played an important role in tourism, as a way of promoting destinations. This made it possible to maintain a link with potential visitors during periods of confinement. Additionally, digitization allows cities to communicate differently, on a more human level, even on a global stage. These new promotional channels opened new prospects for smaller-scale destinations (such as Cantarranas (Case 5) that struggled to get visibility at international tourism fairs.

Digitization also has other aspects that are useful to a city, such as monitoring, benchmarking, control, and the regulation of data. The digital tourism projects presented in this knowledge product have demonstrated their relevant use of technology. They laid a foundation that helps control any negative impacts from the preventive measures that guarantee sustainable development. Such integrated strategies can help produce innovative solutions for tackling crises because policymakers are equipped with crucial data-driven information that helps them make fast decisions. The Case of Henan (Case 3) is a good example, which can be replicated in other destinations.

Lastly, digitalization has had a considerable effect on the transfer of good practices between cities and destinations. The amount of time saved and the low costs have encouraged virtual meetings between decision-makers and local actors from localities in the Southern Hemisphere and all around the world. These meetings have created a dynamic that continues beyond the pandemic, generating smooth and efficient exchanges. This was demonstrated in the cases of Salvador de Bahia (Case 1), O'Higgins (Case 2), **Himachal Pradesh and Agra** (Case 6), Mérida (Case 8) and Querétaro (Case 9), and Sidi Kaouki (10).

5. Replicability

This leads us to the next takeaway: replicability. The pandemic has highlighted the pertinence of experimenting with the city scale. Cities need to scale up and replicate innovative solutions. All the cases showcased in this knowledge product demonstrated their replicability (though for some it was only partial). The Afro-feminine walk of Salvador de Bahia (Case 1) could be adapted to Caribbean destinations. The systemic model of the muleteer communities' in the O'Higgins Region (Case 2) is already being experimented with in other Andean regions in Argentina, Peru, and Ecuador. The digital tourism program of Henan (Case 3) could provide a new model for tourism worldwide. The

open-air museum (the murals and sculptures) of Cantarranas (Case 5) has already been replicated in other cities in Latin America. The community-based tourism experience of **Himachal** (Case 6) has already led to the replication of those pilot projects throughout the country and abroad. The thematic walks of Hyderabad (Case 7) can be replicated by any kind of destination. The corn festival in Mérida (Case 8) is already connected with other Southern and Northern cities. A global application has been suggested for its online crafts marketplace, which is the same as the Creative Agenda of Querétaro (Case 9). Finally, the development of the eco-village in Sidi Kouki (Case 10). This process and methodology could be used in several other Southern localities.

However, as was clarified in the aforementioned webinar of September 2022, it is important to differentiate "replicating" and "copying". Even if the difference may seem subtle at certain points, the key to sustainability lies in the ability to optimize local resources. Therefore, models need to adapt any external experience to the city's reality. For example, some community-based initiatives in this knowledge product have the potential to be replicated in Southern regions with similar issues. These initiatives are the ones presented in Salvador de Bahia (Case 1), the O'Higgins Region (Case 2), **Himachal Pradesh and Agra** (Case 6), Hyderabad (Case 7), Mérida (Case 8), Querétaro (Case 9) or Sidi Kaouki (Case 10).

It must be considered that the degree of community engagement might differ between cities and localities due to different historical, political, or social backgrounds. It would be important to develop a methodology around any empirical approach that is adaptable to various contexts. Consequently, indicators need to be defined to allow proper monitoring, the transfer of data, and quick adaptation to challenges.

6. South-South and Triangular Cooperation

The cases presented in this knowledge product offer an eclectic and comprehensive illustration of the objectives of South-South collaboration. These objectives were designed according to the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries endorsed by the General Assembly in 1978 (Resolution 33/134).

All the projects have “fostered the self-reliance of developing countries by enhancing their creative capacity to find solutions to their development problems in keeping with their aspirations, values, and specific needs”¹² Even if they have found inspiration in replicable initiatives or methodologies from other Southern localities, these cities used these projects to prioritize their resources or to adapt others' methodologies to their reality. Creativity is the core of each project like the creation of new tourist products in the cases of O'Higgins (Case 2), Henan Province (Case 3), Hyderabad (Case 7), Mérida (Case 8), Querétaro (Case 9), and Sidi Kaouki (Case 10). In regard to “promoting and strengthening collective self-reliance among developing countries through the exchange of experiences”¹³, most of the cases mentioned that they utilized peoples' availability and technology during the lockdown to organize webinars with other South-South cities and localities. Through this, they were able to exchange valuable experiences. This was the case in Salvador da Bahia (Case 1), O'Higgins (Case 2), Henan Province (Case 3), Mérida (Case 8), and Querétaro (Case 9).

More generally, the initiatives showcased in this knowledge product highlight ideas and models that are or can be replicated in other Southern regions. This is especially true for the projects developed in Salvador da Bahia (Case 1). Those projects were inspired by initiatives from other Southern and Northern countries. Additionally, the methodology on Walkability could be adapted to any localities with similarities to Salvador.

This knowledge product itself takes part in replicability by highlighting several tourist formats and products that could be replicated in different places: the “glamping” (Case 2), digital cultural tourism in all its forms (Case 3), muralism as an open-air museum (Case 5), community-based rural tourism (Cases 6, 8, and 10), the thematic walks (Case 7), the digital agenda (Case 9), creative tourism (Cases 6, 7, 9, and 10).

Beyond the projects presented here, other initiatives developed by the participating localities present possible connections to every city and locality that reads them. This is the mission of the South-South Cities Clusters: to bring cities, institutions, and experts together and foster networking on specific issues.

12 Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August–12 September 1978 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum).

13 Ibid

Conclusions

The relevant cases presented in this knowledge product show that the COVID-19 pandemic, and other escalating crises, have brought challenges to cities and localities and their people's lives, especially those in the Global South. But the pandemic also highlighted their endless capacity for creativity and innovative approaches. With such resilient capacities, Southern cities can not only achieve their short-term goals but propose new models for long-term sustainable development, which are replicable in other territories.

Tourism might have been one of the sectors most affected by the pandemic, but it also acted as a driver for the economic and social recovery of these cities. However, this requires reorientation. The diversity of the initiatives showcased in this knowledge product demonstrates how each locality had to reorientate their tourism model, to convert their specific weaknesses into assets and achieve more sustainable results.

This knowledge product spotlights how these localities are fulfilling most of the Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030 (albeit on different scales). This confirms that, in terms of sustainability, any small action counts as far as it is part of a coherent and holistic approach. That is why we need to support these localities' efforts and the dissemination of their accumulated knowledge and experiences. Sharing these experiences with other cities of the Global South could help those cities adapt their response strategies. This would help them overcome the various challenges brought about by ongoing and future global multiple crises.

This mutual learning process is in line with the principles of South-South and Triangular Cooperation and has been fostered by the various programs of UNOSSC and UNESCO, (specifically at the city scale). Through this knowledge product, the UNOSSC South-South Cities Project is calling for people to support these cities' efforts toward sustainable tourism and plans to disseminate the accumulating knowledge and experiences of these cities throughout its networks and platforms. In this way, Southern Cities and localities can benefit from holistic support. This support includes access to knowledge products and services, such as reports, toolkits, and training. It also includes access to thematic exchange events and networking/cooperation opportunities. This is done through knowledge platforms such as South-South Galaxy and South-South Cities Clusters.

Final Takeaways

- Cities are the ideal laboratories to do experimental projects, scale up, and replicate initiatives due to their capacity to be reactive and innovative.
- Sustainability will be guaranteed by the "reuse" of the natural, cultural, and above all human and creative resources (a circular economy). This means engaging and empowering the local communities within a balanced model of governance.
- Digitalization is the tool that will facilitate connections between the local and the global community, but it is not a purpose in and of itself.
- Replicability is not the standardization of a model but its adaptation to endless specific contexts. That's why it is essential to develop a methodology around any empirical approach that is adaptable to various contexts.
- South-South and Triangular Cooperation is a dynamic strategy that boosts territories' positive synergies and helps them overcome challenges with innovative initiatives and engineering.

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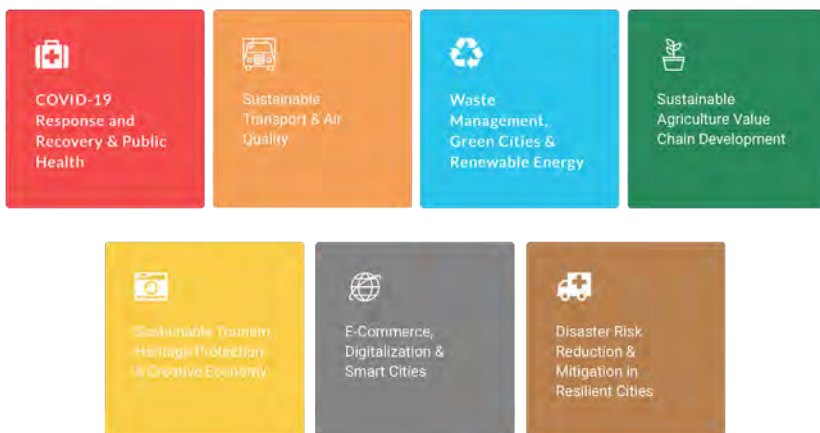
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Join The South-South Cities Clusters

Under the UNOSSC's Cities Project, the South-South Cities Clusters platform aims to bring networks of cities, institutions, and experts together under the South-South Galaxy digital platform, to facilitate horizontal cooperation and exchange. The initiative enables local government representatives and cities partners to connect and engage in South-South and Triangular Cooperation capacity development and knowledge-sharing activities for mutual benefit.

Cities representatives and partners are invited to select or propose the thematic areas they are interested in and join the South-South Cities Clusters. In the first stage, cities from the Global South have proposed the following seven thematic clusters:



For more information about the South-South Cities Clusters visit

<https://www.southsouth-galaxy.org/cities-clusters/>

About the Cities Project

<https://www.southsouth-galaxy.org/maritime-continental-silk-road-cities-for-sustainable-development-project-cities-project/>

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