

Harnessing Community Assets for the Promotion of Sustainable Tourism in Rivers State

Nweke, Biobele Stella

And

Ugwu, Angela Nkechi (Ph.D)

Abstract

The study examined harnessing community assets for the promotion of sustainable tourism in Rivers State. Three research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was 11,268, comprising 1,479 leaders and 9,789 members of registered community-based organisations (CBOs) in Rivers State. The sample size for the study was nine hundred and two (902), comprising 233 leaders and 579 members drawn from the selected registered community-based organisations in the Local Government Areas with tourism potentials in Rivers State under study. The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. The instrument was validated by two experts in Community Development and Measurement Evaluation from the University of Port Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha method. A composite reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained, indicating the instrument was reliable. Out of the 902 copies of the questionnaire administered, 891 copies were filled properly, returned and used for data analysis. The research questions were answered using the mean statistics and standard deviation. From the analysed data, the findings of the study among others revealed that harnessing of community social assets promotes sustainable tourism in Rivers State to a high extent. Through involvement of community stakeholders, fostering synergy between community stakeholders and tourism managers, participation of community stakeholders to help in mobilising relevant community asset for tourism and communities seeking partnership with tourism agencies can enhance sustainable tourism in the study area. Based on these findings, it was recommended, among others that the Ministry of Tourism should encourage the formation of local tourism committees that include diverse community members to collaboratively plan and manage tourism initiatives.

Keywords: Asset, Community, Development, Tourism, Sustainability

Introduction

Tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing economic sectors globally, contributing approximately 10.3% to global GDP and supporting one in ten jobs worldwide (World Travel and Tourism Council [WTTC], 2019). In Africa, tourism represents a significant development opportunity, with the sector contributing about 8.5% to the continent's GDP and providing employment for millions of people (United Nations World Tourism Organisation [UNWTO], 2020). However, the sustainability of tourism development remains a critical challenge, particularly in developing nations where the balance between economic benefits, environmental conservation, and socio-cultural preservation is often precarious (Saarinen, 2019).

Nigeria, endowed with diverse natural, cultural, and historical attractions, possesses immense tourism potential that remains largely untapped. The Nigerian tourism sector contributes less than 5% to the national GDP, significantly below the African average, despite the country's rich cultural heritage, wildlife reserves, beaches, and historical sites (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2021). Rivers State, located in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, exemplifies this paradox of tourism potential versus actual performance. The state boasts numerous tourism assets including pristine beaches, mangrove forests, diverse cultural festivals, historical sites, and vibrant arts and crafts traditions (Ogbulogo, 2005). Yet, these resources remain underutilised, with tourism development in the state facing challenges including inadequate infrastructure, poor marketing, environmental degradation, and limited community participation (Elenwo & Akankali, 2014).

The conventional top-down approach to tourism development, which emphasises external investments and government-led initiatives, has demonstrated limited success in many developing regions, often resulting in environmental degradation, cultural commodification, and marginal economic benefits for host communities (Scheyvens, 2002; Tosun, 2000). This approach frequently overlooks local resources, knowledge systems, and community capabilities, thereby undermining the sustainability of tourism ventures (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2019). Consequently, there has been a paradigmatic shift toward community-based approaches that recognise local communities as key stakeholders and active participants rather than passive recipients in tourism development processes (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009).

Central to this paradigm shift is the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which emerged as a counter-narrative to deficit-based development models. Pioneered by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), ABCD focuses on identifying and mobilising existing community strengths, capacities, and assets rather than concentrating on problems, needs, and deficiencies. This approach posits that sustainable development occurs when communities discover and harness their internal assets including skills, talents, resources, and associations to drive their own development agenda (Mathie & Cunningham, 2013). The ABCD framework has been successfully applied across various development sectors including health, education, economic development, and increasingly, tourism (Green & Haines, 2015).

In tourism contexts, the asset-based approach emphasises leveraging community resources to create authentic, sustainable, and economically viable tourism products that benefit local populations while preserving natural and cultural heritage (Garrod, 2013). Community assets in

tourism development encompass tangible and intangible resources that communities possess and can mobilise for tourism purposes. These assets are typically categorised into various types, including social, political, financial, human, physical, natural, and cultural assets (Flora & Flora, 2013). Each asset category plays a distinct yet interconnected role in determining the success and sustainability of community-based tourism initiatives.

Social assets, also referred to as social capital, represent the networks, relationships, trust, and collective action capacity within communities (Putnam, 2000). In tourism development, social assets manifest through community organisations, cooperative associations, kinship networks, and social cohesion that facilitate collective decision-making and joint tourism ventures (Okazaki, 2018). Studies have demonstrated that communities with strong social capital are better positioned to develop and manage tourism enterprises collaboratively, resolve conflicts equitably, and ensure that tourism benefits are distributed fairly among community members (Zhao, Ritchie & Echtner, 2011). In the Nigerian context, traditional social structures including age grades, town unions, and cultural associations constitute significant social assets that can be harnessed for tourism development (Nwankwo, Elom & Eze, 2013).

Political assets encompass community access to political power, decision-making structures, leadership capacity, and relationships with government institutions (Sharp, Agnitsch, Ryan & Flora, 2002). These assets determine communities' ability to influence tourism policies, access government support, negotiate favourable terms with external investors, and maintain control over tourism development processes in their localities (Cole, 2006). Effective local governance structures, transparent decision-making processes, and strong linkages between community leadership and government agencies enhance communities' capacity to shape tourism development outcomes in ways that align with local priorities and values (Beritelli, Bieger & Laesser, 2007). In Rivers State, traditional governance systems headed by traditional rulers (Eze) alongside modern local government structures represent important political assets that could facilitate community-driven tourism initiatives (Ikelegbe, 2005).

Financial assets refer to the economic resources, income streams, savings capacity, access to credit, and investment capital available within communities (Emery & Flora, 2006). The availability and effective utilisation of financial assets significantly influence communities' ability to invest in tourism infrastructure, maintain tourism facilities, market tourism products, and sustain tourism operations during low seasons or economic downturns (Ashley & Mitchell, 2008).

Communities with diverse income sources, functional savings groups, access to microfinance institutions, and entrepreneurial capacity are better positioned to develop financially viable tourism enterprises without excessive dependence on external funding (Zapata, Hall, Lindo & Vanderschaeghe, 2011). In Nigeria, community-based financial mechanisms such as rotating savings and credit associations (esusu), cooperative societies, and community banks represent potential financial assets for tourism development (Iganiga, 2008).

The relationship between community assets and sustainable tourism development is grounded in sustainability theory, which emphasises the need to balance economic viability, environmental integrity, and socio-cultural authenticity in tourism development (Hunter, 1997). Sustainable tourism requires not only environmental conservation but also economic benefits for host communities, preservation of cultural heritage, and empowerment of local populations to participate meaningfully in tourism development and management (UNWTO, 2013). Community assets provide the foundation for achieving these multiple dimensions of sustainability by enabling communities to develop tourism products rooted in local culture, managed through local institutions, financed through local resources, and designed to generate benefits for local populations (Tolkach & King, 2015).

Empirical evidence from various contexts demonstrates the positive relationship between community asset mobilisation and sustainable tourism outcomes. In Kenya, communities that effectively harnessed their social capital through community conservancies achieved greater success in wildlife tourism while ensuring equitable benefit distribution and environmental conservation (Lesorogol, 2008). In South Africa, communities with strong political assets successfully negotiated land claims and established tourism enterprises in national parks, transforming previously marginalised populations into active participants and beneficiaries of tourism (Spenceley & Goodwin, 2007). Similarly, communities in Thailand and Indonesia with access to financial assets through microfinance and community funds developed vibrant homestay tourism businesses that provided sustainable livelihoods while preserving cultural traditions (Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen & Duangsaeng, 2014).

Despite the growing recognition of community assets' importance in sustainable tourism development globally, empirical research examining this relationship in the Nigerian context, particularly in Rivers State, remains limited. Most existing studies on tourism in Rivers State have focused on tourism potential assessment (Ogbulogo, 2005), challenges of tourism development

(Elenwo & Akankali, 2014), and the impact of oil exploration on tourism (Kadafa, 2012), with little attention to community assets as drivers of sustainable tourism. This knowledge gap is concerning given Rivers State's unique context as an oil-rich region with significant tourism potential but limited tourism development outcomes.

Furthermore, the specific contributions of different asset types social, political, and financial to sustainable tourism in Rivers State remain unexplored. Understanding how these assets individually and collectively promote sustainable tourism is essential for developing context-appropriate strategies that leverage existing community strengths rather than relying solely on external interventions. Such knowledge would inform policy formulation, guide development practitioners, and empower communities to take ownership of tourism development initiatives in Rivers State.

It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the role of community assets in promoting sustainable tourism in Rivers State, with specific focus on social assets, political assets, and financial assets. By investigating how these assets contribute to sustainable tourism development, this research aims to provide evidence-based insights that can guide tourism policy, planning, and practice in Rivers State and similar contexts.

Statement of the Problem

Tourism is widely acknowledged as a viable pathway to socio-economic development, especially when it leverages local community assets in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Community-based tourism (CBT) is increasingly regarded as a model that empowers local communities, enables economic growth, preserves cultural heritage, and fosters social inclusion (Gopal, 2023; Jackson et al., 2025). In the case of Rivers State, the region is endowed with rich cultural heritage, unique natural environments, and a variety of social resources that could make it a prime candidate for sustainable tourism development.

Despite this potential, tourism in Rivers State remains considerably underdeveloped. Studies have identified several obstacles, including inadequate infrastructure, poor preservation of heritage sites, limited community involvement, and weak policy implementation, which have prevented the tourism sector from fully contributing to community development and economic growth in the State. As a result, the opportunity to convert community assets, social, political, and financial, into a sustainable tourism economy remains largely unrealised.

Moreover, while global literature on community-based tourism emphasises the importance of community assets (social capital, local governance, financial resources) for sustainable tourism outcomes, there is a dearth of empirical research examining how these assets operate in the context of Rivers State. Few studies have systematically assessed the extent to which community social networks, political or institutional support, and financial resources are being harnessed to promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State communities. Where research exists, it often focuses on cultural heritage or ecological attractions but neglects the role of political and financial community assets in enabling sustainable tourism (e.g. heritage-site preservation, local governance, equitable revenue sharing, community empowerment).

This gap poses a serious problem: without understanding how community assets can be effectively mobilised, efforts to develop tourism in Rivers State risk being unsustainable, top-down, or exclusionary potentially leading to environmental degradation, cultural erosion, inequitable benefit distribution, and continued underdevelopment. In addition, lack of adequate empirical evidence limits policymakers' ability to design inclusive, asset-based tourism development strategies that could harness local strengths for sustainable growth.

Therefore, this research sought to address the fundamental problem that although Rivers State possesses significant community assets, there is insufficient understanding and evidence on how social, political, and financial assets are being harnessed or could be harnessed to promote sustainable tourism in the State. Without this understanding, sustainable tourism remains more of a theoretical possibility than a practical pathway to community development and improved livelihoods for local populations in Rivers State.

Aim & Objectives of the Study

The examined the role of community assets in promoting sustainable tourism in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to achieve the following objectives;

1. assess the extent to which harnessing of community social assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State.
2. determine the extent to which utilisation of community political assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State.
3. find out the extent to which harnessing of financial assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does harnessing of community social assets promotes sustainable tourism in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does utilisation of community political assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does harnessing of financial assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State?

Methodology

The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was 11,268, comprising 1,479 leaders and 9789 members of registered community-based organisations (CBOs) in Rivers State. The sample size for the study was nine hundred and two (902), comprising 233 leaders and 579 members drawn from the selected registered community-based organisations in the Local Government Areas with tourism potentials in Rivers State under study. The multistage sampling technique was adopted for the study. The instrument was validated by two experts in Community Development and Measurement and Evaluation from the University of Port Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha method. A composite reliability coefficient of 0.82 was obtained, indicating the instrument was reliable. Out of the 902 copies of the questionnaire administered, 891 copies were filled properly, returned and used for data analysis. In the first stage, the cluster sampling technique was adopted to cluster the state into twenty-three Local Government Areas of Rivers State. In the second stage, purposive sampling technique was used to select six (6) Local Government Areas (that have great tourism potentials that have not been developed and made sustainable yet) out of 23 Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The Local Government Areas include Asari-Toru, Degema, Bonny, Andoni, Port Harcourt City and Opobo/N koro Local Government areas respectively. In the third stage, random sampling technique was adopted to select five (5) community-based organisations from each of the six Local Government Areas under study, making it a total of 30 community-based organizations that was used for the study.

In the fourth stage, a proportionate sampling technique was adopted in selecting 50% of the members of the different selected community-based organizations used for the study, making

a total of 579 members. However, all the 233 leaders of the CBOs were taken as census due to their small and manageable size, making it a total of 902 respondents sampled for the study which ensured equal representation of the members of the selected CBOs were used for the study. Furthermore, the proportionate sampling technique was used in the fourth stage because the number of registered members in the selected community-based organisations was not equal.

The research questions were answered using the mean statistics and standard deviation.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does harnessing of community social assets promotes sustainable tourism in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings on the Extent to Which Harnessing of Community Social Assets Promotes Sustainable Tourism in Rivers State

s/ n	Items	VHE 4	HE 3	LE 2	VLE 1	N	\bar{x}	Remark
1	Involvement of community stakeholders would enable tourism managers to easily profile other tourism potentials in the community	319 (1276)	322 (966)	189 (378)	61 (61)	891 (2681)	3.01	High Extent
2	Synergy between community stakeholders and tourism managers will help to intensify awareness on tourism activities	398 (1592)	320 (960)	90 (180)	83 (83)	891 (2815)	3.16	High Extent
3	Participation of community stakeholders help in mobilizing relevant community asset for tourism attraction	419 (1676)	230 (690)	130 (260)	112 (112)	891 (2738)	3.07	High Extent
4	Communities could seek partnership with tourism agencies to harness their tourism potentials	352 (1408)	319 (957)	134 (268)	86 (86)	891 (2719)	3.05	High Extent
5	Communities could work together to ensure them develop cultural assets that could be used for tourism.	502 (2008)	287 (861)	59 (118)	43 (43)	891 (3030)	3.40	High Extent
Grand Mean							3.14	High Extent

Table 1 above revealed the extent to which harnessing of community social assets promotes sustainable tourism in Rivers State. Item 1 showed that majority of the respondents were of the view that involvement of community stakeholders would enable tourism managers to easily profile other tourism potentials in the community to a high extent (mean=3.01). Item 2 showed that respondents agreed that synergy between community stakeholders and tourism managers will help to intensify awareness on tourism activities to a high extent(mean=3.16). Furthermore, item 3 showed that respondents agreed that participation of community stakeholders help in mobilising relevant community assets for tourism attraction to a high extent(mean=3.07). Item 4 showed that majority of the respondents agreed that communities could seek partnership with tourism agencies to harness their tourism potential to a high extent(mean=3.05). Item 5 had showed respondents agreed that communities could work together to ensure they develop cultural assets that could be used for tourism to a high extent(mean=3.40). With grand mean score of 3.14 the answer to research question four is that harnessing of community social assets promotes sustainable tourism in Rivers State to a high extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent does utilisation of community political assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings on the Extent to Which Utilisation of Community Political Assets Promote Sustainable Tourism in Rivers State

S/ n	Items	VHE 4	HE 3	LE 2	VLE 1	N	\bar{x}	Remark
6	Individuals holding positions in the state government structure can attract government attention to harness tourism potentials in their local communities to increase their income.	511 (2044)	279 (837)	89 (178)	12 (12)	891 (3071)	3.45	High Extent
7	Politicians from Rivers State who are holding positions in Government at Federal level can influence government's support for tourism in Rivers State.	478 (1912)	215 (645)	93 (186)	116 (116)	891 (2859)	3.21	High Extent
8	Indigent politicians can influence government policies in favor of promotion of tourism in communities with robust potentials.	325 (1300)	419 (1257)	85 (170)	62 (62)	891 (2789)	3.13	High Extent
9	Indigent politicians can contribute financially to communities towards	429 (1716)	278 (834)	105 (210)	79 (79)	891 (2839)	3.19	High Extent

	setting up tourist sites in communities.								
10	Government officials can make direct investment into tourism in their communities to enhance socio-economic development.	362 (1448)	337 (1011)	103 (206)	89 (89)	891 (2754)	3.09	High Extent	
Grand Mean								3.22	High Extent

Table 2 above revealed the extent to which utilisation of community political assets promotes sustainable tourism in Rivers State. Item 6 showed that majority of the respondents agreed that individuals holding positions in the state government structure can attract government attention to harness tourism potentials in their local communities to increase their income to a high extent (mean=3.45). Item 7 showed that most of the respondents agreed that politicians from Rivers State who are holding positions in Government at Federal level can influence government's support for tourism in Rivers State to a high extent (mean=3.21). Item 8 revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that indigent politicians can influence government policies in favour of promotion of tourism in communities with robust potentials to a high extent(mean=3.13). Item 9 showed that respondents agreed that indigent politicians can contribute financially to communities towards setting up tourist sites in communities(mean=3.19). Finally, item 10 showed that majority of the respondents agreed that government officials can make direct investment into tourism in their communities to enhance socio-economic development (mean=3.09). With grand mean scores of 3.22, the answer to research question five is that utilisation of community political assets promotes sustainable tourism in Rivers State to a high extent.

Research Question 3: To what extent does utilisation of financial assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings on the Extent to Which Utilisation of Financial Assets Promote Sustainable Tourism in Rivers State

S/ n	Items	VHE 4	HE 3	LE 2	VLE 1	N	\bar{x}	Remark
11	Communities hosting multinational companies can harness their financial support to promote tourism in their communities.	392 (1568)	378 (1134)	72 (144)	49 (49)	891 (2895)	3.25	High Extent
12	Communities with wealthy individuals can seek their	371 (1484)	368 (1104)	80 (160)	72 (72)	891 (2820)	3.16	High Extent

	support to develop their tourism potentials.								
13	Communities support tourism through sale of community landed property or other assets.	457 (1828)	330 (990)	57 (114)	47 (47)	891 (2979)	3.34	High Extent	
14	Local government authorities can support tourism in their area using their internally generated revenue.	295 (1180)	396 (1188)	121 (242)	79 (79)	891 (2689)	3.02	High Extent	
15	Communities could levy themselves to gather revenue for promoting community tourism.	320 (1280)	402 (1206)	103 (206)	66 (66)	891 (2758)	3.10	High Extent	
Grand Mean							3.17	High Extent	

Table 3 above revealed the extent to which utilization of financial assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State. Item 11 showed that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that communities hosting multinational companies can harness their financial support to promote tourism in their communities (mean=3.25). Item 12 showed that majority of the respondents agreed that communities with wealthy individuals can seek their support to develop their tourism potential (mean=3.16). Item 13 showed that majority of the respondents agreed that communities support tourism through sale of community landed property or other assets (mean=3.34). Furthermore, item 14 revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that local government authorities can support tourism in their area using their internally generated revenue (mean=3.02). Lastly, item 15 revealed that communities could levy themselves to gather revenue for promoting community tourism (mean=3.10). With grand mean score of 3.17, the answer to research question six is that utilisation of financial assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State to a high extent.

Discussion of Findings

Extent to which Harnessing of Community Social Assets Promote Sustainable Tourism

The finding of the study for research question one revealed that harnessing of community social assets promoted sustainable tourism in Rivers State to a high extent. Through involvement of community stakeholders, fostering synergy between community stakeholders and tourism managers, participation of community stakeholders to help in mobilising relevant community asset for tourism and communities seeking partnership with tourism agencies enhanced sustainable tourism in the study area. With grand mean scores of 3.15 which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. This finding is in line with the finding of a study conducted by Wahyudi and Santoso (2022) in which they explored the role of social capital in developing local community-based tourism innovation villages. Social capital according to them, including social networks, beliefs, norms of reciprocity, and local cultural values, according to them, is a vital asset in various local community development programmes. Social capital will be reflected in the community's ability to work together, generate awareness and commitment, a sense of belonging, and social solidarity, and create active participation in achieving common goals. They further stated that, the presence and role of social assets in society are crucial for the success of community development goals and programmes, including the eco-tourism development programme. López-Téllez et al., (2019) elucidated that the communal assets contain a high biological, cultural and territorial diversity, with tree and seed fossils which reflect the geologic and historical processes of the region. Therefore, infrastructure was established for the creation of a community museum, flora and fauna interpretative tracks, as well as camping services for local public and students of different levels. It allows the creation of a business venture through promotion and commercialisation plans in order to guarantee a market. Pramanik and Rahman (2023) deduced that to promote sustainable development of tourism, the role of the local community social asset and their involvement are undeniable.

Extent to which Utilisation of Political Assets Promote Sustainable Tourism

The finding of the study in research question two revealed that utilisation of community political assets promoted sustainable tourism in Rivers State to a high extent. By getting individuals holding positions in the state government structure to attract government attention to harness tourism potentials, getting politicians from Rivers State who are holding positions in

Government at Federal level to influence government's support for tourism, indigent politicians to influence government policies in favour of promotion of tourism in communities with robust potentials and indigent politicians contributing financially to communities towards setting up tourist sites in communities promote sustainable tourism in the state. With grand mean scores of 3.23 which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. This finding is in line with the finding of Akbar, Yang, Han and Kanat (2019) asserted that because of negative political environments, the residents highly perceive the negative economic and environmental impacts of tourism development. Although the residents highly evaluated tourism's positive sociocultural impacts, its relevance to other indicators was relatively weak. Pridham, (2001) also revealed that community political assets have been largely neglected for a concern primarily with problem solution and prescriptive models of policy-planning This neglect is clearly surprising because tourism is widely regarded as the world's largest industry and is one that shows all signs of growing in the future, hence if tourism will thrive in any community, then the community political assets will largely be utilised.

Extent to Which Utilisation of Financial Assets Promote Sustainable Tourism

The findings of the study in research question three revealed that utilisation of financial assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State to a high extent. By getting communities hosting multinational companies to harness their financial support to promote tourism in their communities, Seeking the help of wealthy individuals to develop tourism, sale of community landed property or other assets for tourism and local government authorities supporting tourism in their area using their internally generated revenue promoted sustainable tourism in the area. With grand mean scores of 3.26 which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. This finding is in line with the finding of Diaz and Kien (2019) conducted a study that addressed the big problem that tourism projects and initiatives are encountering. Lack of financing is a common challenge hindering the development of tourism, resulting to a number of popular destinations that are slowly dying (e.g. the Great Wall of China, and the Angkor Wat). The purpose of Tourism Finance is to set criteria on which value-adding tourism projects should receive investment funding; and to evaluate a tourism organisation's financial needs to better decide on what capital structure (i.e., debt and/or equity) to appropriately raise to minimise the weighted average cost of capital. Gao,

Liu, Ayub and Hussain (2022) inferred that community financial inclusion has a significant positive impact on various aspects of tourism development.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the strategies for promoting sustainable tourism such as harnessing of community social assets, utilisation of community political and financial assets promote sustainable tourism in Rivers State. In other words, the adoption of these strategies by the leadership of these communities alongside the government will lead to the promotion of sustainable tourism development in these communities. This way, these communities are able to harness its potential and resources.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. The Ministry of Tourism should encourage the formation of local tourism committees that include diverse community members to collaboratively plan and manage tourism initiatives.
2. Leadership of the communities should advocate to the government for policies that support sustainable tourism development, ensuring local government involvement in decision-making processes to align tourism with community needs.
3. Tourism agencies and the financial institutions in the community should establish microfinance options to support local entrepreneurs in tourism-related businesses, enabling broader community participation in the sector.

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