

Workshop 2: Strategic Tourism Development Action Plan

1. **Introduction:** A development action plan provides a detailed account of the development project's background, objectives, justification for development, and other important elements of the project.

An effective action plan should be able to give readers a clear and concise understanding of where the site is, what development objectives are planned, why they are important, who the stakeholders are, when the objectives should be implemented, and how the objectives should be implemented.

2. **Objective:** This workshop serves to guide planners with the different components that are typically included in a tourism development action plan. It suggests the format and presentation of an effective tourism action plan. Writing the development plan should be in an essay or narrative style.
3. **Level:** Sub-national
4. **Geographic Clustering**
5. **Mechanics:**
 - a. Each municipality shall provide content for each part of the tourism action plan.
 - b. Each is tasked to accomplish the Table of Contents, List of Acronyms and Executive Summary. See Form 1 for reference.
 - c. Contents contained in the body of the development plan such as (i) Project Description, (ii) Project Rationale, (iii) Stakeholder Analysis, (iv) Project Sustainability; and (v) Monitoring & Evaluation should be covered.
 - d. Outputs will be presented during plenary.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary is an opportunity for the reader to briefly glance at the details of the action plan. The information on this page should also be found in the body of the action plan in detail. It is common to complete this after the body of the action plan is fully completed.

1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 Objectives & Expected Outcomes

Objectives

The objective is where the authors should state and justify the development goal.

A widely used approach in developing a tourism site is to establish a clear theme. A “theme” usually refers to a category or a type of tourist attraction. Setting a theme for a destination not only helps developers focus on a development goal but also lays out a clear image for the destination. Examples of popular tourism categories include ecotourism, community-based tourism, adventure tourism, medical tourism, religious tourism, rural tourism, coastal tourism, cruise tourism, shopping tourism, golf tourism, ski tourism, and many more.

An existing tourism site looking to improve its tourism appeal can also look to establish a theme. Alternatively, a site may only wish to add new supporting tourism products to an existing site, in which case it is also advisable to decide on a theme of development. For example, a historical site may wish to introduce a new set of technologies to enhance the visitor experience by offering an accompanying app, allowing visitors to navigate the site and enjoy improved storytelling. Therefore, the development plan should state the theme clearly in the form of the objectives it wishes to achieve.

Expected Outcomes

In this section, the authors develop and propose a set of expected outcomes that ultimately help achieve the development objectives.

All the expected outcomes should ultimately contribute to the overall success of the development plan. The objectives may be divided into different expected outcomes. Dividing your plan into smaller outcomes can be beneficial in various ways. First, it gives a more explicit breakdown of components that are important and are needed to help achieve the objective. Second, tourism development requires effort from many different stakeholders working together simultaneously. Thus, structuring the objectives based on tasks can help with the management and implementation of each. Please note: these four sections are just examples - depending on the plan, an alternative structure may be used that is better suited to your proposal.

- Enhanced cross-functional tourist service infrastructure development through linkage of Tourist Information Centers (TICs) and other tourist service infrastructure for improved tourist convenience at key strategic locations.
- Improved local tourism products and services and strengthened tourism-related Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) at key strategic locations

through the development of regional capacity building bases and through technical assistance.

- Enhanced regional tourism development leading to increased local incomes at strategic locations, particularly in underprivileged areas, through improved tourism product development and marketing skills.
- Improved local ownership and partnership through responsible, inclusive and effective operation of tourism SMEs, including community enterprises which can manage local tourism businesses provided by local people and control the impacts of tourism development within the community, and empower women through job and management skills development in the tourism sector.

1.1 Planned Actions

In this part, each expected outcome should be broken down into various actions.

This is the most vital part of the project's plan. It is where the details of the development activities are presented. Please take the time to discuss the planned actions with all the parties involved in the project and reach a consensus. Note that the 'actions' that are presented in the action plan are still at a strategic level. Hence, at the operational level, a more specific set of smaller actions may still be required. However, the scope of this document only covers the strategic level of planning.

2. PROJECT RATIONALE

2.1 Situation Analysis

Local Economic Situation

This section provides an opportunity to discuss the current economic situation, relevant to the context of the project, at the subnational level. It is an opportunity to give readers an idea of how the country views tourism and what sort of issues and challenges it is facing.

Current Tourism Sector Analysis

This section the author(s) can narrow down from the overall economic situation at the provincial or local level and only focuses on the tourism industry. Explain and discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that the tourism industry is experiencing.

Challenges Facing the Tourism Sector

This section is a continuation from the previous sections and provides an opportunity to discuss the challenges facing the tourism sector as a whole.

Challenges can be to eliminate weaknesses (discussed in the previous section) or exploit opportunities (also discussed in the previous section).

Location and Current Status

This section is where the location and details of the municipality's destinations are introduced.

Please spend ample time to study and carefully analyze the location for development. This section will lay down the foundation for the rest of the essay. With clear background information of the location in this section, it will be easier to explain issues and illustrate the potential for the site for development. Please note that readers and evaluators may not be personally familiar with your region and local sites – therefore, it is essential that as much clear and relevant information is given about the site as possible.

Location – Start with an elaboration of the location. Explain its geography and how to get there from the nearest or most commonly used transportation hub. A typical way of illustrating this aspect of a location is by using maps. Using more than one map can also be useful. For example, a smaller-scale map (i.e. more “zoomed out” map) shows less detail and can be used to identify where the site’s location is within the country. A larger-scale map (i.e. more “zoomed in” map) shows more detail and can be used to identify the locations of nearby transportation hubs and other landmarks in relation to the site. Readers and evaluators can quickly understand the site’s location by depicting both maps alongside one another. In addition, please give examples of how tourists can reach the chosen site, such as the transit time from the nearest airport by bus or by train. Can visitors take public transportation, or will the transfer require private options?

Tourism resources and products – After the location has been explained, give a detailed description of what are considered to be its core attractions. Describe primary tourism resources and products within the area. Give a brief explanation of why these resources can be interesting for visitors. Highlight some of the popular tourism products in the area such as local restaurants, hotels, activities, and more. If the site is already attracting tourists, explain what visitors to the site usually see and do there.

Attributes and features – After introducing key tourism products and resources, please elaborate on their features and attributes. This is an opportunity to describe the appeal of the location to your readers. Please keep in mind that not all historical monuments have high tourism appeal, so use this opportunity to convince readers and evaluators that the chosen site has high potential to be developed into a thriving tourism site. For example, a historical monument in a site may contain unique architectural attributes that could be of high artistic value. The local cuisine may offer a unique blend of local ingredients difficult to find elsewhere. It is recommended to include as many photos as possible to illustrate the sites and their attributes.

Development state – The chosen site may fall into one of two categories: a site that has not been developed, or an established site looking to be further developed. This action plan is applicable to a tourism site in any state of growth. However, it is important to have a clear understanding of the site’s current status

in terms of tourism development. It is also possible that the chosen site is a well-known and established one, but the proposal is being made to attract a new segment of the market and/or to add new features and facilities to the site. For example, a site could be well established among adventure tourists but now looks to attract families as well. Thereby, the famous adventure site would now be aiming to develop additional activities that would be suitable for families with children.

2.2 Risk/Problem Statements

After discussing the current situations of the municipality's destinations both in terms of national economy and its tourism industry, issues and challenges that require development are outlined here.

The first set of motivations for tourism development projects may stem from current problems and issues that the development plan aims to fix. Alternatively, the plan may attempt to capitalize on new opportunities and trends. Yet, the most optimal plan should be a blend of fixing current issues while capitalizing on emerging market trends.

After reading section 2.1, the reader should have an idea of what some of the issues and problems are that require attention. In this section, the authors should clearly state those issues and provide a detailed explanation of them. Discussions may include the cause of the issues and the types of development that may help to solve these issues. If possible, compare the issues with relevant situations that you or your country have experienced in the past, what was done to remedy those situations at the time, and whether those same solutions could be used to solve the issues at the current destination. Draw from past experiences/projects for inspiration. If the issue is new to the country or to the organization implementing it, try to find similar cases from other destinations/countries for inspiration.

At the same time, the inspiration or model of development can follow an emerging trend in the industry. This development plan is an opportunity to bring interesting concepts and new market ideas to the destination while trying to combat the issues. During the training workshop, authors can take suitable development models and use them as the basis for implementing other developments.

2.3 National Development Strategies & Policies

This section explains how the tourism development plan contributes to the national tourism development goals at large.

Any good tourism development project should align itself with the vision of the NTDP. Thus, it is essential that this proposed development plan can also help achieve the long-term goals set by the national tourism organization. This also implies that the proposed development plan in this document should complement the national tourism development goals.

First, start with an introduction of the current national tourism development plans. Give a brief synopsis of what the national government has already proposed. Explain how the

national plan influences the planning and aims of this current project. Make sure to identify the key issues that affect tourism at the national level and how this project can help combat such issues.

Next, outline how the national government, regional government, or related organizations can help with this development project. Explain the level of involvement they can have with this project. With the national government's involvement, the level of credibility can be substantially increased.

2.4 Previous & Current Development Experience

If there are other outstanding projects that the government is currently engaged in, please explain here. If possible, all the different projects being undertaken at the moment should eventually contribute to success at the national level. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to briefly make a connection between the different projects and the current action plan.

3. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Stakeholders – Identify critical stakeholders within the site's environment. Describe who the major stakeholders are, their roles, and their interests within the site. For example, in a historical/traditional village, some of the key stakeholders might be:

- The village chief: the major communication point between outside stakeholders and local villagers. Looking to develop the village as a new source of employment and income for the local people.
- Local restaurant owners: looking to grow their businesses from visitors. Can offer local dishes that are unique to the village. Currently, popular dishes are...
- Villagers: some own homes that can be turned into homestays. Express interest but currently lack the knowledge and experience to serve as homestay providers - need training.
- Tour operators and agencies: based in a nearby city that brings in approximately 50 tourists per week. Reported that their customers wish to have more activities in the village. Have the potential to bring in more tourists if the village can offer more activities.
- Local government: can help with communication and gathering of different stakeholders for the development of new tourism products and activities.
- National government/ministry: includes tourism in the country's development goal. Can send specialists to help train the local villagers about developing homestays.
- University/educational institutes: can help develop hiking trails, provide information about the local wildlife.

Please note that these are just some of the examples of potential stakeholders in a site. Every site will be different. Please discuss and carefully identify all important stakeholders related to tourism activities in the site.

4. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability tourism sites meets not just the needs of present tourists but also host regions while protecting and enhancing the opportunities for the future according to the UNWTO, particularly the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Thus, it is important for a tourism action plan to consider the sustainability of the proposed development project, in which the author(s) can outline in this section.

It is recommended to highlight how this project would ensure the host regions can benefit from the development of tourism. Plans to minimize potential impact on the national environment and non-renewable cultural assets and heritage should also be discussed.

5. MONITORING & EVALUTION

Any good development project must be both effective and efficient. A monitoring and evaluation framework allows all the parties involved to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the project, in which the details can be discussed in this section.

Effectiveness is about doing the right tasks to accomplish the intended or expected results. Efficiency is about performing in the best possible manner with the least waste of time, and effort.

Monitoring provides opportunities at regular predetermined points in time to validate the action plans' implementations. It also provides feedback to make adjustments as needed. Information from monitoring needs to be used to encourage improvements or reinforce plans. Therefore, as part of a good action plan, monitoring and evaluation should be addressed.