

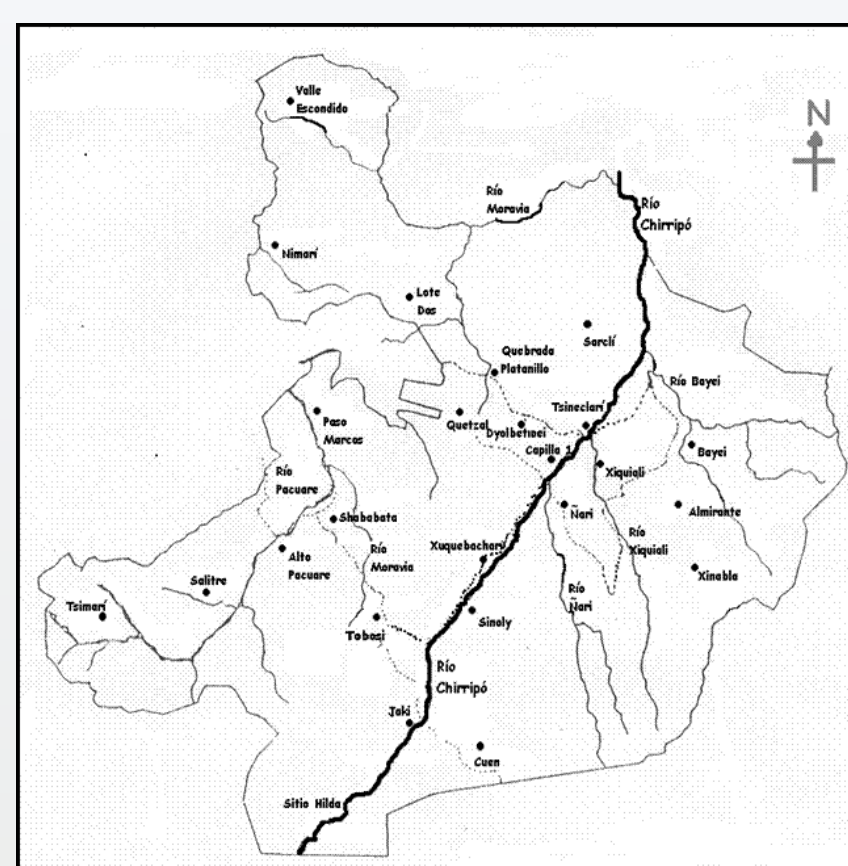
Operationalizing Participation in Data Collection

For Community Based Ecotourism Planning

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Chirripó – The Other Costa Rica

- Highest poverty and lowest HDI in the country
- Lack of infrastructure & basic services
- Agricultural & subsistence livelihoods
- Large indigenous population (96%)
- High levels of inequality and discrimination



Objectives

Participatory Asset Evaluation for Tourism Planning

- Objectives:
- Collect data for tourism planning
 - Identify available resources and strategies for mobilizing them
 - Establish shared priority outcomes

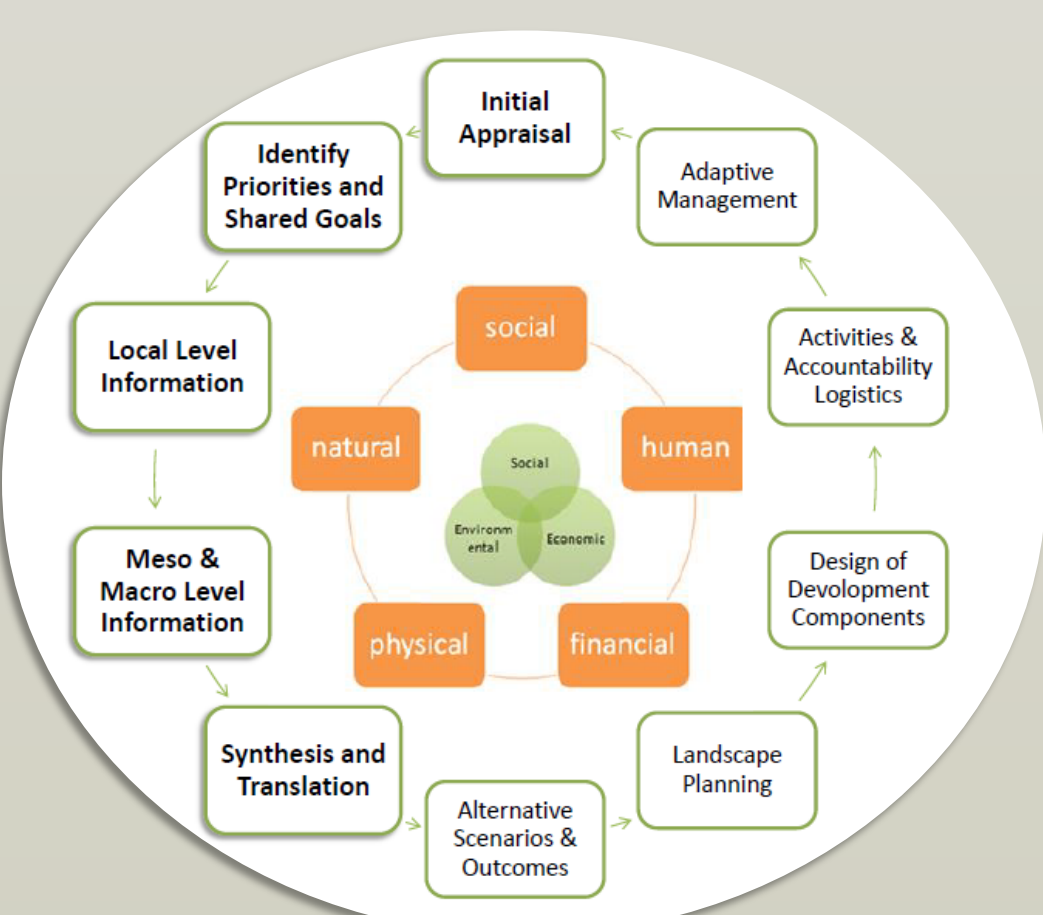
Strengthening Support Networks

- Objectives:
- Identify organizations for possible partnerships
 - Elicit support and investment of resources
 - Establish a network of support organizations

Feasibility Study & Market Analyses

- Objectives:
- Investigate current supply and demand of TRC products
 - Determine feasibility of products & strategies for development
 - Positioning within current tourism distribution systems

The Ecological Planning Process



Working from the Ecological Planning model developed by Steiner, I adapted it to reflect two main challenges within the developing context, increasing focus on the processes of generating information for planning and emphasizing the social and economic components of sustainability:

- Lack of endowments in the capital assets base (community & livelihood capitals) and the need for balanced and sustainable investments across sectors
- The importance of local institutional structures for collective natural resource governance
- How the *process* of planning and data collection can emphasize collaboration of local and external stakeholders to overcome resource deficits and strengthen governance



Initial Appraisal

Activities and Methods

- Introductory Workshops (methods)
- Tourism discussions
- Community resource mapping
- Community Capitals inventories

Stakeholder Analysis

- Community members, local businesses and organizations
- External support organizations

Used social capital inventory to identify groups operating within the community, begin analysis of stakeholders and create a strategy for increasing participation

- Interviewed leaders of organizations
- Current goals and projects
 - Organizational function and structure
 - Membership

- Surveyed group and community members
- Snowball Survey
 - Membership & involvement
 - Interest in tourism

Social Network Analysis

- External Stakeholder Participation
- Identified public, private, and civil society organizations & businesses
 - Initial contacts & relationship building

Identify Priorities and Shared Goals



Local Level Information



- Workshops with community groups and indigenous communities
- Resource use and Livelihood strategies
 - Identification of products & priorities
 - Visioning and pathways
 - Planning activities

Meso & Macro Level Information

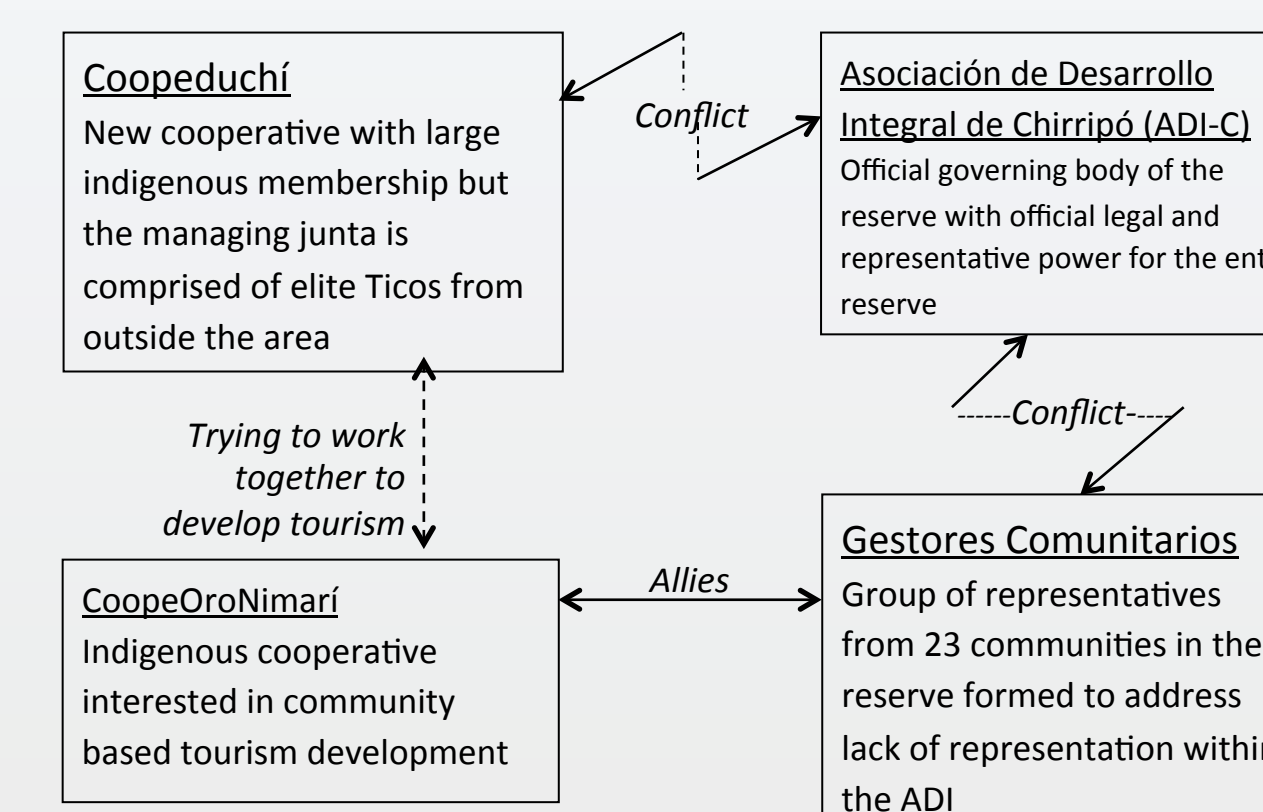


- Data collection and investigation methods
- Literature review & traditional research methods
 - Tourism statistics
 - Formal Interviews with TRC organizations
 - Formal interviews with regional hospitality service providers
 - Competitive Census
 - Market segmentation analysis

This process for collecting and analyzing data for tourism planning in Chirripó will be used in the planning within the initial 23 communities of the Cabécar Indigenous reserve.

	Data collected	Data Needed	Follow Up Activities	Planning
Natural	Inventory of possible tourism attractions	• Spatial • Ecological Inventory/ • Broader perspectives	• Mapping • More workshops with different groups	Priority attractions and feasibility analysis
Human	Skills and Trainings, Local Knowledge	• Who? • What else?	• Individual info • Visioning and pathways	Strategy for capacity building
Physical	Community and individual facilities for community organization and tourism accommodation	• Spatial • Access • Priority investments	• Mapping • Analysis/ownership • Visioning and pathways	Logistics for investments and planning
Financial	Activities and organizations for fundraising	• Specific external organizations and resources	• Research organizations, make contacts	Strategy for building networks and partnerships
Social	Community organizations	• Membership organization, activities	• Interviews and surveys	Local governance, mechanisms for cooperation

Stakeholder Conflict and Collaboration



Outcomes

ICT District Tourism Inventory

- 10 page document detailing the results of the participatory inventory and identifying current and potential tourism products and attractions
- Turned into the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT) for inclusion in their new regional tourism planning initiative

Feasibility Study and Tourism Market Analysis

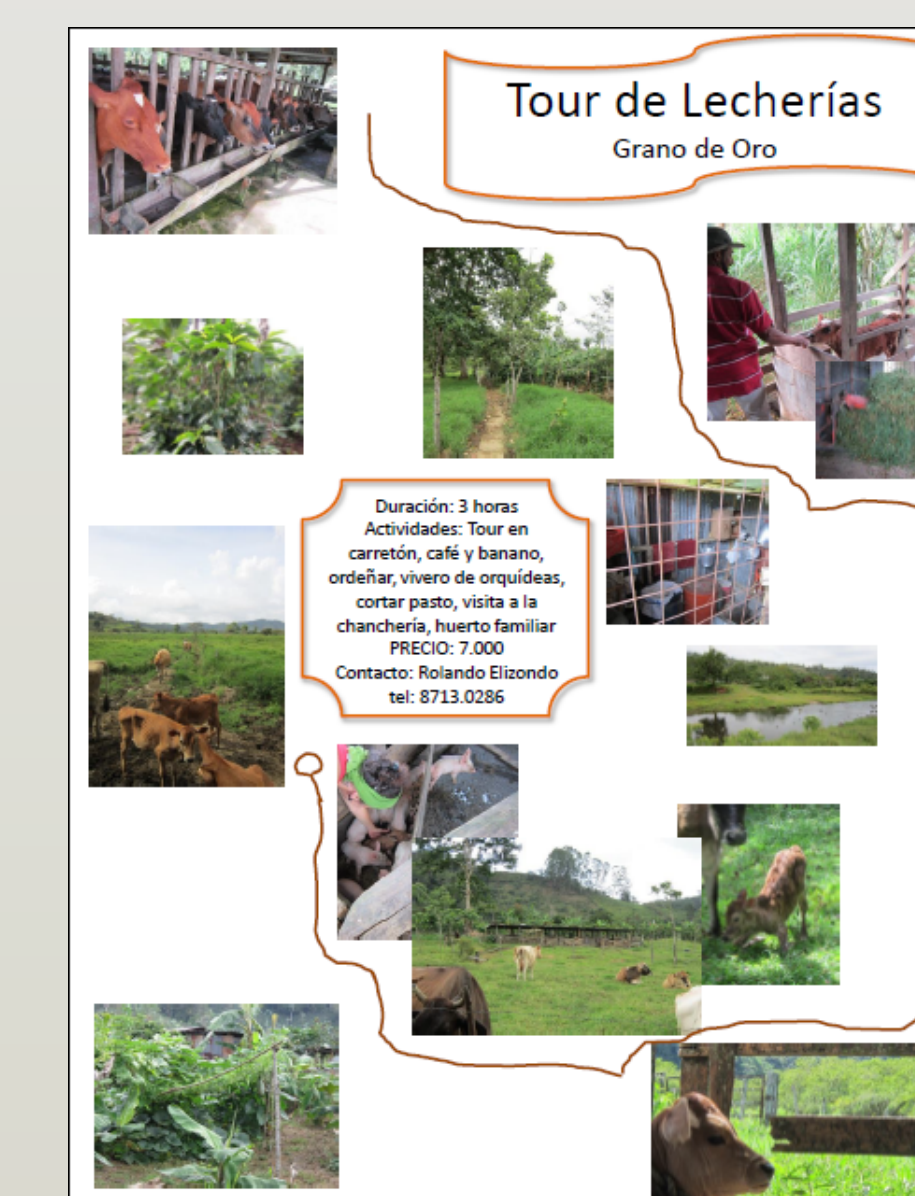
- Detailed study of the current national and regional tourism market including the results of formal interviews with hospitality providers and national level community tourism organizations
- Will be delivered to Coopeduchi and the Turrialba office of the ICT for use in planning and investment & marketing strategies

Proposal for Indigenous Plan de Senderismo

- Document outlining the participatory planning process for infrastructure investments and Community Indigenous Tourism within the reserve, in accordance with Indigenous community priorities
- Planning loosely follows the process detailed here and was designed with local indigenous organizations
- Will serve as the initial proposal for future activities and funding requests

Tourism Product Development

- Develop tours with various groups including planning organizational logistics, pricing, and publicity
- Worked with community organizations to build capacity in Administrative activities and accounting and financial management



Complimentary Goods and Services

Worked with local businesses and people interested in hospitality to build capacity in the following areas:

- Strategic pricing
- Menu development & menu design
- Preparing for new and different markets

References

Steiner, F. (2008). The living landscape: an ecological approach to landscape planning: Island Press.

Special Thanks

The UF Tropical Conservation and Development program &:

