

Tourism Development
for Sustainable Economic Growth

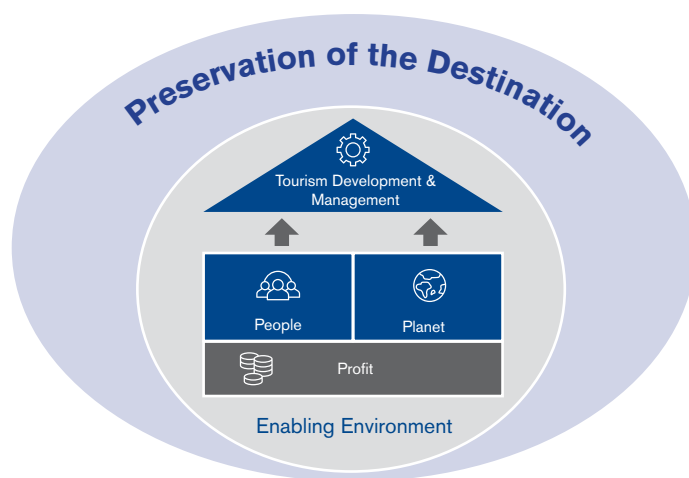
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Tourism is much more than just an economic sector. It is a complex system wherein potential interactions with other economic sectors can develop sustainably both upstream and downstream. For this reason, it is essential that projects are implemented and developed within the broader context.

This is precisely what makes tourism systems very complex: feedbacks into the supply chains of a wide variety of market systems, the dependence on infrastructure

and training, international and national mobility concepts, to name just a few factors, call for the following development projects. The success of the tourism sector depends heavily on the economic situation in the tourist's original markets and on international tourism markets, health and safety issues.

Because of its great potential to create jobs, the donor community has rediscovered tourism after a few decades. Tourism development is once again anchored in the country and theme portfolios.



Swisscontact's understanding of sustainability

Through sustainable tourism management, Swisscontact is actively fostering sustainable development and preservation of the destination. For this reason, even when poverty alleviation is the main objective in all its interventions, Swisscontact hopes to achieve positive impact on three levels: people, the planet, and profit.



People: Tourism can either improve or harm quality of life for local populations and their socio-cultural context. In all its interventions, Swisscontact respects cultural values, promotes empowerment, and fosters social harmony and learning.



Planet: Swisscontact's destination development activities consider the effects that tourism has on the environment. Most of Swisscontact's interventions in the tourism sector depend directly or indirectly on a healthy natural ecosystem.



Profit: Swisscontact emphasizes economic sustainability in programme interventions. Tourism products must be economically viable so that they will continue to be offered over the long term. Only then will they create valuable jobs, secure livelihoods, and ensure income distribution on various levels.

Tourism projects worldwide

Swisscontact's first experience in tourism development dates back to the mid-1990s when the first tourism project started in Peru. Ever since, Swisscontact's tourism-related portfolio has expanded around the globe and widened towards different topics.

In addition to stand-alone tourism projects, Swisscontact is implementing tourism components in market and regional development as well as in skills development/continuing education projects.

- Swisscontact is currently implementing highly targeted tourism projects in Tunisia, Colombia, and Indonesia
- Market development projects featuring tourism as a key sector are underway in Indonesia, Laos, Honduras, Colombia, Macedonia, and Kosovo
- Skills development projects with a tourism/hospitality component are being conducted in Nicaragua, Myanmar, Rwanda, Uganda, Laos, and Cambodia



Swisscontact's tourism projects improve worldwide every year for around

10 000 people

the conditions for employment and income.



Integrated destination development and management acknowledges the diversity of different functions needed in a destination, all of which form the overall picture of destination management.

Development of Tourism Destinations



Destination Management (DM)

Supporting analysis of the destination, moderating working group panels, and supporting the creation of appropriate DM structures.



Product Development

Supporting demand-driven development of tourism products and services without playing the role of a service provider itself.



Advertising and Marketing

Supporting DM organisations to attract more attention domestically and worldwide to the products and services they offer.



Visitor Information

Establishment and/or implementation of public services such as visitor information structures.



Supply Chains

Strengthening actors along the entire supply chain by developing their business management skills, supporting local food producers and artisans to improve their products and develop marketing channels.



Business Development

Strengthening business management skills on the SME level. Swisscontact trains tourism service providers in sustainable business management.



Skills Development

Strengthening skills on different formal levels and for various target groups: tourism course trainers and/or students, employees and/or management, members of local municipal administrations and/or practitioners at local destinations.



Infrastructure

Building and maintaining road and IT infrastructure.



Strengthening the regulatory environment

Swisscontact's emphasis is on building the capacities of people and not on designing legal frameworks.



Data Management

Reliable and secure data constitute the basis of solid Destination Management.



Community Empowerment

Developing attractive service packages to offer visitors. In order to generate the most sustainable added value locally, Swisscontact is providing training to these stakeholders, supporting development and expansion of tourism services while linking these to tour operators.

Impact Assessment

Swisscontact's project work directly – and joined forces and partnerships indirectly – strives towards positive impact, while avoiding, reducing and/or opposing negative impact.

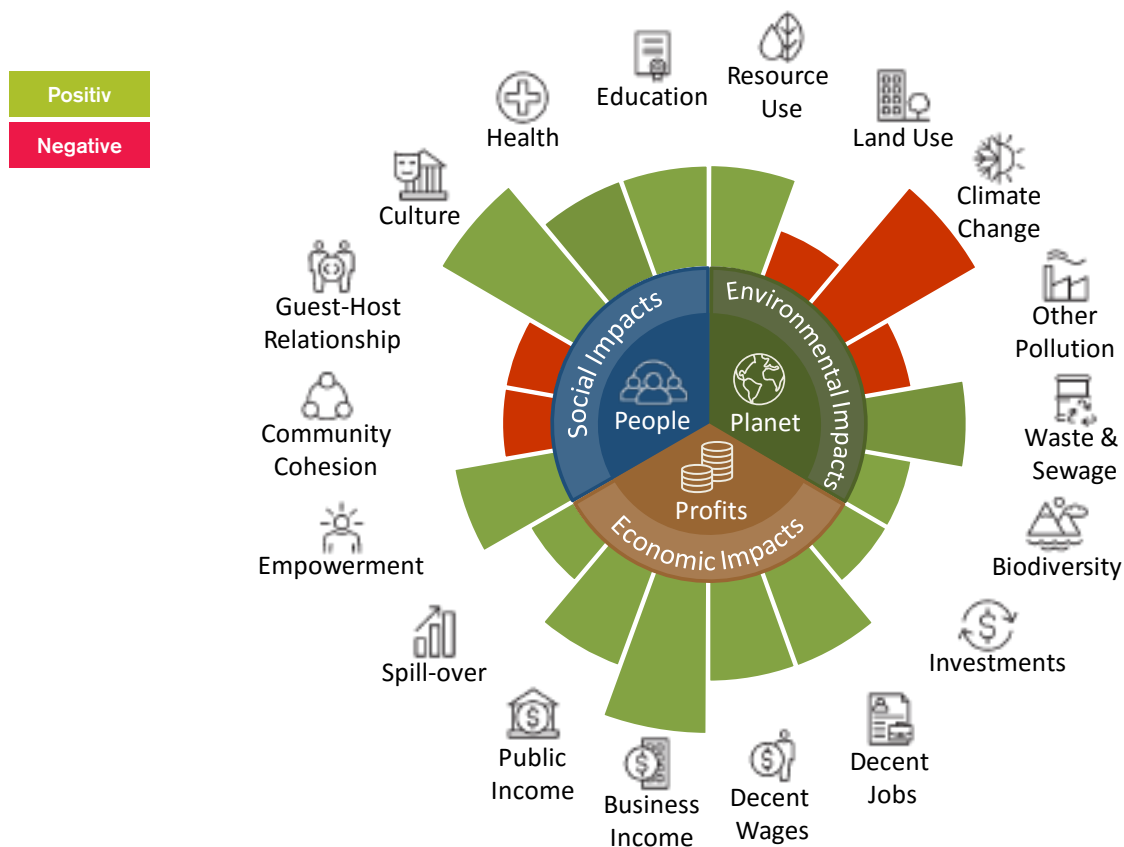
Swisscontact therefore developed the impact wheel, visualizing the dimensions a tourism development project affects directly or indirectly. From project management perspective, reputation and thus opportunities arise from positive impact, whereas negative impact

poses risks affecting not only the overall destination in general, but also the project and its goals in specific. Impact assumptions, mainstreaming sustainability are therefore an important tool already in the project design phase. Relating mitigation strategies must feed into project design and steering.

With the impact graph the impact of Swisscontact's destination development is assessed and presented against the planned impact. Assessments can be made at any stage of a project.

Expected or observed effects of tourism development supported by Swisscontact

Fictitious project example of an impact wheel:



Source: Idea for graphical visualisation TIMM © 2013. PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. Content strongly altered by Swisscontact, 2017.

The various effects individual factors have on a given tourism destination are so broad and varied that it is not enough merely to create new jobs and measure the income generated. The changes are not always reflected in absolute figures, but often perceived through the experiences of locals.

Swisscontact applies a method for determining project effectiveness in order to anticipate where effects are being felt from the very beginning. Factors are evaluated on a continuous basis in order to identify positive effects and mitigate negative aspects.

Swisscontacts' Conviction

Guiding principles:

- Tourism is not to be developed just because of the aim of “developing tourism” as such or bringing tourists to a specific region, but because – and only if – it in the long-run creates observable positive impact in the destination to be visited.
- Tourism development can only have positive impact if attention is paid to sustainability issues.
- Sustainability in tourism can seldom be achieved alone, which is why special attention is required for collaboration and advocacy towards sustainability as well as for systemic destination development approach in which joined forces address the strengthening of all relevant destination functions.
- Destination management is a process, in which any possible resulting structure comes after and based on the findings of the destination assessment process.
- Only the dialog with relevant stakeholders takes account of the complexity of the “spider's web tourism”, in which Swisscontact will seldom take the all-encompassing role of developing all destination functions, but concentrate on our organisation's strengths and facilitating functions.
- Whereas Swisscontact's work is guided by our global convictions, implementation on the ground is only fruitful if aligned to local contexts and realities.

