Chapter 4
Assessment Tools

Tool 24: Development Wheel

What is it?

The development wheel (Figure 24.1) is a self-assessment tool to help communities discuss their perceived resources and skills in three broad areas: natural and cultural resources, mountain community structure, and business development. Communities score themselves on several aspects of these three areas on a scale of one to 10, and mark the values on the 'spokes' of the wheel, each of which represents one type of resource or skill.

When is it used?

The development wheel can be used as a mountain tourism baseline study to identify the existing natural and cultural tourism resources, the mountain community structure, and the state of business development in any given mountain area. This also makes it a useful planning instrument as it indicates which areas can be developed. For instance, the state-of-the-art of business development
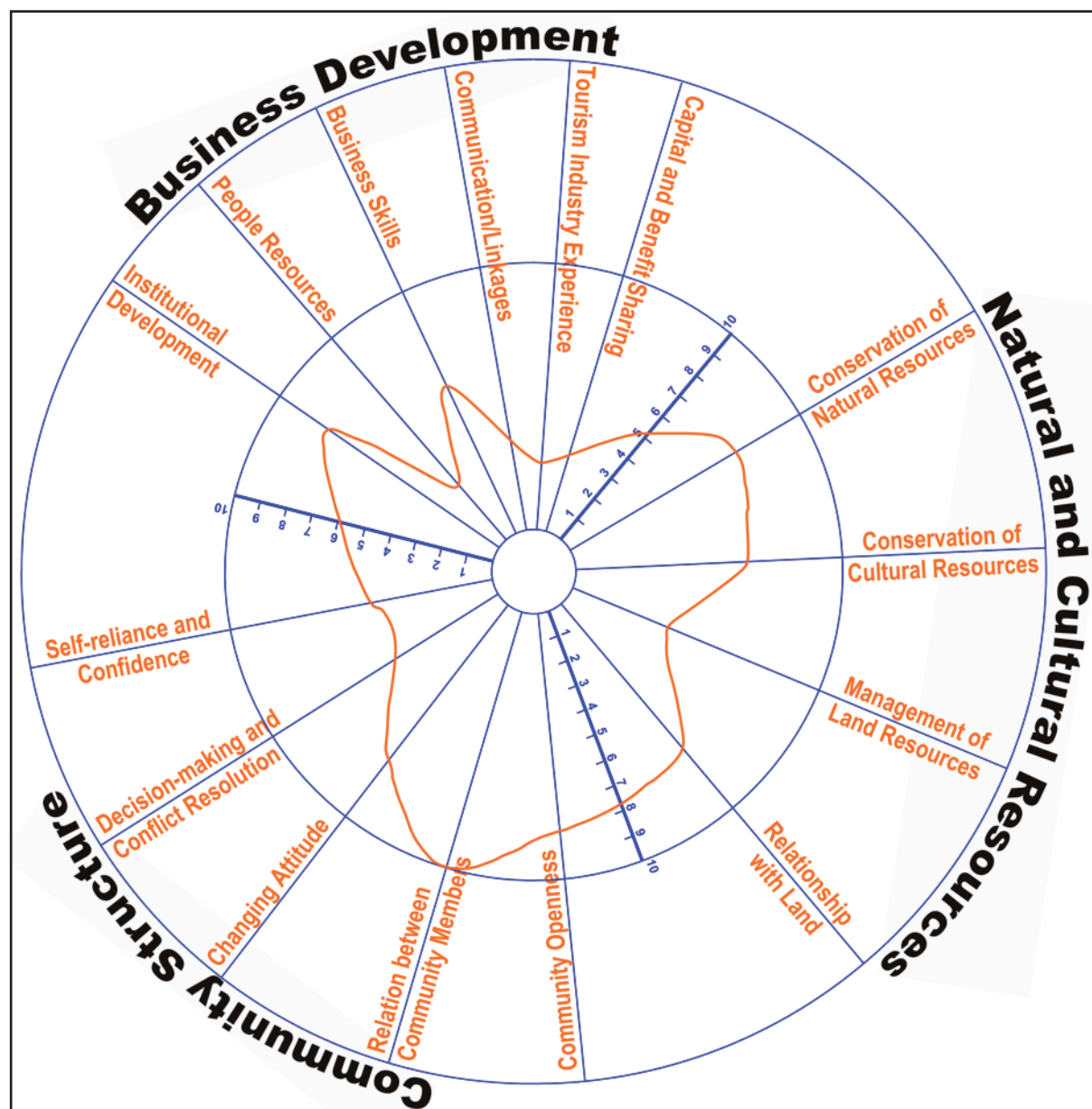

Figure 24.1: The development wheel as a baseline tool

identified in the mountain area can be a useful input for a business development services' strategy (see Tool 19). Finally, the development wheel can be used for monitoring progress in these three areas on a regular basis.

How to apply it?

The development wheel can be used to assess the situation of a mountain community and is used to measure the progress or impact of tourism programmes in this community. Figure 24.2 shows an example of a development wheel created for the village of Salleri in Solukhumbhu, Nepal. The wheel was developed in 2003 (represented by the black line) and re-discussed in 2006 (red line). It shows the assessment of the different (perceived) natural and cultural resources and community and business skills in Solukhumbu both before (2003) and after tourism project interventions (2006), thus graphically showing the progress of the community in different areas and revealing the perceived impact of the different project interventions.

Figure 24.2: The development wheel as an assessment tool

Tool 25: Environmental Impact Assessment

What is it?

Environmental impact assessment (EIA) is a comprehensive and versatile instrument for achieving the sustainability of mountain tourism development interventions. In the context of mountain tourism, EIA is basically an evaluation of the type, nature, and manifestation of the likely impact of mountain tourism activities and the perceived 'seriousness' of the impact on the environment. In many countries an EIA is required by law where proposed development activities may be environmentally damaging. Whether or not an EIA is required is likely to depend on the size and nature of the tourism project, the sensitivity of the tourism site or destination in which it is proposed, and the perceived risk to the environment. EIAs are generally not conducted for small-scale tourism projects, even though their cumulative impacts may be significant over time.

When is it used?

An EIA can be used to assess the sustainability of a mountain tourism development intervention by evaluating its likely impacts on the environment. The EIA process covers most of the surveys and research related to the development of mountain tourism activities, products, or services. It only needs to be applied to those actions that may affect the environment significantly. An EIA should be carried out at the beginning of a tourism project cycle and continue throughout the life of the tourism project.

How to apply it?

EIAs consist of different steps or stages.

Step 1:   **Project concept and identification:** An initial environmental assessment (IEA) can be applied in the screening stage. Screening is the process of selecting the tourism project that requires an EIA. An EIA is often carried out for those projects in which the environmental impact cannot be easily assessed. The EIA process usually involves the use of an interaction matrix or checklist which shows the degree of response of each environmental parameter rated on a scale of one to three (1 – no impact, 2 – moderate impact, 3 – severe impact). If screening recommends that an EIA report is required then the initial studies will begin. At this stage a quick environmental overview or preliminary EIA can indicate whether any of the alternatives proposed are environmentally disastrous.

Step 2:   **Pre-feasibility studies:** Following the screening procedure, scoping takes place to determine the scope of the EIA. The main EIA activities at this stage are a) identification of issues or impacts for investigation and b) formulation of a ToR.

Step 3:   **Feasibility studies:** At this stage, EIA activities involve carrying out a detailed market demand and financial and economic cost-benefit analysis (CBA). A financial CBA addresses the commercial profitability of the tourism project from the point of view of the project entity, whereas the economic analysis addresses the efficient use of resources from a societal perspective. In the financial analysis, the transfer of tax, rent, and duties is treated as financial costs and subsidies are treated as financial benefits. From a societal point of view, these are merely transfer payments and are excluded from the economic cost and benefit analysis. Social CBA, on the other hand, is based on the assumption that an additional rupee accruing to a poor mountain woman or man is more valuable than one accruing to a rich mountain woman or man. This calls for the weighting of income distribution to be taken into account properly, although, in the absence of standard national parameters, this is rarely carried out in practice. Box 25.1 gives the steps involved in financial and economic analysis.

Step 4:   **Project appraisal and design:** The EIA results are considered together with the other feasibility studies to decide whether or not the tourism project should go ahead. If the

Box 25.1: Steps Involved in Financial and Economic Analysis

1. **Preparation of physical input and output flow tables:** All purchased or owned input and output sold or self-consumed by beneficiaries are included in the physical flow of the financial analysis. In the economic analysis, any additional indirect benefits and costs have to be taken into account.
2. **Unit value tables for project and output:** In preparing the unit value tables for financial analysis, the prices of all inputs and outputs have to be estimated at the time of purchase, sale, or consumption. The economic analysis, in contrast, values prices of inputs and outputs at their opportunity costs in order to arrive at shadow or efficiency prices.
3. **Financial cash flow and economic value flow tables:** These can be obtained by multiplying the physical input and output flow tables (Step 1) by their respective unit value tables (Step 2).

appraisal results in a 'go-ahead' status, then a final decision can be made about the implementation of the tourism project.

Step 5: **Implementation of the tourism project:** The EIA report serves as a reference guide for mitigation strategies for negative impacts and monitoring schemes during project implementation.

Step 6: **Monitoring and evaluation:** After the tourism project is completed, an audit can be carried out to determine how close the EIA predictions were to the actual impact of the project (see Box 25.2).

Note: It may not always be possible to quantify environmental impacts. However, it may be possible to qualitatively judge the intensity of such an impact. Some lists of possible environmental impacts are provided in Box 25.2 as a checklist for qualitative assessment. Such an assessment can provide a technical framework for, for instance, establishing carrying capacity standards.

Box 25.2: Checklist for Evaluating the Environmental Impacts of Mountain Tourism

Type of Impact	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Serious Impact	Remarks
Road traffic					
Pedestrian traffic					
Noise level					
Airport traffic					
Trail condition					
Littering/solid waste disposal					
Camping/picnicking					
Visual amenities					
Natural vegetation					
Unique flora					
Biodiversity					
Wildlife					
Unique fauna					
Birds					
Drainage conditions					
Pollution					
Surface water quality					
Groundwater quality					
Air quality					
Archaeological cultural/ historic sites					

Tool 26: Gender Audit

What is it?

A gender audit is an examination of the level of gender integration in tourism projects and organisations. Carrying out a gender audit is a sensitive and lengthy process; hence, the commitment of senior management is essential. Without such commitment, resistance can easily prevent staff from allocating the considerable time required to complete the different components of the audit. Gender audits are focused primarily on internal organisational self-assessments, as opposed to external programmatic assessments which have traditionally been the focus of audits. Review of organisational policies, strategies, rules and regulations, and the organisation's gender budget are all part of the gender audit process.

Box 26.1 shows an example of a gender audit questionnaire for a tourism organisation or project. The questionnaire is intended to provide background information for focus group discussions and should not take longer than 10 minutes to complete.

When is it used?

A gender audit is normally carried out before planning to promote a tourism organisation as a particularly gender-sensitive organisation. Based on the outcome of the gender audit, the management will assess the level of gender integration in the tourism programme and identify the gaps. A gender action plan will pave the way to mainstream gender in the tourism organisation. The tool can be applied in projects with a gender mainstreaming strategy and in small local organisations that have no formal written gender policy.

How to apply it?

There are different methods of conducting a gender audit: individual questionnaires (to get the views of the staff), focus group discussions (to verify their views), and participatory discussions or workshops (to discuss the gaps identified and prepare a gender plan).

the following provides some guidelines for conducting a gender audit:

Step 1:   Form the audit teams, which should consist of two or three people.

Step 2:   Review the organisational strategy, structure, system, technology, budget and expenditure, human resources, and management from a gender perspective.

Step 3:   Prepare a checklist or questionnaire to find out the views of the staff on organisational issues (the organisational strategies, structure and systems, management, the organisational culture, human resources, and finance and technology) and on operational issues (such as the operation of mountain tourism projects).

Step 4:   Compile all the information and categorise it into strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

Step 5:   Prepare a checklist or questionnaire to be used in focus group discussions with the management team. Conduct focus group discussions to obtain the views of the management and to verify the information obtained from the staff about the organisational and operational aspects.

Step 6:   Compile all the information and categorise it into strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

Step 7:   Conduct workshops to share findings, validate information, and prepare a gender action plan together with a budget.

Step 8:   Prepare a gender audit report of the tourism organisation as a baseline for use as the organisation builds up its gender mainstreaming.

Box 26.1: Gender Audit Questionnaire

For each of the following 20 questions, can you please tick the answer that you consider most appropriate? We would be most grateful if you could take the time to complete this questionnaire.

A. Operational issues

1. Are you aware of a gender mainstreaming strategy within your organisation?
Completely   - 3   Sufficiently   - 2
Insufficiently   - 1   Not at all   - 0

2. How many of the relevant documents on gender mainstreaming have you read (for example, a strategy paper or a gender manual)?
All of them   - 3   Some   - 2
Few   - 1   None at all   - 0

3. Do you understand the distinction between gender equality and gender empowerment?
Completely   - 3   Sufficiently   - 2
Insufficiently   - 1   Not at all   - 0

4. How important do you consider the gender mainstreaming strategy?
Very important   - 3   Important   - 2
Of limited importance   - 1   Not at all important - 0

5. How well do you think the gender mainstreaming strategy is applied in the tourism programme or projects?
More than sufficiently - 3   Sufficiently   - 2
Insufficiently   - 1   Not at all   - 0

6. Is gender mainstreaming an important strategy in your selection process (recruitment, interviewing, and so forth)?
Very Important   - 3   Moderately important - 2
Of little importance   - 1   Of no importance   - 0

7. Does the gender strategy offer enough opportunities (capacity-building, training, technical support, documentation) to strengthen your knowledge of gender issues in tourism?
More than enough   - 3   Enough   - 2
Not enough   - 1   None at all   - 0

8. Do you feel there are tools and techniques for gender mainstreaming available in your work?
More than enough   - 3   Enough   - 2
Not enough   - 1   None at all   - 0

9. Does the gender strategy provide sufficient information on, and practice in, the use of instruments to conduct gender analyses, and to incorporate the conclusions of these analyses into all stages of the design process of your tourism programme and projects? How would you rate your organisation in this regard?
Excellent   - 3   Good   - 2
Fair   - 1   Poor   - 0

10. Are you are expected to introduce gender issues in different stages of the tourism programme or project design and implementation at any level? If so, how well do you fulfil these expectations?
Well   - 3   Adequately   - 2
Not very well   - 1   Poorly   - 0

11. Do you consider it important to include gender mainstreaming outcomes in your tourism programme or project reporting procedures?
Very important   - 3   Important   - 2
Not very important   - 1   Unimportant   - 0

12. How often do you integrate gender explicitly in your work? For example, in the choice of activities and methods used.

Always	- 3	Usually	- 2
Seldom	- 1	Never	- 0

B. Organisational issues

13. Does your tourism programme have an active policy to promote gender equality and respect for diversity in decision-making, behaviour, work ethics, information, and so on? If so, how would you rate its effectiveness?

Excellent	- 3	Sufficient	- 2
Insufficient	- 1	It does not have such a policy	- 0

14. Does your tourism programme discourage expressions of gender inequality such as disrespectful jokes, and so on?

More than enough	- 3	Enough	- 2
Not enough	- 1	Not at all	- 0

15. How much attention do you pay to ensure respectful relations between men and women in your workplace?

Very much	- 3	Some	- 2
Not enough	- 1	None at all	- 0

16. Have you undertaken activities to identify existing gender-related problems or constraints in your workplace?

Yes, many	- 3	Yes, some	- 2
Yes, but very few	- 1	No, none at all	- 0

17. Have you ever taken any action to solve a gender-related problem?

Yes, often	- 3	Yes, sometimes	- 2
Yes, seldom	- 1	No, none at all	- 0

18. Do you think it would be useful to establish a working group on gender issues in your workplace to explore these issues further?

Yes, very useful	- 3
Yes, quite useful	- 2
Not very useful	- 1
Not useful at all	- 0

19. If yes, can you elaborate why? ....
....
....
....

20. Are there any further gender issues in your workplace that you consider important? ....
....
....
....

Tool 27: Gender Checklist

What is it?

The gender checklist is a guideline for mainstreaming gender into tourism projects and services by judging to what extent (proposed) tourism projects or programmes are gender sensitive. It helps in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of gender-sensitive projects. As an example, ICIMOD's gender checklist is depicted in Box 27.1. This is a standardised checklist that is currently used by ICIMOD to judge the gender sensitivity of its programmes and projects.

When is it used?

The gender checklist helps in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of gender-sensitive mountain tourism projects. The checklist is used to develop sustainable mountain tourism projects and review ongoing mountain tourism activities, as well as to evaluate tourism projects. It also serves as an entry point for discussion on how to mainstream gender in every step of a (tourism) project. As such it can be used as an analytical tool, an action tool, and an assessment tool.

How to apply it?

The checklist consists of simple questions to be answered while developing tourism project proposals or monitoring tourism projects. The main and linking questions thus categorise the level of gender sensitivity of tourism and non-tourism projects.

Given the variation in the social systems in the Himalayan region, however, and the difficulty in providing a 'one-size-fits-all' tool on integrating gender sensitivity into mountain tourism projects, each tourism situation must be assessed on its own terms.

Box 27.1: Gender Checklist

Is Your Project Gender Sensitive? A Checklist

Why Be Attentive to Gender?
In virtually all societies, women and men have distinct roles, rights, and responsibilities which are manifested in their access to and control of different resources, divisions of labour, and legal and traditional rights. As a result, it is not uncommon for women and men to have very different priorities, perceptions of what their interests are, and, hence, goals. Paying attention to these distinctions often makes all the difference between an effective project outcome and one that unwittingly ends up creating more problems than it solves.

Gender Analysis: What is it?
Gender analysis refers to methodologies and processes used to identify the varied and often specific roles allocated to women and girls and men and boys in households, farms, mountain community institutions, and workplaces. These roles typically result in women having less access to productive resources and decision-making processes than men.

Main Questions	Linking Questions
Check the project document. Do the objectives reflect gender sensitivity?	Are both men and women direct beneficiaries of the project?
Think carefully: Is the project likely to have no effect or an adverse effect on women?	Has a gender disaggregated baseline study been carried out?
Have both women and men been consulted as decision makers in the planning and implementation?	Have both women's and men's views been incorporated (and not just consulted) at all levels? Are gender specialists involved from the start of the project?
Are there specific strategies to address gender needs and concerns?	Are project resources enough to provide services to women and other disadvantaged groups?
Is the participation of both men and women ensured to a level of at least 40%?	Identify stages of women's participation in your project and the constraints (planning, training, capital, and so on)
Are there specific incentives to encourage women's or men's (either of the disadvantaged gender) participation?	Are positive discriminatory measures necessary?
Does the project have a gender sensitive M&E system?	Is gender monitoring in the project limited to only a head count of males and females? What are the qualitative measures?
Is the personnel and recruitment process at all levels gender sensitive?	Are staff members trained on gender issues?
To what extent are the male personnel experienced in delivering services to women and vice versa? Are the services culturally appropriate?	If it is not culturally acceptable, has the project made provisions for female staff intervention (especially in technical positions)?
Do your project partners have experience in gender that could be used for the project?	Have we influenced our partners to ensure gender balance in joint collaborations and in their own organisations?

There are four kinds of projects. How would you categorise yours?

- Gender Discriminatory: Does not believe in equality
- Gender Blind: Not bothered about equality
- Gender Neutral: Believes in equality
- Gender Sensitive: Believes in equity for equality

Source: ICIMOD 2007

Tool 28: Local Economic Development Checklist for Mountain Areas

What is it?

A local economic development checklist for mountain areas is a tool used to diagnose the state of local economic development in an actual or potential mountain tourism destination. It is based on the local economic development approach (LED; see Tool 21). The checklist consists of a list of questions about the local economy, the local labour market, the local mountain environment and tourism infrastructure, the local culture, available tourism resources, and current mountain tourism development activities.

When is it used?

The checklist invites tourism planners and developers to describe the current situation, the envisioned situation, the different options for action, and the foreseeable situation if no action is taken. This description may help to prepare a sustainable mountain tourism development plan. The information generated by the local economic development checklist is useful for identifying the tourism potential of an area and for supporting the formulation of appropriate mountain tourism interventions. The checklist helps to identify at first glance the gap between the existing and the envisioned characteristics of a local economy, thus helping to identify appropriate strategies to achieve better results from the (to be designed) tourism intervention.

How to apply it?

The steps that can be followed for diagnosing local economic development in the mountains are summarised below.

Step 1: Assess the beneficiaries of the interventions: women, socially excluded groups, religious or ethnic groups, or other vulnerable societal groups.

Step 2: Assess the characteristics of the local context and culture in terms of contribution to or constraint of the development of mountain tourism: their uniqueness, significance within the region, physical and geographical context, accessibility, and whether any cultural characteristics are under threat.

Step 3: Assess the local economy in terms of industries available, the capacity to grow sustainably, and potential links between these industrial products and the mountain tourism market.

Step 4: Assess the local labour market in terms of the population trends, local skills, tourism-related training or education facilities, and the entrepreneurial climate.

Step 5: Assess the local environment and infrastructure in terms of capacity to support growth or potential for self-growth.

Step 6: Assess the available financial resources in terms of government grants, local level taxes, and a private sector that is able to invest locally in the tourism industry.

Step 7: Assess the current mountain tourism development activities in terms of their ownership, level of coordination, specific sectors, and specific gaps.

Step 8: In the above assessment describe the current situation, the envisioned situation, the different options for action, and the situation foreseen if no action is taken.

Step 9: Conclude by identifying the gaps and determining how these gaps can be addressed.

In-depth follow-up is required to develop the local economy after the provisional gap between the current and envisioned situation has been described.

Requirements and limitations

Knowledge of the area is a prerequisite to answering the various questions in the steps above, and local knowledge should be used as an important source of data. Proper adaptation of the checklist for the mountain situation is needed to make it more relevant to the analysis of tourism potential in mountain areas in the Himalayas. The checklist is not exhaustive but can serve to guide or stimulate the generation of ideas. It is obvious that, for a detailed economic analysis, the 'traditional' appraisal instruments, such as financial, economic, or social cost-benefit analysis, need to be applied. There are also other instruments that can be used to identify the potential for tourism in a local mountain economy (see SNV Nepal 2004 for more details).

Tool 29: Logical Framework

What is it?

A logical framework is a matrix with four rows and four columns used to summarise planned tourism projects or interventions, and to provide a basis for subsequent monitoring and evaluation. It must, therefore, be regularly reviewed and amended whenever the tourism project changes course.

Below are some of the features of a logical framework.

- The logical framework should be **concise**. It should not normally take up more than two sheets of paper.
- The logical framework should be treated as a **free-standing document** and should be comprehensible to those who are unfamiliar with the subject or previous documents. Acronyms should therefore be avoided.
- If **beneficiaries** are included in the tourism project, they should also take part in the design of the logical framework.

Box 29.1 shows an example of a logical framework.

Box 29.1: Contents of a Logical Framework

Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators (VI)	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Goal	What are the quantitative ways of measuring, or qualitative ways of judging, whether these broad objectives are being achieved? (estimated time)	What sources of information exist or can be provided cost-effectively?	(Goal to Supergoal): What external factors are necessary to sustain objectives in the long run?
Purpose/objectives/outcomes	What are the quantitative measures or qualitative evidence by which achievement and distribution of impacts and benefits can be judged? (estimated time)	What sources of information exist or can be provided cost-effectively? Does provision for collection need to be made under inputs-outputs?	(Purpose to Goal): What conditions external to the project are necessary if achievement of the project's purpose is to contribute to reaching the project goal?
Outputs: Indicate each of the outputs that are to be produced by the project in order to achieve the project purpose	What kind and quantity of outputs, and by when will they be produced? (quantity, quality, time)	What are the sources of information?	(Output of Purpose): What are the factors not within the control of the project that, if not present, are liable to restrict progress from outputs to achievement of project purpose?
Activities: Indicate each of the activities that must be undertaken in order to accomplish the outputs.	VIs should be included in all activities. This is essential for project reporting and monitoring using the logical framework.	What are the sources of information?	(Activity to Output): 1) What external factors must be realised to obtain planned outputs on schedule? 2) What kind of decisions or actions outside the control of the project are necessary for the inception of the project?

When is it used?

The logical framework has the following uses:

- It brings together in one place a statement of all the key components of a tourism project (this is particularly helpful when there is a change of staff).
- It presents them in a systematic, concise, and coherent way, thus clarifying and demonstrating the logic of the way the tourism project is expected to work.
- It separates out the various levels in the hierarchy of objectives, helping to ensure that inputs and outputs are not confused with each other or with objectives and that wider-ranging objectives are not overlooked.
- It clarifies the relationships that underlie judgments about the likely efficiency and effectiveness of tourism projects.
- It identifies the main factors related to the success of the tourism project.
- It provides a basis for monitoring and evaluation by identifying indicators of success and a means of quantification or assessment.
- It encourages a multidisciplinary approach to tourism project preparation and supervision.

How to apply it?

The main matrix of a logical framework generally consists of the following parts:

1. Narrative Summary (Column 1)
2. Verifiable Indicators (Column 2)
3. Means of Verification (Column 3)
4. Important Assumptions (Column 4)

Narrative summary (column 1)

The narrative summary defines the tourism project's structure. Care should be taken to distinguish between project activities, inputs, outcomes, outputs, purpose, and goal.

Verifiable indicators (column 2)

An indicator is a pointer or measure that is used to see whether the objective has been achieved or not. In other words, how do we know if we are going in the right direction?

"Who has seen the wind? Neither you nor I. But where the trees bow down their heads, the wind is passing by. (Christina Rosetti, 1830-1894)."

The emphasis in indicators is on the value, not just the type of indicators of achievement. Any indicator used should be susceptible to measurement, or qualitative judgement, or both. An example of a quantitative indicator is the bed capacity of a new hotel. An example of a qualitative judgement is the assessment that the majority of mountain communities have understood audio-visual materials on benefits of mountain tourism in their region. There is no point in having indicators that cannot be measured at all, or only at a disproportionate cost. Quantification should not, however, be used just for the sake of it, and in some cases proxy assessments may be more appropriate.

There are different levels of indicators to measure the achievements of a tourism intervention:

- Input indicators
- Process indicators
- Output indicators
- Outcome indicators
- Impact indicators

There are also different selection criteria for indicators. Box 29.2 provides some examples of popular criteria.

Box 29.2: Selection Criteria for Indicators

1. **First Criterion (SMART)**
- **S**pecific: Is the indicator specific enough to measure progress towards the result?
- **Me**asurable: Is the indicator a reliable and clear measure of results?
- **A**ttainable: Are the result(s) in which the indicator seeks to chart progress realistic?
- **R**elevant: Is the indicator relevant to the intended outputs and outcome?
- **T**rackable and Time bound: Are data available at a reasonable cost and effort within a stipulated time?

2. **Second Criterion (VRSSUA)**
- **V**alidity: Does it measure the intended result?
- **R**eliability: Is it a consistent measure over time?
- **S**ensitivity: Is it sensitive to changes in results?
- **S**implicity: Is it easy to collect and analyse?
- **U**tility: Is the information useful for decision making and learning?
- **A**ffordability: Can the tourism project or programme afford to collect the information?

3. **Third Criterion (CREAM)**
- **C**lear: Is it precise and unambiguous?
- **R**elevant: Is it appropriate to the subject at hand?
- **E**conomic: Is it available at a reasonable cost?
- **A**dequate: Does it provide a sufficient basis to assess performance?
- **M**onitorable: Is it amenable to independent validation?

Means of verification (column 3)

This column should set out how, and from what sources of information, each of the indicators in the previous column will be quantified or assessed. The availability and reliability of data, and the practicability and cost of collecting them, must be carefully considered both in identifying suitable indicators and in determining the most cost-effective way of measuring them. If some of the data are likely to be unreliable the logical framework should say so.

Important assumptions (column 4)

This column should record the important assumptions on which the success of the tourism project depends, and the risks that have been considered. In designing a tourism project it is normal to start with the problem and work down the levels to thinking about the resources. It might, however, be that the resources identified are either not available or are inappropriate, thus requiring modification of the resources or assumptions at each level.

Tool 30: Quality Definition Chart

What is it?

A quality definition chart helps define the quality of a tourism product or service from the perspective of the tourism target group or customer. It defines customer requirements as well as the related indicators to assess whether or not the expectations of the tour group or customer are met. Figure 30.1 provides an example of a quality definition chart of a training programme.

When is it used?

A quality definition chart provides a set of indicators for monitoring and improving the quality of a tourism product or service.

Core questions that can be asked include the following:

- What are the major quality aspects?
- What are the major quality requirements for each aspect?
- What are the indicators?

How to apply it?

A quality definition chart can be made using the following four steps:

Step 1: Define the product or service offered by the tourism project or organisation.

Step 2: Define the major aspects or the (critical) moments of contact between the tourism client or customer and the tourism project or organisation.

Step 3: Define the quality requirements.

Step 4: Define the indicators related to the requirements.

A quality definition chart can be made on an individual basis or on a participatory basis in a group (maximum 20 people).

Requirements and limitations

To make an adequate chart, the views of tourism customers or clients should be included. What the staff of a tourism project or organisation thinks is a requirement may not actually be a requirement.

Measurable direct indicators may sometimes be difficult to find. To make a quality definition chart takes around one hour, provided the requisite information is available or people with good knowledge of the requirements are among the key tourism stakeholders participating in the exercise.
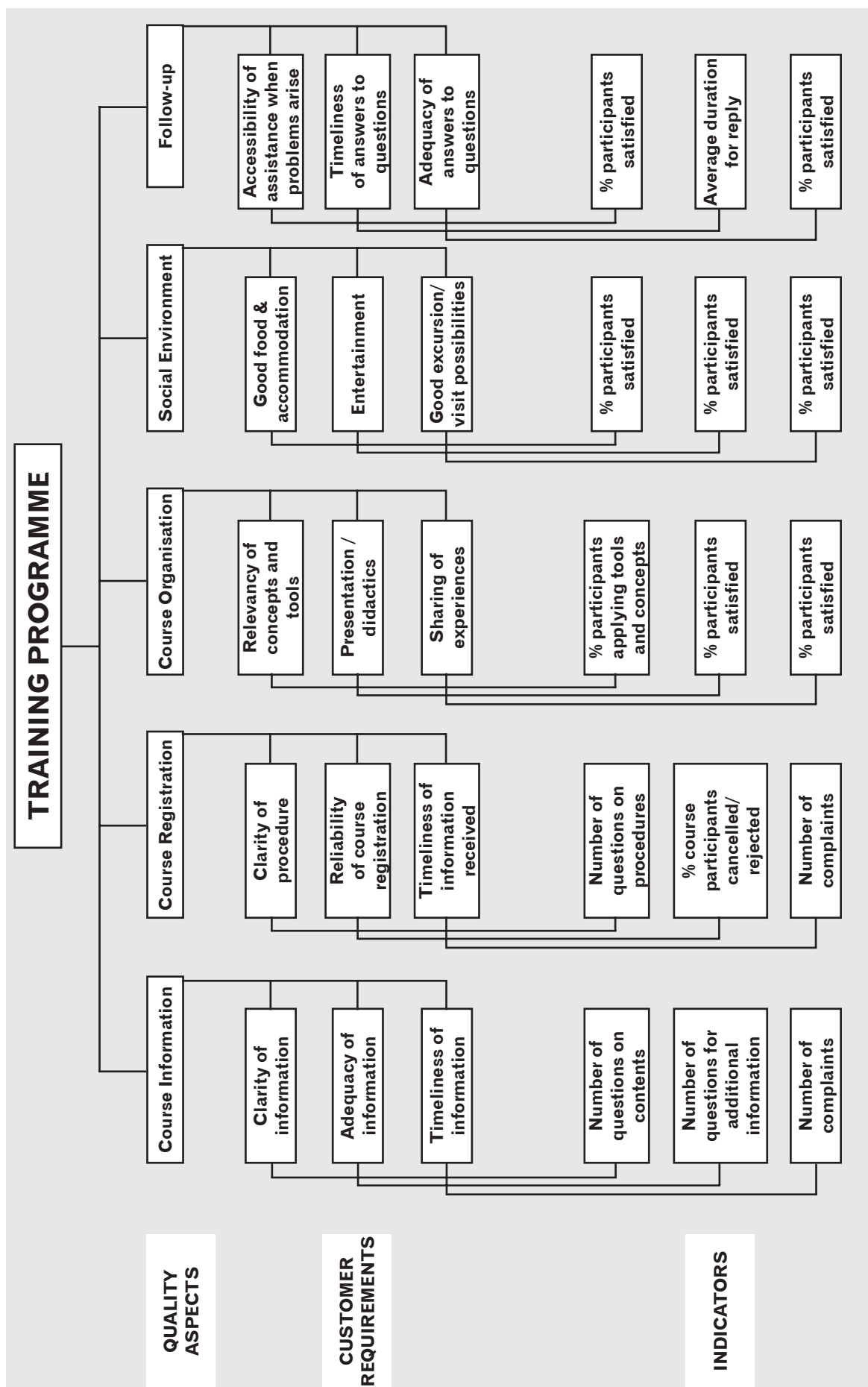
TRAINING PROGRAMME

QUALITY ASPECTS

Course Information | Course Registration | Course Organisation | Social Environment | Follow-up

CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

Course Information:
- Clarity of information
- Adequacy of information
- Timeliness of information

Course Registration:
- Clarity of procedure
- Reliability of course registration
- Timeliness of information received

Course Organisation:
- Relevancy of concepts and tools
- Presentation / didactics
- Sharing of experiences

Social Environment:
- Good food & accommodation
- Entertainment
- Good excursion/ visit possibilities

Follow-up:
- Accessibility of assistance when problems arise
- Timeliness of answers to questions
- Adequacy of answers to questions

INDICATORS

Course Information:
- Number of questions on contents
- Number of questions for additional information
- Number of complaints

Course Registration:
- Number of questions on procedures
- % course participants cancelled/ rejected
- Number of complaints

Course Organisation:
- % participants applying tools and concepts
- % participants satisfied
- % participants satisfied

Social Environment:
- % participants satisfied
- % participants satisfied
- % participants satisfied

Follow-up:
- % participants satisfied
- Average duration for reply
- % participants satisfied

Figure 30.1: An example of quality aspects of a training programme

Tool 31: Social Audit

What is it?

Social audits have been developed in a range of tourism organisations as processes that enable them to measure the extent to which they live up to the shared values and objectives to which they are committed. It provides a framework that allows them to build on existing documentation and develop a process whereby the organisation can account for its social performance, report on that performance, and draw up an action plan to improve on that performance, and through which to understand its impact on the mountain community and be accountable to its key tourism stakeholders.

Some examples of questions on a social audit checklist are given below.

- Who is involved in the tourism programme?
- Who makes the decisions?
- Who benefits from the tourism project or programme?
- Which caste or social group do the women and men belong to, and how are they affected by the tourism project or programme?
- What image does (the) tourism (project or programme) have in the mountain community?
- Has the tourism programme made a positive or negative impact on the mountain community?

Box 31.1 presents an example of a social audit in Nepal; it provides a framework to assess the impact of a tourism programme on different genders, castes (religious), and ethnic or social groups at the various stages of its programme cycle.

Box 31.1: Example of a Social Audit in Nepal

Programme cycle	Brahman/ Chettri		Janjati		Dalit		Madheshi		Madheshi dalit		Muslim		Other castes	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Programme design														
Planning														
Implement-ation														
Monitoring														
Who makes decisions														
Who benefits														

M = Male;   F = Female

When is it used?

Social auditing provides an assessment of the impact of a tourism organisation's non-financial objectives by monitoring its performance and the views of its stakeholders systematically and regularly. It is a process that enables a tourism organisation to demonstrate its social, economic, and environmental benefits and limitations. Social auditing is a way of measuring the extent to which a tourism organisation lives up to its commitment to its shared values and objectives.

How to apply it?

Teams of stakeholders prepare checklists to assess the impacts of a tourism programme, and use them to collect the required information. To balance bias or ethnocentricity in their judgements, an external person or panel is hired to verify the social audit's accuracy and objectivity.

Social auditing requires the involvement of the main stakeholders of the tourism organisation. This may include employees, clients, volunteers, donors, contractors, suppliers, and local residents interested in the tourism organisation. The social auditing process requires an intermittent but clear time commitment from these key persons. The social auditor liaises with others in the tourism organisation and designs, coordinates, analyses, and documents the collected information during the auditing process.

Social auditing information is collected through research methods that include social book-keeping, surveys, and case studies. The objectives of the tourism organisation are the starting point from which impact indicators are determined, stakeholders identified, and research tools are designed in detail.

The collection of information is an ongoing process, often done in 12-month cycles and resulting in the tourism organisation establishing social bookkeeping and the preparation of an annual social audit document or report.

Experience has shown that it is important to provide training to the social auditor as well as mentoring during the first few years. If well facilitated, social auditors from different organisations can become self-supporting in subsequent years.

Tool 32: Strategic Planning

What is it?

Strategic planning is a tourism management tool. It is used to help a tourism organisation do a better job: to focus its energy, to ensure that members of the tourism organisation are working towards the same goals and to assess and adjust the tourism organisation's direction in response to a changing global and mountain environment. In short, strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what a tourism organisation is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on future tourism trends and developments.

When is it used?

Strategic planning can be used to determine a clear tourism mission, vision, values, goals, objectives, roles and responsibilities, and timelines.

Strategic planning raises a sequence of questions to help tourism planners examine experience, test assumptions, gather and incorporate information about the present, and anticipate the environment in which the tourism organisation will be working in the future.

The process is about fundamental decisions and actions because choices must be made in order to answer the sequence of questions mentioned above. The plan is ultimately no more, and no less, than a set of decisions about what to do, why to do it, and how to do it. Because it is impossible to do everything, strategic planning implies making tough decisions about what is most important in order to achieve organisational success in the competitive tourism industry.

Strategic planning stresses the importance of making decisions that will ensure the tourism organisation's ability to respond to changes in the environment successfully.

How to apply it?

Strategic tourism planning is only useful if it supports strategic thinking and leads to strategic tourism management – the basis for an effective tourism organisation. Strategic thinking means asking, 'Are we doing the right thing?'

Perhaps, more precisely, it means making that assessment with three things in mind.
● A definite purpose
● An understanding of the environment, particularly of the forces that affect or impede the fulfillment of that purpose
● Creativity in developing effective responses to those forces

Strategic planning and management can be understood by continually asking the question, 'Are we doing the right thing?' It entails attention to the 'big picture' and the willingness to adapt to changing circumstances, and consists of the following three elements:
● formulation of the tourism organisation's future mission in light of changing external factors such as regulation, competition, technology, and customers;
● development of a competitive strategy to achieve the mission; and
● creation of an organisational structure which will deploy resources to carry out its competitive strategy successfully.

Strategic management is essential for the effectiveness of any tourism organisation. It is adaptive and keeps the organisation relevant. In these dynamic times it is more likely to succeed than the traditional approach of 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'.

Tool 33: Trend Lines

What is it?

This tool helps to analyse relationships between historical and current trends in selected environmental, cultural, socioeconomic, and tourism market conditions, identifying opportunities and designing sustainable mountain products (i.e., a historical trend line as an **analytical tool**). It can also represent a timeline of the impacts and benefits of sustainable mountain tourism as a result of the implementation of action plans (i.e., a future trend line can be used as a **monitoring, planning, and reporting tool**). Furthermore, it can measure progress in achieving impacts and benefits of sustainable mountain tourism.

When is it used?

Trend lines are useful for analysing, planning and monitoring institutional capacities, mountain community awareness, and the relationship between sustainable mountain tourism and natural and cultural conservation conditions and factors. They are a qualitative not quantitative measure of conditions, characteristics, situations, attitudes, and so forth. Thus, the upward and downward trajectory lines represent relative change, not exact measurements. Historical trend lines are used as an analytical tool, future trends line as a planning or monitoring tool. The facilitator can influence the selection and definition of trend line topics to provide useful information for, for instance, appreciative participatory planning and action (APPA) exercises and analyses (for more information about APPA see Volume 1, Chapter 6). The following describes an example of using historical trend lines in an APPA exercise, including the steps involved. It is followed by a summary of the steps used to define future trend lines as planning or monitoring instruments.

How to apply it?

The steps for using a historical trend line are as follows (using trend line analysis in the discovery phase of APPA as an example):

Step 1:   Introduce the trend line exercise and the XY graph. Explain the concept of an X-Y graph (simple graph with a horizontal X-axis and vertical Y-axis on which points can be plotted that are useful for showing relative change over time).

Step 2:   Identify (brainstorm) environmental, cultural, socioeconomic, and tourism market conditions and characteristics that relate to sustainable mountain tourism and conservation (for example, trends in numbers of mountain tourists, lodges or teahouses, employment, the condition of forests and slopes, waste, and the cultural integrity of different mountain communities). Some sample topics are shown in Box 33.1.

Step 3:   Select (prioritise or cluster) 6 to 10 trend topics to be plotted; more than 10 lines become cluttered.

Step 4:   Ask the key tourism stakeholders how many years back they can visually recall the selected conditions and characteristics. Choose a starting point that at least a few of the stakeholders can remember. In selecting key tourism stakeholders, include several elderly people.

Step 5:   Draw the lines for the X and Y axes on paper, or on the ground. Mark points on the X-axis for every one, two, or five years depending on the overall time period portrayed.

Step 6:   Select a condition or characteristic topic for a trend line (e.g., the number of tourists visiting a certain mountain village) and discuss criteria for determining whether the trend line should go up or down. Discuss specific events or factors that influenced the trends. Place points on the chart at the height that represents the value of each condition or characteristic for a given year, using a pencil so that it can be changed during the discussion (or if doing the exercise outside, place stones on the graph).

Box 33.1: Sample Topics and Analytical Questions in a Historical Trend Line

Sample Topics

- **Trends in mountain tourism development and market demand:** represented by trends in the number of tourist arrivals (by type of tourist if relevant), number of lodges/beds and occupancy rates, average number of days tourists spend in the area (by type of tourist), tourist activities plotted separately (e.g., trekking, rafting, bird watching, and cultural tours), and demand for tourism services (e.g., local guides or homestays).
- **Trends in the socioeconomic impacts and benefits of mountain tourism:** represented by the number of local guides employed, revenue earned by lodge and restaurant operations, sales of locally-made goods (e.g., vegetables, eggs, milk, handicrafts, and fuel supplies), English speaking (or other foreign language) abilities, inflation of local prices, general living standards (using proxy indicators as relevant), and others. Relate this trend graph with that for market demand.
- **Trends in cultural integrity:** represented by the mountain community's support for religious or cultural institutions, monuments and activities, number of practicing artisans, use of native language, consumption of local food, attendance at ritual ceremonies, and so forth and relate it to the mountain community's time or financial resources committed to mountain tourism.
- **Trends in environmental conditions:** represented by the condition of mountain forests (e.g., species diversity and distance to collect wood, timber, and fodder), productivity of mountain rangelands used by livestock transport, amount of waste, wildlife sightings, and so forth.

Sample Questions to Stimulate Analysis of Historical Trend Lines

- **Market trends:** Which types of tourist generate the greatest local benefits (e.g., guide jobs, lodge revenue, and local product sales); the greatest demand for tourism services, facilities, and resources; and the greatest impact on the environment? How has the condition of forests, the waste situation, instances of wildlife sightings, number of cultural activities, and so forth affected a rise or fall in tourist numbers? How has the availability of mountain tourism services and activities affected the number and length of stays of different types of tourist?
- **Socioeconomic and cultural trends:** What is the relationship between cultural integrity (as defined) and mountain tourism (by different types of tourist)? How is tourism affecting the general socioeconomic situation in the mountain community? Are trends in the numbers of artisans and the number or buying habits of certain types of tourist linked? What is the relationship between local interest or participation in cultural events and tourism trends?
- **Environmental and natural resource trends:** Are landslides, fuelwood and timber collection rates, and the impact on mountain forests and slopes linked to the number of tourists or mountain tourist lodges and, if so, how? How do tourism trends relate to garbage or pollution trends in mountain areas? What other factors (e.g., economic activities, population growth, and consumption patterns) have affected specific resource use trends; can these be separated from mountain tourism use patterns?

Step 7:   Continue plotting all points for a selected condition or characteristic before connecting the points into a line. Check with key tourism stakeholders whether or not the line is representative of the trends.

Step 8:   Ask the key tourism stakeholders to discuss whether and how the various trend lines are related and what conditions have influenced each other (for example, how has an increase in tourist numbers and/or tourism development affected the mountain community's economic status, forest and slope conditions, or waste? Have waste conditions affected tourist numbers? What has been the security of food in the past? Did tourism interfere with this food security? How have mountain people managed to cope with such adverse situations?). This analysis is very important for helping key tourism stakeholders to appreciate the relationship between sustainable mountain tourism, conservation, local benefits, and market demand. Be sure to note the content of the discussion.

Step 9:   Finalise the graph, copy it on to a large piece of paper, and colour the lines for clarity.

Step 10: Reflect on the value of this exercise – how looking at past trends helps understand the current situation and the causal relationships between factors of change.

Step 11: Conclude with a brainstorming session about other (tourism or tourism-related) conditions and issues for which the historical trend line tool might be used, and what it might reveal.

Slightly different steps are used to prepare a trendline about likely events in the future, to give input to planning and monitoring of sustainable mountain tourism. Steps used to develop a future trend line as a planning tool are as follow.

Step1: Discuss the utility of future trend lines in plotting anticipated impacts, benefits, and the market characteristics of sustainable mountain tourism that are likely to result from the implementation of action plans. Identify indicators of impacts and benefits. Relate the timing of certain impacts, benefits, and targeted market segments with the implementation schedule of various mountain tourism activities.

Step 2: Prepare X and Y axes on a large piece of paper and identify the future point in time used in the 'dream' exercise (10 to 20 years). Mark the X line for every six months to one year, depending on the overall timeframe.

Step 3: Discuss the anticipated impacts and benefits that will occur when the action plan is implemented; identify indicators to represent those impacts and benefits. Identify the tourism market segments to be targeted and the demand anticipated for the mountain tourism services they will bring.

Step 4: Plot lines along the X-Y axes for each main impact, benefit, and service demand anticipated. Upward and downward trend lines will represent when and how much impact, benefit, and demand will occur according to the action plan schedule. Leave the trend lines in pencil for possible revision later.

Steps in using a future trend line as a monitoring tool are as follows:

Step 1: Periodically update historical trend lines to bring them up to date in plotting and analysing the relationship between certain conditions.

Step 2: Review future trend lines every six months to make a note of progress made in achieving impacts and benefits as a result of action plan implementation. Note the discussion around the monitoring review regarding opportunities and constraints in implementation.

Step 3: Discuss the need to revise future trend lines according to monitoring results and any revision to implementation schedules or modifications of indicators.

Tool 34: VICE Indicators and Monitoring

What is it?

VICE is an abbreviation for *visitors, industry, community,* and *environment*. VICE indicators are a set of performance indicators that can be used as a check to ensure that the needs of all key mountain tourism stakeholders are being met (see Box 34.1; for more information on VICE and the VICE model see Volume 1, Chapter 5).

Box 34.1: Key Areas and Performance Indicators of the VICE Model

Key Areas	Performance Indicators
Visitors	Numbers, trends, satisfaction
Industry	Profitability, trends
Mountain Community	Opinion, satisfaction
Environment	Carrying capacity/sustainability, quality

When is it used?

Information is essential for monitoring whether mountain tourism development is achieving its objectives. Using the VICE model, the information needs for monitoring progress towards sustainable mountain tourism are broadly grouped under four major headings.

1. **Visitors:** visitor surveys
2. **Tourism industry:** inventory of mountain tourism facilities and services
3. **Mountain community:** socioeconomic well-being or socioeconomic surveys of households
4. **Environment:** inventory of mountain tourism assets

Visitor survey (demand side):

Any mountain tourism development must ensure that visitors are satisfied. This means that information has to be obtained directly from visitors through carefully conducted surveys. Information that needs to be collected at mountain tourism destinations from, for instance, organised trekkers, can include the following:

● Number of arrivals by type (nationality, age, sex, income, and purpose of visit)
● Trekker type, group size, tour or trek duration, and total stay on site or in country
● Trekking arrangements and payments
● Types of facilities used during the trek
● Duration of stay (days and nights)
● Tourist spending for accommodation and food, locally-produced goods or services, guides, porters, ponies, yaks, or horsemen.
● Break down of expenditure made during the trek
● Visitor perception of the quality of mountain tourism products or services, namely:
  – accommodation's hygiene and sanitation,
  – attractions and sites visited,
  – level of crowding or congestion,
  – cleanliness, hygiene, and sanitation,
  – safety,
  – visitor information centre, and
  – willingness to pay more for the level of facilities available and how much

Inventory of mountain tourism facilities and services

An inventory of mountain tourism facilities and services can include the following:

- Accommodation type (lodge, hotel, campsite, or homestay)
- Number of rooms, beds, and occupancy rate
- Energy use pattern by type and sources
- Lodge expenses by major items (food, beverages, energy, water, and so on.) and origin (local versus import)
- Revenue from mountain tourism and profitability
- Leakage of tourist-generated income from the mountains

Socioeconomic survey of households (host mountain community)

The socioeconomic survey aims to gather information (both quantitative and qualitative) about the socioeconomic conditions of households in the host mountain community. Over time, tourism and mountain community development are assumed to bring about changes in the living conditions of households. It is essential to understand what changes have occurred and whether the changes are as desired. It is essential to determine who is benefiting from mountain tourism and how to bring about an equitable distribution of benefits from tourism in mountain communities. A baseline survey on the socioeconomic conditions of households or mountain community well-being is essential before any mountain tourism development activities are conducted. The baseline survey should cover a variety of living conditions that address the sociocultural, economic, and local environmental issues in mountain communities.

Inventory of mountain tourism assets (supply side)

Mountain tourism assets or attractions can include both natural (environment) and man-made assets.

- **Flora:** Forest types (matured, regenerating, or pristine), rangeland, and medicinal plants
- **Fauna:** Common, endangered, and rare species (birds and animals)
- **Culture:** Ethnic diversity, cultural events, artefacts, and heritage sites
- **Nature:** Scenic and unique spots, routes and trails, water sources, wildlife, and bird-watching sites

An inventory of these assets will provide a basis for assessing the carrying capacity (CC), defining safe minimum standards, and determining limits of acceptable change (LAC) based on management objectives and parameters (for more information about CC and LAC, see Volume 1, Chapter 4). Establishing safe minimum standards for both environmental and socioeconomic or infrastructural facilities is essential for monitoring the changes and for taking timely management action.

How to apply it?

Indicators should be defined at an early stage in the process of formulating a tourism strategy for a mountain destination or site. Establishment of a baseline and target values for each indicator will prove most helpful in keeping abreast of negative or unacceptable changes and implementing a mountain tourism management system guided by the strategy. Likewise the LAC established according to management objectives (parameter/standards) will provide the basis for monitoring the impacts on the tourism industry, the communities, or the environment.