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# Sustainable Tourism Development in Nepal, Case: Suomen Latu Ry.

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**Sustainable Tourism Development in Nepal,  
Case: Suomen Latu Ry.**

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This bachelor's thesis studies a sustainable tourism development project in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. The case company Finnish Central Association for Recreational Sports and Outdoor Activities (Suomen Latu ry.) conducted a two-year project with Nepal Environment and Tourism Initiative Foundation (NETIF) between 2008-2010. The overall goal for the project was to create better environment for better tourism by creating a Kathmandu Valley Cultural Trekking Trail (KVCTT) as a tourism product to help the poor rural communities with the help of tourism.

The study introduces the theory of tourism in developing countries and the concepts of ecotourism, rural tourism and sustainable tourism. With the help of secondary data, literature and primary data from two theme interviews the outcome of the project was measured. Inside the overall goal there were three sub goals that gave frames to the study. The goals were studied separately to be able to answer to the research question; "How has the Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project (NTOEDP) reached the planned goals when it comes to sustainable development?"

The results of the study show that the planned activities for the project were achieved but the sustainability and sustainable development were not yet reached. On numerical level the statistics show that the project succeeded but the proof of creating sustainable tourism is missing. Too many weaknesses were found while analyzing the project. With facing several challenges in the research the results may be subjective but still valid and reliable. The project is still on progress on its second phase and there are possibilities to learn from the mistakes and still create sustainable groundwork and sustainable development in the area. This thesis only concentrated on the first phase of the project and introduces improvement ideas for the future.

Key words: developing countries, tourism development, ecotourism, rural tourism, sustainable tourism, Nepal Outdoor and Environment Development Project (NTOEDP)

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Tämä opinnäytetyö tutkii kestävän matkailun kehityshanketta Nepalissa, Kathmandun laaksossa. Toimeksiantaja Suomen Latu ry. toteutti ensimmäisen osan hanketta Nepalilaisen järjestön, Nepal Environment and Tourism Initiative Foundation (NETIF), kanssa vuosina 2008-2010. Hankkeen tavoitteena oli luoda parempi ympäristö kestäväälle matkailulle rakentamalla alueelle vaellusreitti, joka toimisi matkailun tuotteena. Reitti kulkee nimellä Kathmandu Valley Cultural Trekking Trail (KVCTT) ja on apuna köyhille maaseudun yhteisöille, jotta ne saavat toimentulonsa matkailusta.

Tutkimuksessa käytetään teorioita matkailusta kehitysmaissa, eco-matkailusta, maaseutumatkailusta ja kestävästä matkailusta. Hankkeen onnistumista mitattiin toissijaisen tiedon, kirjallisuuden ja ensisijaisen tiedon avulla. Ensisijaista tietoa kerättiin haastattelujen kautta. Hankkeen tavoitteena oli kolme aputavoitetta, jotka antoivat tutkimuskehityksen tälle opinnäytetyölle. Nämä kolme tavoitetta tutkittiin erikseen, jotta saatiin vastaus tutkimuskysymykseen: "Miten hanke Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project (NTOEDP) on saavuttanut tavoitteensa kestävän kehityksen kannalta?"

Tutkimustulokset tässä tutkimuksessa näyttävät, että suunnitellut tehtävät hankkeessa olivat toteutuneet, mutta kestävä kehitys ei ole vielä tapahtunut. Numeerisella tasolla tilastot osoittavat, että hanke olisi toteutunut niinkuin suunniteltiin, mutta todisteita kestävästä kehityksestä ei ole. Hankkeen analysointi osoitti liian paljon heikkouksia hankkeessa. Monien haasteiden kautta saatiin tuloksia, jotka saattavat olla subjektiivisia, mutta silti päteviä ja luotettavia. Hankkeella on meneillään toinen vaihe Nepalissa ja mahdollisuudet kestävään kehitykseen alueella ovat olemassa, jos virheistä otetaan oppia. Tämä opinnäytetyö kuitenkin tutkii vain ensimmäistä vaihetta hankkeesta ja esittelee parannusehdotuksia toiseen vaiheeseen.

Asiasanat: kehitysmaat, matkailun kehitys, eco-matkailu, maaseutu matkailu, kestävä matkailu, Nepal Outdoor and Environment Development Project (NTOEDP)

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## List of acronyms

AT- Alternative Tourism

CBS- Central Bureau of Statistics

CBT- Community Based Tourism

CC- carrying capacity

DDC- District Development Committees

DNPWC- Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation

GDP -gross domestic product

IPPG- International Porter Protection Group

KVCTT - Kathmandu Valley Cultural Trekking Trail

LDC- less developed countries

MDC- more developed countries

MDG- Millennium Development Goals

MoU -Memorandum of understanding

MT- Mass Tourism

NETIF- the Nepal Environment and Tourism Initiative Foundation

NNTDC- Nagarkot Naldum Tourism Development Committee

NTOEDP- Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project

NGO- non-governmental organization

NTB- Nepal Tourism Board

ODI- Overseas Development Institute

OECD- Organization for Economic Cooperation Development

SWC- Social Welfare Council

UN- United Nations

UNCED- United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

UNDP- United Nation Development Program

UNEP- United Nations Environmental Programme

UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund

UNWTO World Tourism Organization

VDC- Village Development Committees

WHL- World Heritage List

## 1 Introduction

Tourism is an industry that generated almost 1\$ (US) trillion in global receipts in 2008 and makes it one of the largest industries in the world. It is the most important part of the global economy and international tourism is the fourth largest industry in the world, after fuel, chemicals and automotive products according to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 2010). In Nepal, tourism is the second largest income to the country after oil (Mastry 2001).

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world and tourism plays a vital role for many locals to make their living. Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) reports that over 500 000 people are benefitting from tourism either directly or indirectly (NTB 2001). In the poor country, where 80 percent of the populations live in rural areas, the foreign aid programs are essential in the developing progress (World bank 2011; United Children's Fund UNICEF 2009). The government of Nepal is not paying enough attention to the rural poor areas but luckily several different non-government organizations (NGO) in the country are increasing the awareness and trying to show that investing to the communities and their living conditions might help the country to arise from the extreme poverty. In addition to that tourism is a useful tool to be benefitted in this issue (Ashley & Mitchell 2005).

This thesis research is about sustainable tourism in Nepal. The research was made during the year 2011 based on a sustainable development project, Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project (NTOEDP), that a Finnish non-government organization (NGO) Finnish Central Association for Recreational Sports and Outdoor Activities (Suomen Latury) conducted in Kathmandu Valley with a Nepalese NGO, the Nepal Environment and Tourism Initiative Foundation (NETIF) during the years 2008-2010. The idea for the thesis came from the personal interest about the topic and having a presentation of the project by the project manager of Suomen Latury in the university in year 2010.

The project had three main goals within the concept of sustainability, which gave the frames to this thesis. The question to be answered by this research is "How has the Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project (NTOEDP) reached the planned goals when it comes to sustainable development?" The three goals were:

- 1) The first goal was to create *the more environmental consideration in tourism sector and communities*. The activities were introduced to tourism service providers, stakeholders and communities to protect the nature, have effort in waste management and see the consequences of deforestation.



2) The second goal was to have *more community involvement in tourism*. The villagers were trained in several ways to be part of tourism industry. Teaching was about e.g. how they can use their land to produce food products to hotels and restaurants or how to run a small lodge or hostel to visitors.

3) The third goal was to have *more people benefitting from tourism*. This was conducted by constructing and improving the trekking trails that already existed in Kathmandu Valley and combine the short walking routes into one long trail, where tourists spend more time and money while visiting in Nepal.

The overall goal for the project was to create *better environment for better tourism*, which will be achieved with sustainable development in tourism in the project area. The concepts and theories of ecotourism, rural tourism and sustainable tourism played the key roles when delimiting the research. The qualitative research method was used with case study and interviews. In the research the literature data, primary data and secondary data were used. There were two interviews with the leaders of the two commissioners. The interview with Mr. Arun Shrestha, the President of NETIF, was conducted by email and the interview with the Mr. Panu Könönen, the Project Manager of Suomen Latu ry, was done in Helsinki. All the materials for the thesis research were collected by the interviews, project documents and analysis of voluntary workers on site, theory literature and electronic sources. The research was made for the commissioners Suomen Latu Ry and NETIF, which are introduced shortly in the following chapters.

### 1.1 Finnish Central Association for Recreational Sports and Outdoor Activities

Suomen Latu ry, the Finnish Central Association for Recreational Sports and Outdoor Activities, is a parental NGO for 225 member associations with over 75 000 members altogether. The organization has marketed outdoor activities for over 70 years and it is open for all age groups. The main purpose for the organization is to increase people's interest for outdoor exercising and develop the conditions and quality of the outdoor exercise places, for example tracks and hiking routes. Guarding the everyman's right in the nature is an important matter to the organization but they also want to promote the health beneficial exercise in the societies and increase the well being in the society (Suomen Latu 2011).

The organization works also internationally with different projects. In the years 1997-2001 there were a development co-operation project in Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania and now it is employed by the studied project in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal (Suomen Latu 2011).

## 1.2 NETIF- Nepal Environment and Tourism Initiative Foundation

NETIF is NGO consisting of tourism entrepreneurs and environmentalist located in Kathmandu and Dhulikhel in Nepal. The organization was established in the year 2006 and it registered as an NGO in the year 2008. The aim of the organization is to promote and develop sustainable tourism in the rural areas of Nepal, to increase the knowledge of the tourism opportunities in Nepal and at the same time respect and honor the nature and well being of the rural villagers. The organization provides education, helps with the implementation and does networking with other NGO's, government and local stakeholders. NETIF does the implementation of the projects with both parties, in the private and public sector and brings them into co-operation to achieve the same goal. One of the organization's important objects is to create different types of income by providing self-employment programs in the tourism and environmental fields (NETIF 2011).

## 2 Tourism in the developing countries

The world could be coarsely divided to more developed countries (MDCs) and less developed countries (LDCs). These designations are false with definitional problems because the world is evolving. Many less developed countries continue to advance on paths of development and modernizations (Timothy & Nyaupane 2008). The most common matters that differentiate the developing countries from the developed countries can be point out with different characteristics. For example Hobbs (2009) has listed the indicators and their characteristics in relation of the level of development. It can be seen that in the developing countries the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is always lower than in the developed countries and the birth and death rates are higher. Also energy use tells something about the country, the less developed countries cannot use energy that much as in the more developed countries (see appendix 1).

When characteristics of the table by Hobbs (2209) are compared to Nepal (figure 1), it can be categorized as a less developed country (World Bank 2010). Also the South Asian region is the second poorest region in the world, which makes Nepal one of the world's poorest countries, according to United Nations Development Project (UNDP 2006).

Traits	U.S.A	Nepal
Per capita GDP and income	47,400 \$	1200 \$
Percentage of population employed in manufacturing	20,3%	7%
Energy use	3.873 trillion kWh	2.243 billion kWh
Percentage of population living in cities	82%	19%
Percentage of population living in rural settings	18%	81%
Birth rate	13.83 births/1,000 population	22.17 births/1,000 population
Death rate	8.38 deaths/1,000 population	6.81 deaths/1,000 population
Population growth rate	0.963%	1.596%
Percentage of population under age 15	20,1%	34.6%
Percentage of population that is literate	99%	48.6%
Amount of leisure time available	n/a	n/a
Life expectancy	78 years	66 years

Figure 1: Characteristics of Nepal and U.S.A. (CIA 2011)

Tourism is the most important part of global economy. The industry generated almost 1\$ (US) trillion in global receipts in 2008, with the increase of 1,8 percent from the year 2007 (UNWTO 2010). The industry was negatively affected by the global financial crisis and economical recession between the years 2008 and 2009 (see appendix 2), but was recovered faster than expected (Honey & Gilpin 2009). International tourism worldwide declined during crisis 4 percent but was already up to 7 percent in the year 2010. The main drivers in this growth were the less developed countries, with 8 percent of increase in the tourist arrivals, when the more developed countries only reached up to 5 percent. When looking the situation regionally, Asia was the fastest growing region to recover with 13 percent of increase in 2010 (UNWTO 2010).

International tourism is ranked as the fourth largest industry in the world, after fuel, chemicals and automotive products. The expansion of international travel has also increased in recent years and reaches to the developing countries as well (UNWTO 2010). Within 10 years the arrivals of international tourists to developing countries in emerging economies has

increased rapidly and steadily. The amount of arrivals has grown from the 31 percent of the total travelers in the world to 46 percent (see appendix 3). Also the market share in 2009 was 46,6 percent, which is truly high. If compared to the developed countries and advanced economies the growth has not been so rapid and massive. It is also calculated that the annual growth in developing countries was 5,2 percent when in the developed countries the figure stayed in 1,2 percent.

## 2.1 Tourism fighting against poverty and Millennium Development Goals

According to the World Bank poverty line description, there is almost 50 per cent of the world's population living in poverty. The calculation is based on the measure of people living with the income of 2\$ (US) per day per person. The extreme poverty, people living with the income of 1\$ (US) per day per person, appears mostly in the developing countries (World Bank 2007). In Nepal, there was over 55 percent of the population living under the income of 1,25\$ per day per person in 2005 (World Bank 2005).

Opportunities for economic improvement in many developing countries are limited. Factors of limited natural and human resources; lack of investment flows and difficulty to enter into global competition with the established manufacturing and service industries of developed countries, restrict them. But still many of the developing countries, and especially regions of countries, have a comparative advantage in wilderness and wildlife that has capability to be attracting tourists. Normally these resources exist in rural areas in which 75 percent of the world's population lives in extreme poverty (Timothy & Nyaupane 2009).

In 83 percent of developing countries tourism is the key foreign exchange earner and leading export earner for one third of the poorest countries in the world. For 40 poorest countries in the world, tourism is the second most important source of foreign exchange after oil (Mastry 2001). It can be said that tourism is an important tool to advantage when combating against poverty. This is because tourism has multiple advantages to several industries. Tourism creates a network of different operations, from hotels and restaurants to adventure sport providers and food suppliers. This increases employment in several sectors; the industry needs cooks, guides, cleaners, drivers, translators, hotel management and other service sector workers (Honey & Gilbin 2009). The industry also serves job opportunities to women because it is not gender-specific. This leads to the economic autonomy and greater influence in household decision making for women, which is affecting to the wellbeing and quality of live. It might even increase the self-esteem giving psychological benefits and give an opportunity for women to have a more powerful social and political role in the society (Scheyvens 2002).

Indirectly tourism encourage to the development of multiple use of infrastructure that has a positive influence to the host community. The roads need to be repaired, health care facilities should be available and outdoor activity centers, for instance, need to be built (Honey & Gilbin 2009). Also the tax revenues from tourism offer possibilities to invest in education and health care to improve the livelihoods of the poor and to fund poverty reduction projects (Holden 2008).

Also the direct economical linkage between the tourist and the poor is for example through selling and buying handicrafts. This offers a change to improve not only the income of the individual but to the whole community (Ashley et al. 2001). Also the communities that are poor with material matters but rich in culture, heritage and history can use their unique factors for generating income and comparative advantage in tourism industry (Honey & Gilbin 2009).

All the discussed cases, how tourism can be used as a tool in the fight against poverty, are part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by United Nations (UN). These goals were established in the year 2000 when UN identified the poverty one of the biggest global challenges in the world. These goals are planned to be achieved by the year 2015 (United Nation Development Program UNDP). In the year 2005 the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNWTO joined in to help to achieve the MDGs. Also several NGOs and private sector get involved to review the progress towards meeting the MDGs (Ashley & Mitchell 2005). If the goals are achieved UN has predicted that the poverty in the world will be cut by half and billions of people will have the chance to benefit from the global economy (UNDP 2011).

The eight goals of MDG are listed below. It can be seen that at least some of the goals could be achieved with the help of tourism. The UNWTO responded to the challenge of UN about the MDGs and established 'Sustainable Tourism- Elimination of Poverty'- program (STEP) in 2002, which has a direct objective of helping to achieve the MDGs. The intention of the program is to "develop sustainable tourism as a force for poverty alleviation" (STEPa). The STEP program is on progress in Nepal too, funded by the UNWTO. The project goes by the name 'Great Himalaya Trail Development in West Nepal: Linking Formal and Informal Enterprises to Tourism Markets to Reduce Poverty' (STEPb). Also the UN is actively in Nepal and trying to achieve the MDGs there with the help of local civil organizations and government (UNDP 2011). These several examples of trying to achieve sustainable environment and alleviating poverty, with the help of sustainable tourism are crucial and very current topics, which gives an important factor to this research.

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other deceases
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development (UNDP 2011)

## 2.2 Tourism's phases in Nepal: a country of attractions and challenges

Nepal is a landlocked country located in the mountains of Himalayas in South Asia. The neighboring countries are India and Tibet autonomous region of the People's Republic of China. The surface area of the country is 147 181 square kilometers. The Himalayas lie on the north part of Nepal with the world's highest peak, Mount Everest. There are overall eight out of ten world's highest mountain peaks located in Nepal (Kotilainen & Kaitila 2002). According to the Nepal Ministry of Tourism and Civil Organization (MOTCA), the mountaineering and trekking are the main reasons for travel to Nepal (MOTCA 2009).



Picture 1: Map of Nepal (Lonely Planet 2011)

There are over 29 million people living in Nepal and over 80 percent of the people live in the rural areas (UNICEF 2009; CIA 2011). The population density is approximately 160 per square kilometer, which is relative high since the mountain region covers 35 percent of the total land area. In the Terai and other hill regions the density increases to 225 per square kilometer. When comparing this to Finland the population density is 17 per square kilometer and in Mongolia the number is only 2. And Nepal being half of the size of Finland, the density is emphasized even more. The surface area of Finland is 338 000 square kilometers and the population number is only 5,3 million, which is six times less than in Nepal (Kunnat.net 2011; Discover Mongolia 2011). Nepal has several ethnic groups and different spoken languages; in total there are 65 different caste and ethnic groups and 60 different spoken languages. The official language is still Nepali, which is closely related to Hindi and it is spoken by 50 percent of the population (Kotilainen & Kaitila 2002).

As a tourism destination Nepal offers attractive natural scenery with several natural parks, diverse of culture and ethnic groups and heritage (Grandona 2007). The country is famous for being one of the most important adventure, cultural and ecotourism (ACE) destinations in the whole world. The main tourist attractions are the Himalayas, the highest range of mountains in the world. The biggest tourism activities are trekking and mountaineering, which provide most of the country's economy in the case of longer stay and spending distribution (Cockerell 1997). Tourism is one of the most important sectors to bring income to the country and it creates more that 500 000 direct and indirect jobs (NTB 2001). In 2010 tourism accounted for 6 percent of the country's GDP (Ministry of Finance 2010).

The phase of modern tourisms starting in Nepal varies in different sources. According to MOTCA (2009), it started in 1949 but many researchers, like Phatt (2006) and Belk (1993) discusses that the modern tourism started between 1951 and 1953. Nevertheless, the country was opened for foreigners around 1950's and that was the start of modern tourism, especially the trekking tourism in Nepal. It is said that the trekking tourism in Nepal is the leading example of ecotourism operations (Gurung & DeCoursey 1994). Based on the statistics by Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) the amount of incoming tourists to Nepal has increased between the years 1962 to 2010 from 6000 to over 600 000 visitors per year. The growth is rapid and the reason for travelling to Nepal has changed during the past years. For example in 1999 the main reason to travel was for leisure purposes but by the year 2008 the reason of trekking and mountaineering increased when the leisure purposes decreased (MOTCA 2010).

By 2009 the trekking and mountaineering exceeded the amount of leisure travelers and is now one of the main reasons to travel to Nepal, with the number of over 26 percent of all the travelers. In 2008 and 2009 the amount of leisure travelers dropped crucially, from 29 percent to 8 percent from the total arrivals to Nepal. According to the statistics, there is still the

category of ‘other reason for travelling’ that can also consist of trekking and mountaineering, which is 36 percent of the total arrivals (MOTCA 2009). As a researcher I can reflect that one of the reasons for this could be the recession and the economic crisis in the world that had a straight impact to tourism and travelling. People were not able to travel “just for fun” but for activity reasons like trekking.

The steady growth of tourism industry in Nepal in 1980s and 1990s was disrupted by a Maoist (The communist party of Nepal) insurgency in the early 2000s. This ‘People’s war’ has ironically worsened the plight of the rural poor by distracting the vital government funds away from the development and causing aid programs to suspend their activities because of security issues. After a bloody decade-lasting insurgency of Maoist, the king was dethroned in 2006. This was the start of a new Maoist government and Nepal changed to monarchy (Lonely planet 2011). Presently this action has established more stable environment to the country even though people are still suffering from the war and the lost lives of Nepalese civilians. The wounds will have long time to heal, but still tourism was recovered fast after 2008 (Nyaupane & Budruk 2009). Main reason for this was the return of foreign aid and providing 60 percent of the development budget. At the same time Nepal maintains as one of the poorest countries in the world (World Bank 2011). But hopefully government of Nepal is willing to make changes to the social and economic development of the poor rural areas and communities to improve the situation (Lonely planet 2011).

### 2.3 Heritage tourism offers versatile options

The definition of heritage tourism by National Trust is “traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic and natural resources” (National Trust 2011).

For being the leader in ecotourism, Nepal has another important richness, the heritage. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have created a list of heritage places in the world to ‘encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world’ because this is ‘considered to be of outstanding value to humanity’ (UNESCO 2011a). UNESCO has listed Kathmandu Valley; Sagarmatha National Park, including Mount Everest; Royal Chitwan National Park and Lumbini, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha, to the world heritage list (WHL). These places have filled the criteria (see appendix 4) that UNESCO has set and received their status already in the late 70s to early 80s, except Lumbini, which was recognized until 1997. In 2011 there were 911 places in the WHL (UNESCO 2011b).



The existence in WHL is a remarkable tool for promoting heritage-tourism and attracting tourists to the heritage areas. Also the placement in WHL gives a global visibility to the country, which is extremely important especially for the developing countries (Timothy & Boyd 2006). But evidently it is not that simple. It is argued by many researchers, like Hall & Piggin (2001), that the use of WHL-status has not been proved to increase income in every heritage-area; usually only the popular sites will continue to be popular and the less accessible and less popular sites will not have significant growth in arrivals. But this only happens when the area is managed properly (Engenhardt 2005).

Still the heritage and its conservation provide a lot of opportunities to the country. Especially to the developing countries the heritage conservation ensures that the heritage becomes a resource for development in apart and economically peripheral regions of the country (Grefe 2004). This way the tourism development at heritage sites can bring better income and living standards for the local community. It stimulates the economy in rural and distant regions by creating demand of agriculture produce. In Nepal, the infrastructure development project made for Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha, created lots of job opportunities to the locals as constructor workers. Also permanent jobs were given to take care of the Buddhist temples (Timothy & Nyaupane 2009). But there are also other effects than the improvement of the local economy.

Ayala (2005) explains how to add value to the heritage artifacts to get the tourists to stay in sites longer than one-day trip. The three- step process might be beneficial for the long-term success and sustainability of heritage tourism. First step is to classify the heritage product and where it fits within the natural and cultural theme of the destination at the scale of a country, region or area. Second step is to equip the heritage with protection guarantees. Tourism industry is depending on the remnants of the past, which is a good reason for it to help conserve the heritage. And the third step is diversification and raising the experience of the heritage with cultural performances, local food and other things that encourage the visitors to stay longer. Therefore the whole heritage experience can be better by interpretation (Ayala 2005). Even though this research is not about heritage tourism, these tools could be applied in Nepal and especially in the rural places with historical and natural heritage to create more sustainable tourism.

#### 2.4 Trekking tourism benefits locals

In 1950 the trekking activity started in Nepal by climbing the Annapurna Mountain and after that followed the mountains of the Everest and Nanga Parbet. By the year 1964 trekkers from all over the world had conquered all the Himalayan giant peaks. A British colonel Jimmy Roberts was the first person to realize that trekking would charm the tourists also. He was

the founder of the first trekking agency in Nepal, the Mountain Travel Trekking Agency, in 1964. Roberts spent many years by walking the hills of Nepal and came up with the idea to provide tents, guiding and food facilities to the tourists with Sherpas. The Mountain Travel Trekking Agency was the only agency in 1964-1968 and after that many other entrepreneurs have followed Roberts's idea (Explore Himalaya 2009).

Nowadays Nepal is one of the world's most popular trekking destinations. There are several hundreds of organizations that provide range of walking-holiday packages to tourists. Normally the packages include guiding, porter services, somebody who carries the equipments of the camps, and food (Wearing & Neil 2009). There are two trekking seasons in Nepal, the first is from March to May and the second is from September to November. In one good season estimated only in Annapurna Conservation area region, the second most visited conservation areas in Nepal (MOTCA 2009), the trekking tourism provides over 50 000 people a seasonal employment as porters (Nepal 2002). There are three types of porters, traditional porters, high altitude climbing porters and trekking porters. The biggest group of porters is the trekking porters (International Porter Protection Group, IPPG 2003). They are usually from the lower altitude middle hills and consist of poor farmers looking to earn a supplementary income (Ayers 2003). All the porters normally stay under the altitude of 5000 meters, but this may change during the years because many hotels and restaurants are built in higher altitudes (IPPG 2003).

For many locals living in the rural mountain areas, the trekking industry is the only employment and it is vital to the porters to survive (Ayers 2003). Although the job is dangerous, because of altitude sickness, hypothermia and other sick related matters, it is sustainable in the way that porters make the contact for tourists themselves and collect potential tips. This way the worker benefits directly itself without any agencies or other middlemen. Of course this is not always the case, it depends on the fact whether the porter work temporarily or for a trekking company. Because by self-employing the porter has higher risk for accidents that the earnings and insurance will not cover (McKinlay 2003). So working for a company can be better for the safety of the employee, because they are understood that it is a profitable business practice to take care of the porters. They provide insurance, English-language training and safety training. These cases will keep the porters and the trekkers happy while climbing the mountains and having well experienced porter as their guide. Also in many unfortunate lethal accidents of porters, the insurance will leave money to the porter's family (Ayers 2003).

The voluntary based group IPPG helps other porter NGOs and "works to improve the conditions of mountain porters in the tourism industry worldwide" (IPPG 2011). This is done by raising awareness of the issues among travel agencies, guides and trekkers. IPPG also

supports porters to earn a decent wage and have medical care (IPPG 2011). One good example of sustainability in different NGOs or groups is the recycling of clothes. For example the Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP) runs a Porters clothing bank, where they receive old winter jackets, fleeces, hiking boots, wind shells and other useful equipment for the porters to wear. This means that the trekkers can leave their old, but still usable, clothes and equipments to these banks as a donation and this way helping the wellbeing of the poorly paid and equipped porters that do the heavy work for the tourists (KEEP 2011).

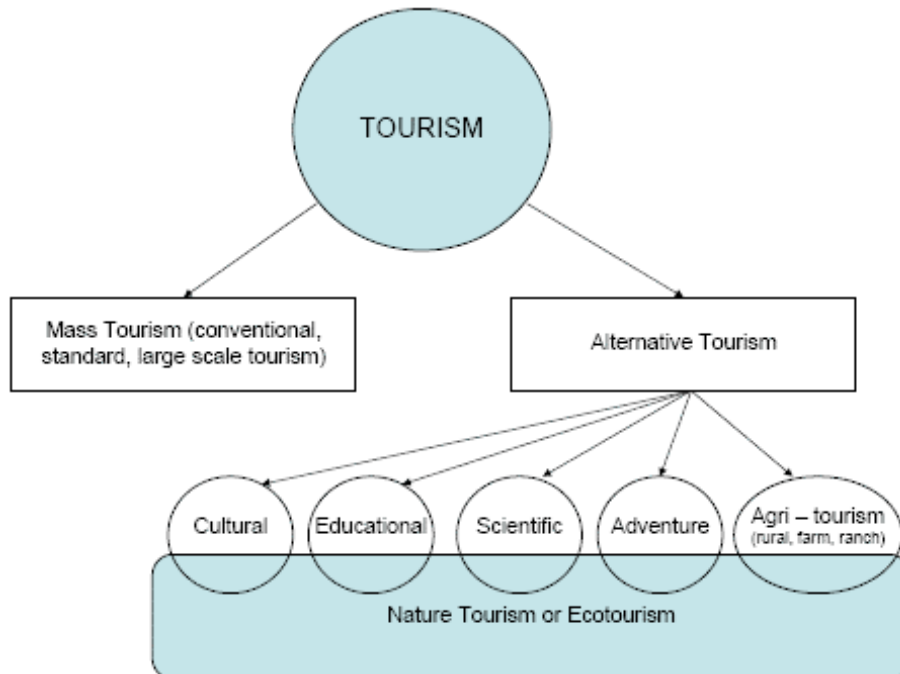
### 3 Ecotourism can provide prosperity to locals

To define ecotourism there are several researches and articles about the subject. But the first formal definition is by Ceballos-Lascurain, the pioneer of ecotourism movement, in 1987 (Wearing & Neal 2009). He defines that ecotourism is “Travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas” (Ceballos-Lascurain 1987). The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) clarifies that ecotourism is “Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people” (TIES 1990). And Tickell (1994) summarizes the concept of being “travel to enjoy the world’s amazing diversity of natural life and human culture without causing damage to either”. All of these (and many other) descriptions has one similarity behind the concept: ecotourism is seen as an alternative tourism, which is opposite of the mass tourism (Newsome et al. 2002).

To conclude the discussed definitions and thoughts, ecotourism is general consisting of four main characters; it is nature based; environmentally educated; sustainably managed and conservation supporting (Buckley 1994). The characters of ecotourism also reminds of the triangle that defines sustainable tourism, which has ecological, economical and socio-cultural dimensions (Swarbrooke 1999), as can be seen later in the chapter 5. It is argued that ecotourism is considered as one component of sustainable tourism development (Boyd & Butler 1993).

In general, ecotourism’s main focus has been on natural environment but in recent years the focus has faced evolution into a catchphrase that encompasses numerous tourism forms, like ‘nature tourism’, ‘sustainable tourism’ and ‘green tourism’ just to name few (Wearing & Neil 2009). But the idea of alternative has remained and Mieczkowski (1995) has identified the type of tourism existing in the relation of the two main broad categories along the range of tourism types- the Mass Tourism (MT) and Alternative Tourism (AT). He explains that AT is a flexible common category that consists of multiplicity of various forms that have one similar feature; they are alternatives to mass tourism. This means that they are not associated with

mass large-scale tourism but are more or less small scale, low-density, detached in non-urban areas and they provide to special interest groups of people with mainly above average education and with relatively high-disposable income (Mieczkowski 1995).



Picture 2: Alternative Tourism (Mieczkowski, 1995)

So the specific forms (see picture 2) of the AT are cultural, educational, scientific, adventure and agri-tourism, which in this study is defined as rural tourism. Significantly the AT has similarities of MT, but the main difference is the scale and character of the impacts. Another notable overlap appears between the different types of AT themselves. For example cultural tourism is to a large extent educational and ecotourism is related to nature-based tourism (Wearing & Neil 2009). But even though Mieczkowski (1995) had difficulties to place ecotourism in the context of AT, because it does not coincide directly to cultural tourism, he find the similarities in educational, scientific, adventure and rural tourism forms. The AT is also linked to Community Based Tourism (CBT) by many researchers, like Dernoï (1988) and Holden (1984).

As discussed earlier, Nepal has reached the role of leader in ecotourism and offers many ecotourism destinations. And based on the study of Mieczkowski (1995), Nepal provides most of the alternative tourism forms in adventure, culture and rural tourism. One significant part of ecotourism in Nepal is the rural tourism that is introduced in the following chapter.

### 3.1 Rural tourism is a re-generator for conservation

When discussing about rural tourism, it is important to know the concept of *rural*. The definition of rural and rural areas varies between and even within different countries. This is why it is difficult to have one overall description of the concept. Normally rural is understood to be countryside or non-urban, but there are different opinions that where to draw the line between rural and urban. Many researchers argue about the subject, but for instance Sharpley & Sharpley (1997) have defined rural for all areas, “Both land and water, that lie beyond towns and cities which, in national and regional context, may be described as major urban centers”. By Lane (1994) the rural tourism reach beyond agriculture tourism to include “special-interest nature holidays and ecotourism, walking, climbing and riding holidays, adventure, sport and health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travel, arts and heritage tourism, and in some areas, ethnic tourism.”

Tourism in rural areas has grown significantly in recent decades because of government initiatives and market forces; more and more travelers are looking for alternative holidays in the countryside (Weiler & Hall 1992). The growth is seen especially in the developing countries, where the complicated economic situation drives agencies to promote new uses of the countryside by influencing both potential providers of tourism services and the markets of rural tourism through media. Tourism is seen as a re-generator for rural economy and conservation (Bramwell 1990). The concept of rural tourism is not new; people have been escaping from the stress and everyday life of industrialized areas to ‘quiet and peaceful’ environment for centuries. Already in 19<sup>th</sup> century people have been growing their interest to rural areas. The growth of rural tourism is difficult to measure because only few countries collect statistics in way that separates the solely rural from other forms of tourism. Based on a research by Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD) in 1994 most national tourism administrations can still agree that rural tourism is a growing sector (OECD 1994).

Even though the researchers have been able to define rural tourism in overall aspect there are many problems that influence the case. All the definitions are difficult to apply universally. The first problem is that not all tourism that is located to rural areas is purely ‘rural’; it can be ‘urban’ in form and still be placed in rural areas. Secondly there are different forms of rural tourism developed in different regions. For example, agriculture vacations are important in many parts of rural Europe, when in North America these kinds of vacations are very rare in the rural areas. And final example of the problems is that because rural tourism is complex, the rural areas themselves are complex. They are seldom either fixed entities or autonomous and free from urban influence. This is why the working definition of the subject is extremely hard to find (OECD 1994).

To help understanding the subject of rural, the concept of *rurality* is also necessary to be familiar with. This is because rurality is usually the main selling point when marketing rural tourism. In its 1994 research the OECD discusses rurality in wider debate and presents three dominating points that define the concept:

- “the population density and size of settlement.
- land use and its dominance by agriculture and forestry.
- ‘traditional’ social structures and issues of community identity and heritage“(OECD 1994)

For the first point, it can be generalized that rural settlements might vary in size but they are still relatively small, with the population under 10 000. Also the population density is usually relatively low. This is the case of extremely distant wilderness, as we can see later when discussing about the scale or rural-urban (OECD 1994) In Nepal, the project area consists of rural and semi-rural areas, when looking for the population density and size (CBS 2001).

For the second point, many researchers have defined rural areas to those with less than 10-20 percent of their land areas covered by the built environment. But these areas should not be managed by agrarian and forest-based economic activities. They should be, to a wide extent, depositories of the natural world and wildlife. And they must give a sense of space and traditional non-urban, non-industrial economy to the visitors. Their economies need to be highly influenced by the market for farm and forest products (OECD 1994). In the villages along the Kathmandu Valley cultural trail, the agriculture is the main activity for the land use (CBS 2001).

When it comes to the last point, ‘traditional’ social structures, one key character is important to rurality; the preservation of older ways of life and thinking. With this vital character combined to the scenic values and recreational opportunities of the countryside the rural areas attract tourists from urban areas (OECD 1994). But still it is difficult to define exactly the characteristics of a rural society because the definitions of this also vary between and within different countries. Luckily a researcher Flinn (1982) has noted three totally different types of traditional life styles in the rural United States. First one is a “Small town society, closely knit, strongly believing in democracy, but often not in close contact with nature”. The second traditional style is “Agrarian society, based on family farming, farm life and the calendar of the seasons”. And the last style are “Ruralists, living outside towns, but not farming: independents who value open space, nature, and ‘a natural order’” (Flinn 1982). In Nepal, all of these society structures exist in the rural areas, and especially in the project area in Kathmandu Valley (CBS 2001).

With the similar intentions researchers have introduced the concept of a *rural-urban continuum* to help coping with the complexity of the case and the problems of comparing areas, which are supposed to be rural but possess many different characteristics (OECD 1994). To help to present the meaning of rural and rurality, the subject is compared to the urban subject, which is generally defined as the opposite of rural. Urban as a subject is commonly known so that in comparison helps to understand the meaning of rural more easily. In the figure 3 the contrasts of rural versus urban are listed by Frankenberg (1966).

RURAL	URBAN
Community	Association
Social fields involving few but multiple role relationships	Social fields involving many overlapping role relationships
Different social roles played by same person	Different social roles played by different people
Simple economies	Diverse economies
Little division of labour	Great specialization in labour force
Ascribed status	Achieved status
Education according to status	Status derived from education
Role embracement	Role commitment
Close-knit networks	Loose-knit networks
Locals	Cosmopolitans
Economic class in one role of several divisions	Economic class in the major division
Conjunction	Segregation
Integration with work environment	Separation of work environment

Figure 2: Rural versus urban (Frankenberg 1966 in OECD 1994)

The rapid urbanization and industrialization in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries changed the social structures in countryside. These 'new' structures are different from the traditional structures that the rural societies had before. But using the concept of continuum rural communities can be assessed, at local level, on a sliding scale from extremely distant wilderness to highly urban or somewhere in between, depending on a community's situation. There are variety of situations between the scale; largely rural or largely urban; midpoint presenting the edge of suburbia; a crossover point between poles and several others to characterize both urban and rural typology. As an example, several small towns in rural areas are often referred to be urban design areas but which fall within the rural regional framework (George et al. 2009).

### 3.2 Sustainable rural tourism

Rural environment all over the world is very fragile; it can be easily changed and even damaged, and tourism is a powerful factor for the change. It is very important issue, because in many countries the rural areas have a role of saving the natural and historical heritage (Lane 1994). In Nepal most of the heritage places that are listed in WHL are located in the rural areas except the whole Kathmandu Valley, which consists of both urban and rural areas.

To keep the tourism in rural areas sustainable is vital for the whole rural tourism to sustain. Tourists are seeking for unspoiled scenery, peace and quiet, and even total solitude from the small community based tourism enterprises (Krippendorf 1987). By Lane (1994) the concept of sustainability in rural tourism should be multi-purpose one to succeed. It cannot be a narrow ethic that only concentrates to nature conservation. The concept should aim to:

- “Sustain the culture and character of host communities
- Sustain landscape and habitats
- Sustain the rural economy
- Sustain a tourism industry, which will be viable in the long term – and this in turn means the promotion of successful and satisfying holiday experiences
- Develop sufficient understanding, leadership and vision amongst the decision-makers in an area that they realize the dangers of too much reliance on tourism, and continue to work towards a balanced and diversified rural economy” (Lane, 1994)

The concept by Lane (1994) can be used for any sustainable activity, because it includes the three main aspects of sustainability- the economical, ecological and socio-cultural perspectives.

## 4 The Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project

The project NTOEDP was implemented by Suomen Latu ry and a Nepalese NGO NETIF in 2008. The practical part of the project was executed between 1.1.2009 - 31.12.2010. The project area is located in Kathmandu Valley in Nepal and the outcome of the project goes by the name of *The Kathmandu Valley Cultural Trekking Trail (KVCTT)* (Könönen 2011a). In this chapter the project and its phases are discussed closely.

Mr Panu Könönen, the project manager from Suomen Latu ry, is the implementer of the project. According to him, the project idea came during the previous project in Kilimanjaro National park in Tanzania. There Suomen Latu constructed trekking trail with facilities to the

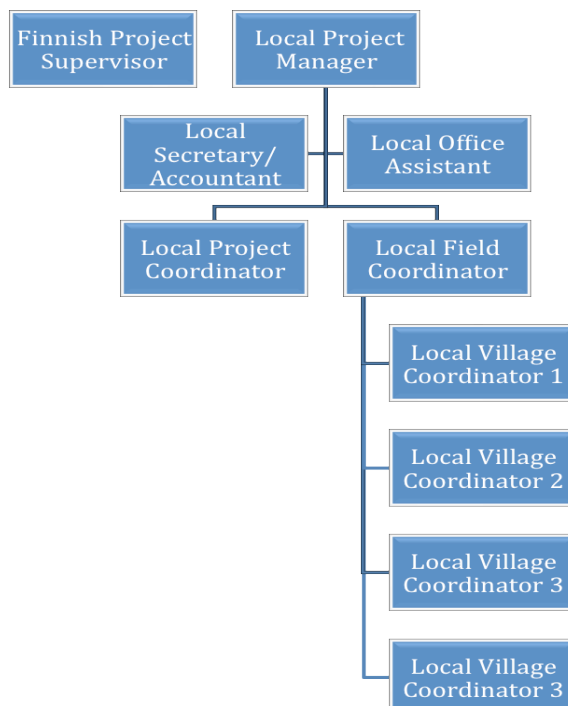


Mount Kilimanjaro and after that the organization decided to do a similar project to Nepal (Könönen 2011a).

Suomen Latu has worked with the NETIF since the year 2006, but the proposal of the NTOEDP was introduced to the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in May 2007. Already in the year 2008 Suomen Latu received a funding from the Ministry and was able to support the NETIF by hiring an office worker, creating a web site, producing marketing materials for the project and arranging cleaning activities in the mountains. The first part of the project was conducted between the years 2008-2010, and the project has received more funding to continue till the year 2013 (Könönen 2008). However, in this research the focus is only in the first part of the project.

In March 2008 Suomen Latu and NETIF, together with the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), the Human and Natural Resources Studies Centre (HNRSC) at Kathmandu University and their partner NCCR North-South arranged an interactive workshop called *Post-Conflict Tourism in Nepal: Opportunities and challenges*. The workshop was held for most important Nepalese stakeholders in tourism industry and it acted as a launcher for the project (Könönen 2008).

There are also several other national and local partners involving to the project (see appendix 5) but here the focus is only on the two ringleaders behind the project- NETIF and Suomen Latu ry. In picture 3 the project organization is presented.



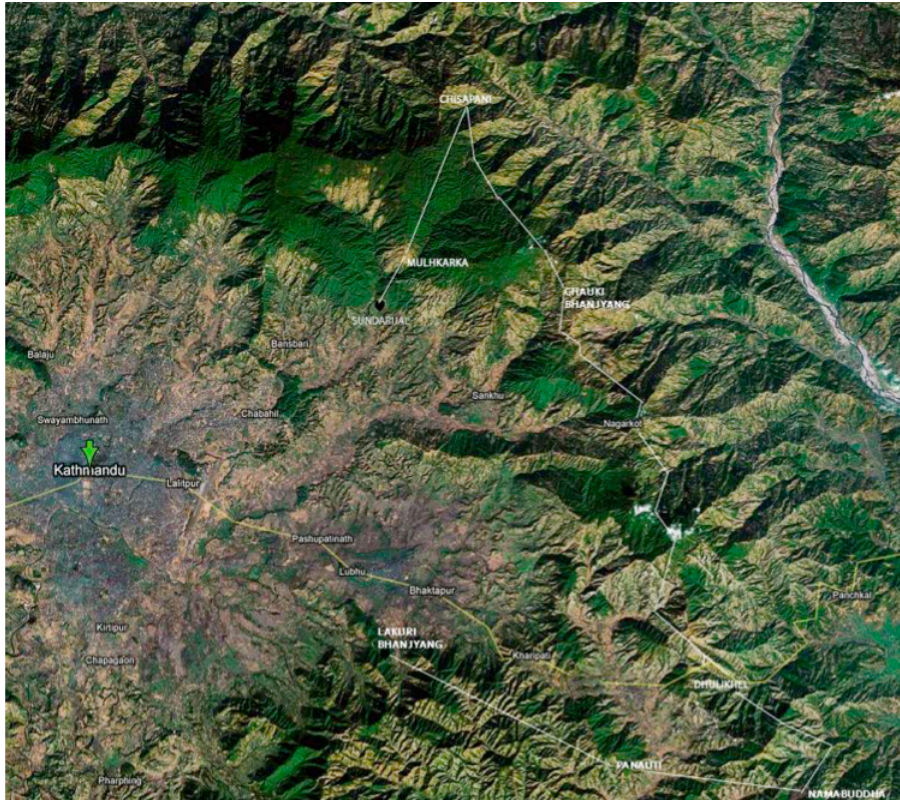
Picture 3: Project Organization (Könönen 2008)

#### 4.1 Phases of the project

Based on the Project Document by Könönen (2008) the main reason for creating the NTOEDP was to help the poor rural communities in Nepal through tourism. Kathmandu Valley is one of the most popular tourism attractions in Nepal, but the facilities there are not attracting and facing the needs of tourists who would like to do trekking in the valley (Grandona 2007; Könönen 2008). There were three goals of the project: *1) More environmental consideration in tourism sector and communities 2) more community involvement in tourism and 3) more people benefitting from tourism.* The overall main long-term object is to create *better environment for better tourism.* The target groups in the project area are local communities, tourism entrepreneurs, local tourism development committees, eco clubs and waste management committees, women self-help groups and leading farmers groups (NETIF 2011; Könönen 2008).

##### 4.1.1 Project area

The project area is located in Kathmandu Valley, which is a bowl-shaped valley in the middle of Nepal, at the altitude of approximately 1,4 km. It is surrounded by four major mountains; Shivapuri, Phulchowki, Nagarjun and Chandragiri. The valley consists of three big cities; Patan, Bhaktapur and Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, and small rural villages of Dhulikhel, Nagarkot, Shivapuri, Banepa, Nala, Phulchowki, Tika Bhairav, Timan Narayan and Daman (Nepal home page 2011). The KVCTT covers three regions of the valley, the region of Kathmandu, Kavre and Bhaktapur. The track goes by rural and semi-rural areas starting from Sundarijal and continuing by villages and towns of Mulkarkha, Chisapani, Chauki Phangiyang, Nagarkot, Dhulikhel, Namabudda and Panauti (see picture 2). Also a popular tourist destination, the Shivapuri National park is located along the track. Most of the trails between the villages and towns in the valley already exist and are popular one-day trekking routes, but the new idea was to develop the whole circle into one over 72 kilometers trekking trail as a one tourism product. The aim was to increase the community-based tourism along the trail to achieve the sustainable tourism in the area (Könönen 2008; Suomen Latu 2011).



Picture 4: Kathmandu Valley Cultural Trail (Google Maps 2008; Könönen 2008)

#### 4.1.2 Kathmandu Valley and Shivapuri National Park

The city of Kathmandu, has over 990 000 habitants and the density of people is 13 225 per square kilometer. In the whole valley area the density is only 97 per square kilometer with the population of 1,5 million people. In Kathmandu, there is variety of cultures and different ethnic groups that provides the rich cultural heritage of the city (Kathmandu Metropolitan City Office 2011). Newars are the native inhabitants and creators of the valley from the beginning but nowadays there are over 60 different caste/ethnic groups. 70 percent of the metropolitan population is divided by the Newars (31,8%), Brahmin (21,5%) and Chhetri (16,4%). Other small groups, such as Sherpas and Magar comprise approximately 3 percent of the whole population. All together these major groups share 85 percent of the total habitants and smaller groups, with less than 1 percent, are Muslims, Raj, Marwadi and Tharu among the other minorities (Subedi 2010).

Kathmandu valley is the gateway to Nepal's tourism. 90 percent of all the travelers enter Nepal through Kathmandu valley. The country's only international airport is located there, The Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA). The three main tourism destinations in Nepal are Kathmandu, Pokhara and Chitwan national park (Grandona 2007). Based on the statistics there were nearly 40 percent of all the visitors in national parks and protected areas in 2009

made in Shivapuri National park. Only the Chitwan National park exceeded the amount of visitors for 42 percent of all the visitors (MOTCA 2009). This gives to the KVCTT good possibilities to achieve the project goals and maintain as a successful tourism product.

Shivapuri Nagarjun National Park covers a region for 159 square kilometres and is situated on the northern fringe of Kathmandu Valley. The park lies in a transition zone between sub-tropical and temperate climatic areas. The flora consists of a variety of natural forest types including pine, oak and rhododendron. Recorded wildlife in the park includes mammalian species such as Himalayan black bear, leopard, jungle cat and rhesus monkey. The park is also home to 177 species of birds. Shivapuri is one of the main sources of drinking water for Kathmandu Valley. About 30 million litres of water is tapped daily from rivers Baghmati and the Bisnumati and from several other small streams. Because of its pure natural settings and easy accessibility from Kathmandu, many visitors are attracted to the park for trekking and other wildlife tourism. Trekking routes to Nagarkot, Gosaikunda, Helambu and Langtang National Park also pass through this recreational area. Several religious sites for the Hindus and the Buddhists are placed within the park itself (Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation DNPWC 2011).

#### 4.2 Starting point in 2008

The starting point for the project was to analyze Nepal through tourism, environment, waste management and politics. There were three main problems to solve: 1) *the lack of environmental consideration in tourism sector and communities* 2) *the lack of community involvement in tourism* and 3) *less people benefitting from tourism*. The results of these were gathered by the interactive workshop, surveys, literature and studies related to the topic and have been conducted by Suomen Latu and NETIF with the help of Kathmandu University (Könönen 2008).

In the year 2008 Students of the Kathmandu University conducted a survey for the local people in the project area by interviewing 62 households and 19 hoteliers. The method of the survey was face-to-face interviews with semi structure and open questionnaires. The questionnaires were divided into two survey categories: “Household survey (General public response) and Hotel & Logde operator survey (Tourist Service Provider response)” (Aryal et al. 2008). The villagers and hoteliers were picked along the designed track that goes along the villages and valley.

The focus of for the survey was to find would the community based tourism offer cost-effective way to ease the poverty in rural community. There were four objectives to the research:

- “1.To know the status of tourism along the trail.  
 2.To know the status of the households and hotels along the trail.  
 3.To know the possibilities of extending tourism business along the trail.  
 4.To know the willingness of the local community to participate in tourism activities ”  
 (Aryal et al. 2008)

In general the survey showed that the households along the track live in poverty and the hotels were good with enough facilities and capacity for accommodation. But the infrastructure in the project area was underdeveloped. There were some kinds of pipeline distributions for getting water from the springs, but they were not in function all year round. The households and hotels had enough water to run, but in summer time they were facing problems. The lack of treatment of drinking water and toilets were big challenges as well at least for the households. The electricity was supplied by the government in most villages but not in Chisapani, which has solar system and wind power as their source. The electricity was only used for lightning, but the hotels probably use it for several other things also. The mobile phone connection in the villages was very high and almost everyone in the villages has mobile phone. The use of Internet or other communication was rear, but some hotels do offer WLAN services (Könönen 2008; Aryal et al. 2008).

The biggest issue along the trail was the waste management. Because the most common waste is solid, mostly plastic, paper and glass, it is not that easy to get rid of it ecologically. The trashes are burnt, buried or in the worst cases thrown to the bushes. This was one really important issue that the NTOEDP needed to focus on (Könönen 2008; Aryal et al. 2008).

The migration in the area varied. There was less emigration than immigration. The reasons for this were the poverty and job opportunities. But the emigration happened because of the lack of facilities in the rural areas. Also the farmers are normally moving seasonally (Könönen 2008; Aryal et al. 2008).

Tourism in the area was expected to increase the economical situation by providing new job opportunities. According to the results by the survey, here were more tourists during autumn and spring seasons than in winter and summer seasons. The households that were located away from the trekking rail mentioned that there were only approximate 20 tourists in a month, when along the track there might be from 100 to 500 tourists per month. When the interviewers were asking about community-based tourism, the villagers did not know the meaning of it. The villagers also thought that the government should do more for their well being, to help socio-economic development in communities by for example repairing the water pipeline system. Nevertheless, people living in the Kathmandu Valley area were positive towards the NTOEDP (Könönen 2008; Aryal et al. 2008).

### 4.3 Activities and actions

The practical actions in the project towards responsible and sustainable tourism have focused on Pollution and Waste Management; Energy and Natural Resource Conservation; Community involvement; Addressing the needs of local people and the Tourists; and Health and Awareness (NETIF 2011). These actions were planned to do between 2009 and 2010. A tentative timetable (see appendix 6) was prepared to do the actions in four six-month sections and taking into consideration of the monsoon season in Nepal, which may delay some activities (Könönen 2008). Below the actions have been divided and presented separately.

#### 4.3.1 Waste management is the biggest challenge

While discussing with Könönen in January 2011 he mentioned that the biggest challenge in the project has been the waste management. He also stayed in this opinion in May 2011 when he was interviewed. This area of the action is studied more carefully than the others, because Könönen mentioned this subject of being the most challenging in Nepal now and in the future (Könönen 2011b).

The process of waste management involves seven actions when dealing with the waste of humans and organisms. The progression includes minimization, handling, processing, storage, recycling, transport and final disposal (American Psychological Association 2011). According to these actions, NETIF has done several awareness and cleanup campaigns in the project area. There has been placed more than 600 trash bins, 7-10 incinerators (the amount varies with different sources) and four waste management centers along the trail. The organization has also trained local people and entrepreneurs in waste management and is developing a long-term waste management project that includes at least employing people to do cleaning in the area (NETIF 2011; Suomen Latu 2011).



Picture 5: Incinerator along the track (Könönen, 2008)

Based on the Kathmandu Valley Environmental Outlook (2007) only 75% of the solid waste is collected and the rest remaining waste stays on the streets in the urban areas of Kathmandu. In the rural areas, the waste from the households is mostly organic, so they have a process to recycle and reuse the waste. The problem still is the non-degradable waste, plastic and solid waste, which is difficult to destroy ecologically. Luckily there are some organizations and private sector that are doing their part in the waste collecting, and NETIF has also being part of these campaigns. The campaigns include door-to-door collecting and promoting the composting for households. The biggest waste in Kathmandu area is organic waste from the households, but only 70% of this waste is composted (Kathmandu Valley Environmental Outlook 2007). This is why the promotion of composting is extremely important.

The major issue in waste management in general is the lack of facilities for waste management. The dumping sites are limited and the waste is now even used as a filling for low-laying spots in the rivers. Normally the small municipalities dump their waste along the banks of the Bagmati and Bisnumati rivers because the transportation of the waste away from the city is costly. There are some independent collectors that collect e.g. plastic or glass and sell it to the scrap shops, but that is not enough. The organizations need to do more because the Local Self-Governance Act 1999 moved the responsibility of waste management to the municipalities (Kathmandu Valley Environmental Outlook 2007).

#### 4.3.2 Energy and natural resources' conservation

NETIF has funded and being part of installation of 34 fuel-efficient stoves in the households and a wind turbine in Kathmandu Valley. Also organic farming has been taught in communities and NETIF has planted over 5000 plants along the KVCTT. The alternative energy, manufacturing of briquettes, has been taught to villagers and people have been encouraged to use these briquettes. Also an active education about the dangers of deforestation has been part of the project (NETIF 2011; Sharma & Bhatti 2010).



Picture 6: Wind turbine in Chisapani (Könönen 2008)

All the activities for the project are accomplished by taking care of the protection of the natural resources. As an example, NETIF build the constructions for incinerator and tourist shelters in metal, instead of wood. All the waste wood was used for maps, guidelines, signs and awareness boards for natural resource protection and placed along the trail. Also some recycled vegetable bags were distributed to the local entrepreneurs to encourage them to recycle and leave plastic bags (NETIF 2011; Sharma & Bhatti 2010).





Picture 7: Re-usable bags were introduced and waste wood is used for signs (Könönen 2008)

For natural resource conservation there were several workshops held about the topic. The workshops were about:

- - organic farming
- - mushroom farming
- - waste management issues
- - heritage conservation in sustainable tourism around Panauti Area
- - wild life conservation in Shivapuri National Park (Sharma & Bhatti 2010)

These workshops were held for the local people and local entrepreneurs to train them in the matter of nature protection (NETIF 2011). Especially in the National parks there are high risk of deforestation because local people cut the trees for firewood to produce alcohol (Könönen 2011b; Shestra 2011).

#### 4.3.3 Community Involvement plays the key role

One of the main goals to the project was community involvement and NETIF encourage and support this involvement actively throughout the project area. The local people have been involved in the constructing for the infrastructure and building and repairing the trail. Employment has also increased in the construction and transportation fields when the construction materials for the trail have been transported elsewhere. Local people have also provided home stay-accommodation services to tourists and this way benefitting from tourism. Also local communities manage the Village Garbage Management Fund and through the training programs by NETIF, the capability of the people has been enhanced. The training programs has been:

- “- Small Hotel and Lodge Management
- - Mushroom and off Seasonal Vegetable Cultivation
- - Local Guide Training
- - Folk Dance and Live Presentation
- - Corn Husk Training for doll making
- - Basic Vegetable Farming” (Sharma & Bhatti 2010)

Also some of the hoteliers have been trained to give all the clothe-waste to the doll makers, and managing the hygiene and sanitation (Sharma & Bhatti 2010). The target of the training programs has also been women and marginalized ethnic groups of the villages (NETIF 2011).



Picture 8: Training of doll making (Könönen 2008)

Many local stakeholders has done co-operation with NETIF during the project. Among the others, MOTCA has signed a Memorandum of understanding (MoU) for three years to support the improvement of the trail maintaining in good shape. The NTB has help with the sustainable tourism promotion and small funding in the events and seminars. Also the Dulikhel Municipality has signed a MoU with NETIF about waste management, gardening and tree planting. There are already 7 workers involved in the project (NETIF 2011; Sharma & Bhatti 2010)

#### 4.3.4 Addressing the needs of local people and the tourists

The active participation of the local people in the communities is necessary for sustainable development (Mowforth & Munt 2005). NETIF does the projects in the areas where the participation is active and different stakeholders are willing to be part of the actions. The

small tourism entrepreneurs, for instance small hotel and restaurant owners, are benefitting from the project direct. It serves job opportunities to many local people even outside of the tourism industry. The partners of NETIF, Village Development Committees (VDC), municipalities and Shivapuri national park are benefitting from the project indirect. (NETIF 2011; Könönen 2008)



Picture 9: Locals participating to the construction of the trail (Könönen 2008)

In Kathmandu Valley NETIF has repaired two community centers, which can be used for several purposes. The centers are places where community members- also women, dalits and youth- can implement tourism activities and learn through different trainings, like handicraft and entrepreneurship development. The aim of the centers is that the vulnerable groups in Nepal (women, janjati, dalits and muslims) will also see the opportunities and possibilities in tourism. With the high hierarchy in the caste system in Nepal, the centers are neutral places with human equality (Könönen 2008). For the tourists NETIF has constructed shelters and toilets along the trail and the trekking trail has been upgraded totally. There are also three landslide protection walls built in the landslide prone areas (Sharma & Bhatti 2010).



Picture 10: Better facilities for trekkers (Könönen 2008)

#### 4.3.5 Promotion, safety and awareness of the trail

For promoting the new trail, over 1000 brochures were published and three websites are regularly updated. Media has been interested about the area, and the trail is marketed in 10 major medias in Nepal. Also in the magazine of Suomen Latu ry, *Latu ja Polku*, the KVCTT was marketed and introduced in the summer 2008 to attract Finnish tourists to go trekking in Kathmandu Valley. One guidebook has been published on the trail and several hiking and biking events have been organized in the area. NETIF has also promoted the trail in conferences in Finland, Fiji, Kenya and Nepal. (NETIF 2011; Könönen 2008; Sharma & Bhatti 2010). Also the Finnish travel Agency Olympia has took the KVCTT part of to their package trips that they sell to Nepal (Könönen 2011b).



Picture 11: KVCTT in different medias (Könönen 2008)

The safety awareness has been introduced to local people and visitors' through brochures and information boards along the trekking trail. There are security information, the instructions for what-to-do and what-not-to-do, marked eating places, information about the drinking water and suggestions what to bring and carry while trekking in the valley (NETIF 2011).

The awareness of development of tourism and sustainable tourism has been taught in a local school in Sanjivani to students through a "Sanjivani Eco Club". Also the importance of ecology and sustainable development of tourism has been taught among local communities in the project area. All the stakeholders with the project are aware of the "Better Environment for Sustainable Tourism Development" and NETIF is actively supporting them to develop activities, events and campaigns (NETIF 2011).



Picture 12: Awareness board for using the rubbish bins (NETIF 2011)

## 5 The research: Sustainable tourism development in Nepal

The Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Bruntland, introduced the popularization of the concept of sustainable tourism already in 1987. In this so-called Bruntland's report the sustainable tourism is defined as "tourism that meets the needs of the current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Weaver 2001). In 2004 UNWTO introduced a conceptual definition of the sustainable tourism that is adopted by United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP):

"Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments. Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability" (UNEP 2004).

Incontrovertibly there are many different opinions and point of views about the term and the concept but the meaning can be recapped in three main aspects that have the origins from the term sustainable development. In general the definition of sustainable tourism emphasizes the ecological, economical and socio-cultural elements of tourism activity (Swarbrooke 1999). In 1992 in Rio de Janeiro in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the 'Earth Summit', the program for promoting sustainable development throughout the world was launched. This program is popularly referred to 'Agenda 21' and was adopted by the participating countries. The Agenda 21 is an action plan showing the basic principles that are required to achieve sustainability. In 1997 in New York at the 'Earth Summit 2' the tourism was recognized as an economic sector that needs to be developed sustainably (Holden, 2008).

In this research the three aspects, socio-cultural, ecological and economical, are studied by comparing them into the actions of the project in Kathmandu Valley. The chapters include captions of the interviews of Panu Könönen, the Project Manager from Suomen Latu, and Arun Shrestha, the President of NETIF, and literature related theory.

## 5.1 Research plan and method

The idea for the thesis, to research the *sustainable tourism in Nepal*, was idealistic and actual considering also the personal interests of the researcher. The concept of sustainability was familiar and it had been studied along the three-year studying period. The theme is extremely important to the tourism industry because the business is going towards sustainability; and more ecological ways for travelling are sought constantly. The competition in tourism field is difficult and sustainability is now the trend within the consumers and business providers. For researching and studying the concept of sustainable tourism will be useful and important for the future career in tourism industry.

To start planning any kind of research there are seven steps to be followed. This thesis research is done with the help of framework by Lodigo et al. (2006):

- Identifying the topic of the research.
- Finding literature about the subject and search for previous studies from the same topic. The research question is decided.
- Defining the role of researcher. Identifying how to become involved with the participants.
- Identifying the research strategy and data collecting method to be used. Clarify if the technique needs sampling.

- Selecting the participants purposefully and start collecting the data. Introducing thoroughly (who, what, why) the study to the environment where data is collected.
- Withdrawing everything (interviews, observation) together. Making notes after (and during) the data-collecting situation. Analyzing the data.
- Writing the results of the research. Applying the previous studies with the new findings. Suggesting improvement ideas and own perspective about the topic (Lodigo et al. 2006)

The research question is "How has the Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project (NTOEDP) reached the planned goals when it comes to sustainable development?" The focus in the research is to study how it is possible to create sustainable tourism in a certain destination. The project NTOEDP is studied phase to phase carefully to see has it reached the required goals. The outcomes of the project between years 2008 and 2010 are compared and analyzed. The main studies concentrate on the theory of rural tourism, ecotourism and sustainable tourism, which will support the observation that is done from the background materials and interviews. By observing the already studied results by Nepalese Social Welfare Council (SWC) in 2010 the research will show the validity of the thesis.

The background material is gathered from the case company Suomen Latury, NETIF, SWC and voluntary workers observation on site. The studied findings from the background material will be researched from three points of view of sustainability: from a socio-cultural perspective, from an ecological perspective and from an economical perspective. The future of the project, political issues in Nepal and the global warming are not researched and are delimited from this study. The research will only concentrate on the cases that have direct influence to NTOEDP and its planned goals.

#### 5.1.1 Research method in the thesis

The research method in the study is the qualitative data collecting method. This method is used normally in project-based researches. With the use of qualitative method the researcher can have more in-depth understanding to the studied case. The research seeks to find an answer why certain things happen or appear. Qualitative methods are used to search for empirical support for quantitative researches. The participants to the study are chosen carefully to be suitable for the research. Usually the data is collected by interviews and observations. The qualitative research is always non-hypothetical; the hypotheses are always done after the study (Lodigo et al. 2006). In this kind of research the ethnographic observation on site would have been better and more reliable for the results and analysis but with the lack of finance there was no possibility to travel to Nepal. Also the quantitative

research method with questionnaires was delimited because there were not many Internet users in the project area. Therefore doing the research from Finland, based on the already existing secondary data, the qualitative research method was more suitable.

The data analyzing techniques supports the reason why to use qualitative research method instead of quantitative method. However, there are several different ways to start analyzing the qualitative data, it is based on the research and applied to be suitable for the certain study. In this research the suitable technique is theory-based analyze. This is because it is based on previous studies and theories. It tests the theory that already exists from the topic and the results of the new research are compared to the previous results. Hypotheses are set to the study and they are verified through the empirical study (Walker, 2004). This thesis is the empirical study of the already researched results by the SWC. The study uses literature theory, primary data and secondary data. Because of the complexity of the thesis research another analysis technique is also used, the thematic analysis.

In the thematic analysis the data is analyzed by theme. These themes appear from the data and the researcher does not impose them. The data collecting and analyzing happens simultaneously and the thematic analysis is comparative analysis (Creswell 2005). While analyzing the project NTOEDP the three main themes appear regularly. They are the socio-cultural, economical and ecological themes of the topic. While collecting literature data and secondary data the analyzing of the project maintained in mind constantly. The literature data searching was done with the help of hypotheses, which were found during analysis. Also by comparing the outcomes and results of the project in 2010 to the beginning of the project in 2008 the thematic analysis technique was practical and useful tool to be used.

The qualitative research is based on two philosophy orientations the ontology and epistemology. Ontology is the philosophy that supports this thesis research to use the qualitative data collecting method. Ontology in brief is “the study of what there is” (Hofweber, 2011). The problems in ontology are that they deal with whether or not a certain thing exists. But it is usually taken to cover problems about the most general features and relations of the entities that do exist. There are four reasons to use ontology philosophy:

- the study of ontological commitment, for example what we or others are committed to
- the study of what there is
- the study of the most general features of what there is, and how the things there are relate to each other in the metaphysically most general ways



- the study of meta-ontology, for example saying what task it is that the discipline of ontology should aim to accomplish, if any, how the question it aims to answer should be understood, and with what methodology they can be answered (Hofweber, 2011).

The epistemology is normally related to critical thinking: "the study or a theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge especially with reference to its limits and validity" (Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary 2011). Epistemology is the study of knowledge and justified belief. It is about issues having to do with the creation and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas of inquiry (Steup 2010).

#### 5.1.2 Right research strategy supports the method

The research strategy in the thesis is case study with theme interviews. *Case study* is used when studying closely a particular individual, group, program or an event. Case study starts with the defining of the research problem or question. These are framed through experience, observation and review of similar research. After conducting the questions researcher chooses the persons that are observed or interviewed in the study. In a case study several different qualitative methods are used. There can be interviews, observation and even document examination during one case study. The results of the case study are normally presented very detailed (Lodigo et al. 2006)

Interview as a data collecting strategy is normally used when studying a certain project. The perspectives of the participants in the project are useful and they can offer more information about the project than any written data. Interviews are done individually and the aim is to collect the respondent's own ideas and thoughts about the topic. Questions are normally open-ended and leave 'room' for respondent's opinions. An interview is also chosen when a personal contact is important and the opportunities for interesting comments are wanted (Overview of Qualitative Methods and Analytic Techniques 2011).

There were two interviews made for the head participants of the project. The project manager of Suomen Latury, Mr Könönen, was interviewed personally in Helsinki, but the President of NETIF, Mr Shestra, was interviewed through email. The interviews were theme interviews with 14 open questions (see appendix 7). The questions were divided in the three themes of the concept of sustainability; in ecological, in economical and socio-cultural themes. Inside of these main themes the questions were again divided in four categories: Better tourism/sustainable tourism; decision-making and management; marketing and evaluation and future. The interview with Mr Könönen was recorded and the interview with Mr Shestra was written. The recorded interview was also transcribed after the meeting.

The results of the qualitative research are normally written in narrative style. There are different formats of narrative styles and in this thesis the results are written in traditional-scientific format. It means that the text is written in the traditional style of research reports. It includes introduction, review of literature, method, results and discussion sections. In the results and discussion sections the analysis of themes is included (Creswell 2005; Glesne 2006)

The reliability of this research is based on the experts involved in the project. The head of each NGO is familiar with the project phases and there is no need to think that the answers given in the interviews were incorrect. The fact that will decrease the reliability is that the interview situation varied. Interview with Mr. Könönen was conducted face-to-face while the interview with MR. Shestra was done by email. Language barrier gave challenges when analyzing the answers from Mr. Shestra that has affected to the reliability.

All the material given to this research is written and the reliability on those can be checked. There is also no need to doubt the reliability and validity of the secondary data; the only problem is that it might be subjective and this way affect to the validity of this thesis. The thesis research is mostly based on analyzing the secondary data and using several different sources in the theories and can be defined valid in that case. Also the interview questions were based on the theory of sustainable tourism, which increases the validity. By using theory based analyze it can be said that this kind of research is valid and reliable because it is based on honest use of written material.

## 5.2 Implementing sustainable tourism

According to a researcher Maclaren (1996), the sustainable tourism can be implemented by using a framework he created. The framework shows how to start a sustainable project and it is close to the plan that has been used in the NTOEDP. It is a six-phase process to be followed:

- 1) Define goals & objectives
  - Socio-cultural, economic, environmental
- 2) Establish appropriate planning & management framework
  - Include spatial, temporal & political parameters
  - Take into account broader intersectoral context
  - Identify appropriate tourism context
- 3) Select appropriate & feasible indicators
  - Establish measurement criteria
  - Identify appropriate benchmarks & thresholds

- 4) Measure & monitor indicators
  - Predetermined intervals or on a continuous basis?
- 5) Determine whether goals are being achieved
- 6) Implement remedial actions where necessary
  - May require reassessment of sustainable tourism goals

The first step to every project is to *define goals and objectives*; this is how the NTOEDP has been started. In the project plan (Könönen 2008) the goals are written: 1) *more environmental consideration in tourism sector and communities* 2) *More community involvement in tourism* 3) *more people benefitting from tourism* and the overall object *better environment for better tourism*.

After this the next step is *to establish appropriate planning and management framework*.

This has happened between Suomen Latury and NETIF already in the beginning of the project. The project manager from Suomen Latury has visited Nepal several times and negotiated with the project manager of NETIF, and vice versa. Next step is to *select appropriate and feasible indicators*. It has been conducted by surveys and researches on the project area and the local stakeholders and villagers have been gathered to become part of the project.

After this the *measuring and monitoring the indicators*- step has been taken care of. The project in the area is about to be continuing until year 2013 and NETIF is trying to develop a functional groundwork for the project to maintain the sustainable tourism in the area without any international funds. The stakeholders should be able to run the tourism industry and fund the construction work and other tourism related activities in the future.

After the project, there needs to be a phase where *to determine if the goals and objectives has been reached*. This conclusion is done by Suomen Latury, NETIF, SWC and this thesis research. The results will be presented and analyzed in the chapter six. After the measurement of how the project has been succeeded the *remedial actions are implemented where necessary*. The project received an extra funding from the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and will continue till the year 2013. In this research the actions where the project has not succeeded will be pointed out to help the ongoing project to do the remedial actions.

### 5.3 How is the ecological sustainability taking care of in NTOEDP?

The ecological sustainability is normally defined as the need to avoid and minimize the environmental impact of tourism activities (Mowfort & Munt 2005). As discussed before in the chapter 3, the definition is similar to the concept of ecotourism. This is why ecotourism itself

is sometimes referred to sustainable tourism because it considers also the wellbeing of local people (Newsome et al. 2002). The false of this is, that the concept of ecotourism does not pay attention to the economical aspects and sometimes it can be very unsustainable way of running tourism activities in the area. There are cases where ecotourism has been used as marketing tool and in reality it often means introducing unsustainable ways of tourism into fragile areas by having limited regard to the environment and local communities (Sinha 2006).

The natural environment is a vital resource for tourism. It is important to the government to put a high priority to preserve and enhance the natural environment. While the level of tourism grows, the resource use threatens to become unsustainable. And with a ruined physical environment the destination is in danger to lose its original attraction. There are researches about several different kinds of negative impacts of tourism that the decision makers should consider while implementing tourism development and operational activities. Nevertheless, the most common negative impacts are, amongst the many others:

- Threat to eco-system and biodiversity- for example loss of wildlife and rare species
- Disruption of coasts- for example shoreline erosion and pollution of the water
- Deforestation- for example loss of forest for fuel wood, which impacts to soil and water quality and reduces forest products
- Water overuse- for example in tourism activities, like swimming pools
- Urban problems- for example congestion and overcrowding, air and noise pollution
- Exacerbate climate change- for example fossil fuel energy consumption
- Unsustainable and discriminatory resource use- for example energy and water overuse, excessive production of waste (Sinha 2006).

One important method of assessing environmental impact and sustainability is the calculation of carrying capacity (CC) (Maldonado et al. 1992). CC has its origins in the last century when concerns were being expressed over the levels of wildlife population that could be supported by the environment (Holden 2008). Nowadays the concept has been transferred to tourism and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines it as “the maximum number of people that may visit the tourist destination without causing destruction of the physical, economic and socio-cultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors’ satisfaction” (UNWTO 1992). It is also mentioned that CC limits can be difficult to measure, because they are assessed by human judgments. Nevertheless, they are necessary to planning for tourism and recreation (UNWTO 1992).

It is evident that there are different types of calculation capacities and O'Reilly already in 1986 identified four different types of CC being relevant to the tourism. They are economic CC, psychological CC, environmental CC and social CC. The economical CC means "the extent of the dependency of the economy upon tourism". The psychological CC means "the expressed level of visitor satisfaction associated with the destination". The environmental CC means "the extent and degree of impacts for tourism upon the physical environment" and the social CC means "the reaction of the local community to tourism" (O'Reilly 1986). These four types are dependent of each other but it could be possible to exceed the threshold limit of one capacity type for a limited amount of time. Even without having harmful effect upon another type. But setting capacity limits across economic, environmental and social areas will certainly involve judgments. For example, it could be acceptable for decision makers to exceed the cultural and environmental CC limits to maximize economical benefits even though the long-term sustainability of such decision is questionable (Mowfort & Munt 2005).

To quantify a capacity in a certain destination is very problematic because it is influenced by variety of factors. These factors are, among the others, fragility of the landscape to development and change; the number of visitors, the types of tourists and their behavior; the degree of emphasis placed on the environmental education of tourists and local people; and the level of organization of destination management (Mowfort & Munt 2005). When asking about the carrying capacity calculation in the project area in Nepal the answer was unfortunate. The calculations in a scientific ways were not done because it was difficult to measure the capacity of each area. Mr. Könönen (2011b) mentioned that there are some statistics about the visitors in Shivapuri National Park, and the amount of tourists has doubled in 2008 to 2010. The pressure of human flow is highest in that park (Könönen 2011b).

The reason for not doing the calculation of CC was that the ringleaders were more concentrated on the present situation, like the lack of waste management, the supply chain and work force. Different hotels and lodges had different standards and they did not know how to become more ecological. This is why the project started with really basic things. The main idea was to create a tourism product where people visit keeping the base of the product sustainable. Tourists, hoteliers and local people are behaving more sustainable and understand for example how to build the lodges more ecologically and concentrate on waste management. Könönen (2011b) still thinks that there need to be more sustainable concepts still to keep the long-term development ongoing. The project targets are now planned only for five years, because of the funding, which is not that sustainable in the long run (Könönen 2011b; Shestra 2011).

When thinking a general ecological way of doing business in tourism, or any other industry, the supply chain is important. As a researcher the seasonality in food products and origin of

products occurred in mind in NTOEDP. The interviewed persons were asked about the use of seasonality in food products and where do the products come from; are they local or transported elsewhere. Könönen (2011b) described that seasonality was not taken care of enough. The wealthier hotels do import off-seasonal products from the Kathmandu City or India. Luckily some budget hotels do not have the financial ability to import products elsewhere and do use local seasonal food products and other materials. Some five star hotels offer all year round the same food products ignoring whether they are seasoned or not.

When it comes to the transportation of products the main reason, according to Shestra (2011), is that the quality of products varies between the local suppliers and the suppliers in the Kathmandu City. Apparently hoteliers prefer the high quality products more. But in case of the harvest failing in the city they need to satisfy with the lower quality products from the local supplier. Nevertheless, all the imported products do not come further than other parts of Nepal or India. Fortunately NETIF has seen this as a problem and is strongly urging for the use of local products with giving different capacity building training programs to the locals.

The overall object for the project is *Better environment for better tourism*. The meaning of *better tourism* was explained in the interviews with the concept of sustainable tourism. Könönen (2011b) argues that better in the project goal means sustainable. And in this case it is tourism that gives opportunities for villagers and people who cannot automatically participate in tourism business. The idea is that the tourism will help the villagers but unfortunately it is not just positive because there are the environmental issues, the negative impacts of tourism, which were discussed earlier. This is obviously a dilemma that is expected to solve during the project. According to Shestra (2011), the object means to promote present tourism paradigm towards socially responsible, ecologically friendly and economically viable tourism management for the sustainable tourism development. Better tourism means creating responsible tourism that does not reduce the quality of the visitors' experience, and also increases community involvement in tourism with shared benefits.

To considering the two points of views of sustainable tourism the goal of the project was argued. In the interview it was asked that, "which one is the aim of the project; *sustainability of tourism* or *tourism sustainability*?" The answers varied from each other's. Shestra (2011) said that it is the sustainability of tourism, where Könönen (2011b) thought that tourism sustainability is the aim in the long run. It was explained that one of the project goals is to emphasize tourism businesses to maintain there in the future. Idea is that it should not harm the nature and should minimize the effect of negative impacts of tourism. The project started from the sustainability of tourism and is now moving to the tourism sustainability. In the chronological order, starting from the basics to reach the main goal.

#### 5.4 Socio-cultural sustainability in the project

To explain the concept of socio-cultural sustainability the two dimensions are introduced separately. Social sustainability refers to the capability of a community, local or national, to adopt inputs. These inputs can be for short or long periods of time and they need to be in function without creating a social disharmony while achieving the results. In case of still creating disharmony the functions must be adopted to alleviate the harms. The challenge to sustain the social wellbeing occurs when tourism increases differences between the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of tourism. It can also generate spatial ghettos either by tourists themselves or those excluded from tourism and create social divisions between the server and served, because of tourist development e.g. resorts or enclaves (Mowforth & Munt 2005).

One possibility of trying to avoid the effect of the different divisions to a point where they can be executed, Clark (1990) has introduced a possibility to calculate also the social CC of the community. This calculation would measure the level at which tourist activity becomes a cause of social unrest or tourist discomfort. These calculations are difficult to measure but can be executed to create a proposal of sustainable development and 'objective' quantify.

The cultural sustainability refers to the capability of people to maintain or adapt elements of their culture to differentiate them from others. Even though the societies can more easily stay in function in social harmony, despite the effects of changes brought by tourists, the culture is more fragile for these changes. The visitors with different habits, customs, styles and means are threat to the local means of interaction, style of life, customs and traditions. The cultural influences from the visitors are unavoidable and can be harmful. Evidently this is not all negative because culture is also dynamic feature of human life among the society or economy. But it needs to be controlled in a way that the influences does not harm and distort the original local culture and the responsible behavior should be emphasized for tourists to achieve sustainable tourism (Mowforth & Munt 2005). Unfortunately the cultural impacts and changes are seen only in the long run and are therefore they are difficult to measure (Pratt 1992).

In the study of the project the decision-making and community involvement was researched. The idea was to investigate if these functions are thought carefully in the long run to maintain the socio-cultural sustainability. By Stewart and Hams (1991) the commitment of local communities is the key to sustainable development. The requirements of the sustainable development cannot simply be imposed and the active participation of the local communities is needed. Also to ensure the participation of locals in planning and development, the possibility of achieving more local benefits from tourisms is higher. The employment, income

and establishing more tourism related enterprises are the main benefits (Sinha 2006). In the interview the involvement and the voluntarism of the locals gained interest because there have been cases where government has pushed and forced communities or societies to be involved to a project to receive a foreign funding. Evidently these kinds of ways have never achieved the sustainability in the long run (George et al. 2009). There were two questions about the topic “how are the local communities involved to tourism business and has it happened voluntarily?” and “in what ways are the local communities involved to decision-making and are the women involved to this?”

According to both parties, Suomen Latu ry and NETIF, the involvement of local communities has happened voluntarily. But the difference between the answers by Könönen and Shestra varies in the community involvement. Shestra (2011) explains that most of the communities along the project area are being part of tourism business a lot. They have opened teahouses, hotels, lodges, and resorts and involved to vegetable farming, clean-up campaigns, waste management and other tourism related matters. With Könönen (2011b) the answer introduced more thoughtful points of view. When starting the project in 2008 with the five different communities the head of different Village Development Committees (VDC), people from women’s self help clubs and several tourism stakeholder were gathered to hear about NTOEDP. The feedback was collected and the reality of the development projects occurred. There have been several different projects in the villages with similar intention. Normally during a foreign funded project a school or hospital has been built and when the project stops, in other words the finance stops, the maintaining of the schools and hospitals is impossible. There is no money left for salaries or construction. People of the villages have become cynical because they have not seen the benefit coming out of the projects in the last 50 years (Könönen 2011b).

What comes to the decision-making and women the situation is better. One of the aims in the project is also to emphasize women’s rights. There are women’s clubs and some women are always part either in the village level or district level in the decision-making. Even in the Nagargot tourism development committee there are 2-3 women in the board. Also many women are actively taking part of the tourism business by running lodges, raising cattle and cleaning the trekking trails (Könönen 2011b; Shestra 2011). When the managing causes problems in the socio-economic activities the locals have been solving the problems with participatory approach. The communities have developed a sense of institutional efforts and have registered their forum as a legal entity. In case of the issues rise on the use of nature park resources and the responsibility of the environmental conservation, the decisions need to be made with the park authority. The common interest has to match for both of the parties (Shestra 2011).



The harmful fact of the decision-making is that the Dalit-people are not in the committees and cannot take part of the decisions. This is because of the caste system in Nepal, which is hard to break and is not the duty for Suomen Latu ry or NETIF to do. Nevertheless, the project tries to emphasize the Dalits to be more active in the projects, not as being the target of it, but being part of the decision-making. In the caste system in Hindi the Dalits are in the bottom and they have their own communities. There are at least 10 percent of Dalits in the project area but Könönen (2011b) could not give a specific number because there are no statistics about that. It is very important to women and minorities to be part of decision-making and give them a louder voice in policy making because they are vital part of the community who are affected directly or indirectly by tourism (Sharpley & Tefler 2002). Without giving these people the right to be part in decision-making their positions become progressively irrelative to tourism and their work becomes even more marginalized (Timothy 2000).

### 5.5 Economical sustainability in the project

The economical sustainability refers to a level of economic achieve from the tourism activity. There are two important factors to be taken under consideration when thinking the economical sustainability. The economy, generally known as finance, needs to be sufficient to cover the costs of any particular measures taken to cater for tourist by alleviating the effects of the tourists' presence. Or the economy needs to be enough to offer an appropriate income to the inconvenience caused to the visited community without violating any of the other conditions, or it can refer to both cases (Mowforth & Munt 2005).

The previous definition can give a misleading argument that the two aspects of sustainability are being 'bought off'. In other words, despite how much damage could be done culturally, socially or environmentally, it is seem to be acceptable if the economical profitability of the plan is great enough to cover over the damages. This is not the case because it could be argued that economical sustainability is not an aspect that competes with the other aspects of sustainability. It can be seen as equal and important element with its own rights. Still it does not reduce the significance, level of acceptance or tolerance of the other aspects. Also it does not blur the importance of the contextual issue of power over tourist activities. But still the question of who gains financially and who loses often sets the power and control issue in more immediate focus than all other aspects of sustainability (Mowforth & Munt 2005).

Tourism can create four different types of local cash income. It generates wages from the formal employment and salary from selling products, services or casual labor. It also gains the dividends and profits from locally owned enterprises and creates collective income from

community run enterprise. All the profits from a private sector partnership and land rental paid by an investor gives income to the community. The negative side of this is that even though the waged employees can be able to improve the insecurity of a household, it can be only available for minority of people and not to the poorest. Luckily, the casual salary from selling goods and services can be small but more widely spread and may be enough for a community to cover school fee for one or more children. The local participation to tourism can be divided into three segments; the formal sector, such as hotels; the informal sector, such as trade; and the secondary enterprises that are related to tourism, such as food retail and telecommunications (Sinha 2006).

According to Shah & Gupta (2000), it is suggested that in the formal sector the accommodation for tourists in the destination can be simple as home stays with lodges, guesthouses and hotels and even some can include foreign companies. But when the foreign luxury hotels start to grow the situation becomes more complex with international investors beginning to play more dominant role. The use of small-scale and locally owned businesses advances sustainable tourism because the small-scale enterprises are considered more harmless than large-scale developments. This is because they put less stress on cultural and natural environments and give more direct economic benefits for local community (Long & Wall 1995). Also with the use of small-scale services the local participation is much more higher level than in the destination with large-scale services (Cater 1995). The small-scale establishments are expected to keep control of decision-making in local hands and reduce isolation of native people from their land, which has happened in many destinations with the development of external controlled mass tourism (Sharpley & Tefler 2002).

In the case of employment the data is scattered and collection is not very systematic. There are cases where the high-status jobs in resorts go to non-locals, emigrants or foreign-trained nationals. So in the less established areas they have more local staff than in the luxury resorts in other areas. Therefore, in the informal sector there are much more opportunities to the poor locals to be employed, and especially for women. This sector provides activities like vending, running stalls and collecting fuel wood. The income can be significant but unreliable because it is often seasonal work (Mowforth & Munt 2005). Nevertheless, it can provide very welcomed enhance to the income of the poor. According to the research by Overseas Development Institute (ODI), in 2000 the best way of earning in tourism industry is to the causal labor and self-employment. This tends to emphasize the entrepreneurial spirit of village communities. The villagers are tending to pull together an income from a diverse variety of sources. The causal labor includes porters, cooks, guides, cleaners and caterer for instance. In Nepal these is a well-organized labor market to employ porters, cooks and guides for seasonal basis (Shah & Gupta 2000).

The government participation towards sustainable tourism in many cases has been too passive to ensure the progress of it. The governments need to be more engaged and active at all levels, from the international negotiations to development of tourism policy and the execution of key regulation at national and local levels. A study for the European Union (2002) gave useful recommendations for governments to take action in the support of sustainable tourism. In short it refers to the Agenda 21 and recommends “production of regional and national tourism strategies, as well as development and exchange of knowledge through regional networks on sustainable tourism, engaging stakeholders as well as government ministries” (European Union 2002).

Especially in the project area in Kathmandu Valley, where the poverty and underdevelopment are problems, the economic benefits to be gained from ecotourism needs a proper protection of the nature areas. And without a strict government control over the development the cycle of development will not be any different from the other forms of tourism, and the ecotourism label cannot be used as a marketing tool for the poor rural areas (Holden 2000). The strict control may help to protect the environment to keep the area attracting tourists. Managing a place with major negative impacts for nature from tourism the tourists will not want to visit the place and the area suffers the loss of economy in tourism industry (Sharpley & Telfer 2002).

In the interview the government participation to the project was asked. According to Könönen (2011b), tourism is the target area of the government in Nepal. The government is enthusiastic about tourism and they have put emphasize on tourism. The year 2011 is a year of tourism and they try to have over 1 million visitors to Nepal through this campaign. Unfortunately the government is totally independent on foreign aid and they cannot support all the projects that are in progress in Nepal. They are not very active with NTOEDP either but trying to address the basic needs for the villagers. NETIF gets their funding from Finland through Suomen Latu ry and ICIMOD, another Finnish organization, which has nothing to do with NTOEDP. Most of the NGOs in Nepal rely only on foreign support. Luckily the local government bodies, Village Development Committees (VDC), District Development Committees (DDC) and Municipalities, are involved with NETIF in tourism planning, solving the waste problems and environmental conservation issues. They settle some small funds in different activities of NETIF as well as providing human resources for technical matters. They are also helping in monitoring the project activities with supportive roles (Shestra 2011).

The SWC in Nepal has been trying to improve the government participation for the last two years. SWC reports to government and keep them up-to-date of the real situation in the project destinations. It also tries to maintain the projects to be sustainable; the lack of finance from the government is increasing the problem (Könönen 2011b). However, NETIF has

signed the MoU with the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation. Under this agreement the Ministry will construct a proper trekking trail wherever it is needed along the KVCTT. The main objectives for both of the parties are to develop and promote 200 kilometers long cultural trekking trail around the Kathmandu valley in near future (Shestra 2011).

There are no international companies in the project area but in the other areas there are plenty. Könönen (2011b) mentions, when asking how the income or profit of the international companies from tourism is shared with the local communities, that most of the companies are not funding the local communities at all. They are basically stealing the market from the locals. But luckily there are some companies that have been selling their shares to Nepalese, which makes the locals partly owners of the enterprises. In one case that Könönen knows, there is no money seen in the pocket of Nepalese shareholders. The company has just avoided taxes to make loss instead of profit. According to Shestra (2011), the international companies tend to sub-contract the local companies that provide local services. It is estimated that around 60% of the cost of a package booked with a foreign operator will be left in the country of origin. Many companies that offer treks in Nepal offer short treks or parts of their itineraries in the KVCTT.

To have only local community products and services in the project area, the economical benefit from tourism is still not shared in every case. Typically there are family-run lodges, restaurants, teahouses and hotels and the individuals, the entrepreneurs, are benefitting direct from the service themselves. But having community-owned lodges the profit is shared between the community. Also some Ladies clubs have started to sell handicrafts, candles and other tourism souvenir products and they are sharing the costs and income inside the organization (Könönen 2011b). But to have a functional system for community shared benefit the management needs to be proper. The care is needed for not letting the private individuals jeopardize community efforts by undercutting prices, offering alternatives or reduce the community benefit of tourism. This way it may never reach the poorest sector of the community. Good management and very strong community support for the project is needed to ensure that the private individuals are not only seeking personal gain and cannot operate with the rest of the community. This has seen to work in Baskharka, Myagdi district, where the community refused to allow a private entrepreneur to open a lodge that would be in direct competition with the community lodge. Evidently it does not seem to work another places, where a private lodge has been set up close to a community lodge because there is no village with community pressure to restrict it (Shestra 2011).

The marketing is vital for the project and destination to gain economical profit. It gives visibility and information to attract visitors to the destination. This is why the marketing is studied within the case of economic sustainability. The marketing of the KVCTT is done

mostly in Nepal for trekking agencies, travel agencies, hotels and NGOs by brochures, posters and promotional events. NETIF also organizes promotional events for students, embassies and emigrants. The use of social media and Internet has been important tools to inform the project as a whole. Also some guidebooks of Nepal have wrote about KVCTT and Suomen Latury is doing the promotion in Finland to their association members and consumers (Könönen 2011b; Shestra 2011).

Olympia travel agency in Finland offers trekking trips to Shivapuri. The marketing segment is the elderly people who have time and money to travel. Also it is important that the visitors are interested on trekking, culture and nature; Kathmandu Valley is not a sea & sun-destination. Evidently it is not a mass tourism site either and the promotion is focused to a smaller segment. This is why KVCTT is only promoted in Suomen Latury websites and magazines and through Olympia travel agency. It would not be profitable to do the marketing more broaden (Könönen 2011b; Shestra 2011) and also the trekkers tend to be more aware of nature conservation and could be more environmental friendly. Nevertheless, it does not mean that 'other' tourists are unaware and it is normally related to the culture and nationality. Shestra (2011) thinks that Scandinavian, Canadian and Northern European in general are more conscious of the environment protection than people from India or Israel for instance. There is no evidence or study about the case and Shestra (2011) speaks from his own experiences.

To conclude the research based on the interviews it is interesting to see the difference and different point of views about the topics between NETIF and Suomen Latury. Mr Könönen sees the project and the effects in the long run for the future when Mr Shestra is only concentrating on the present situation. As a researcher I can reflect that is the cultural difference between developed and developing countries. In the western culture it is more normal to look far to the future, to think how things effect to the future and plan things systematically. This could be because of the high GDP and income that gives the possibilities and hope for future. In the developing countries it is more important to concentrate on the present because the death rate is extremely high and life expectancy is low; there is 'no need' to think to the future if you cannot be there to see it. As a researcher I am exaggerating the difference but this view gives a better understanding on the cultural differences and worldview. Everyone is trying to improve the present that the future would be better but the attitudes, values and way of living is different in different cultures. There is no right or wrong way in these matters, just differences.

## 6 The analysis of Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project

The results and analysis of the project is based on observation by The Social Welfare Council

(SWC), the observation by volunteer workers in Nepal, different statistics and interviews. The analyzing process was challenging because of the lack of relevant statistics and information. The existing material for the research was 'poor' and some of the materials were only available in Nepalese. One major issue was the cultural differences between Nepal and Finland and the overall state of the project was difficult to perceive. Nevertheless, the analysis was conducted but with narrow perspective to the subject. Overall the project outcome was not easy to measure.

On the field observation at the end of 2010, there were two members of SWC, Mr Ram Sharma- Acting Deputy Director and Mr Prakash Bhatti -Administration Assistant, who have collected the information for the evaluation. The observation was done in five districts of the project site throughout Bhaktapur and Kavre. These areas were selected together with NETIF on a sampling basis to do the observation. The goals for the observation were:

- To analyze the progress of the project (NTOEDP)
- To study and analyze the change brought about by the project and its effectiveness and achievements.
- To study and analyze the contribution made by the project in achieving its target and outcomes.
- Field survey and analysis of the implementation strategies and process.
- To analyze aspects of continuation, sustainability (financial and social) and cost effectiveness.
- To explore and analyze the difficulties/obstacles faced and offer resolutions.
- To analyze the aspect of coordination and partnership among the project management, organization and local line agencies
- To analyze the financial aspect (Program cost, admin cost, financial regularities, discipline and transparency)
- To analyze the uses and documentation status of the expandable and non-expandable properties/materials of the project.
- To study and describe the situation of renewal and auditing, process.
- To study the regulations and laws to maintain financial discipline of the organization (Sharma & Bhatti 2010).

In their report SWC was not able to analyze all the goals. It was challenging to study the regulation and analyze the uses and documentation status of the expandable and non-expandable properties/materials of the project. Also the sustainability of the project was not studied properly. SWC suggested NETIF to put more focus on the sustainability but did not show any concrete results of how the project is lacking the sustainability. All of these issues also created even more challenge to this thesis research.

In Nagarkot the SWC team visited Nagarkot Naldum Tourism Development Committee (NNTDC) and held discussions with committee members. The team observed the Community Center, fund boxes, trekking trail, tourist shelters, information boards and waste bins. Also the observation of the mushroom production, briquette manufacturing, gardening, stairway development and tree plantation was executed. The team had meetings and discussions with local partner organizations, Dhulikhel Development Committee, Dhulikhel Chambers of Commerce, Gauri Shanker Cultural Group and Sanjivani Eco Club. The team discussed with the co-operation of NETIF and NNTDC to discover if they are satisfied with NETIF's work and contribution and how the NETIF fund has been given and managed by NNTDC (Sharma & Bhatti 2010).

In Dhulikhel the team met with the local women's group and discussed about the mushroom farming trainings provided to the women to ascertain what level of support and benefit has been achieved by NETIF. In Kavre the team met with Kavre Guide Association in regards to the role of NETIF played in setting up and promoting the association. SWC members observed the cultural dance program, the Gauri Shankar Cultural Dance group, which has been promoted by NETIF. They have formatted, trained and promoted the dance group and now the group is a self-sustaining business (Sharma & Bhatti 2010).

NETIF does its social audit with the different stakeholders and beneficiaries groups. This is to analyze how they work with all stakeholders throughout the project area and to help improve networking, alliance building and communication. Also by doing the social audit NETIF can point strengths and weakness within the project and identify which local groups and areas require more focus. The budget of NETIF is also decided with the local stakeholders. All spending is decided through local community level meetings and recommendations. Through these meetings the local community members then put forward a proposal to NETIF for funds for the required project or activity (Sharma & Bhatti 2010).

### 6.1 Achieved actions

In 2008 NETIF and Suomen Latu ry created a plan of certain activities to be achieved by the end of the project. The main actions have been introduced in chapter 4 and now they are studied in the grass root level. The achievements are measured by the observation of SWC, interviews with commissioner representatives and voluntary workers observation.

In their field study SWC presenters received positive answers from the co-operation committee in Nagargot. NNTDC was pleased with the working alliance with NETIF and they have seen the improvements in the area because of the NTOEDP. The visitor numbers has been increased, better waste management and coordination between local people and

hoteliers have improved. Also the construction of the local tourist information centre, which acts as local community house, NNTDC office, Nagarkot Guide Association Office and NETIF's local office, has helped the community. The fund boxes kept in more than 30 hotels throughout Nagarkot and Dhulikhel have created extra funds for NNDTC (Sharma & Bhatti 2010).

The mushroom farming in Dhulikhel also received positive outcome. NETIF has supported the women undertaking the mushroom farming with the specialist mushroom consultant with regular visits. The Guide Association in Kavre was happy with the level of support, training and guidance given by NETIF. The association is now registered organization with the help of NETIF and they have been able to be involved in NETIF's promotional programs like World Tourism Day Hiking program from Nagarkot to Dhulikhel, Orange Blossom Hike and other events requiring local guides (Sharma & Bhatti 2010).

In 2009 the value of euro did increase when in the year 2010 the value decreased; mainly because of the financial crisis in the world. Because of this not all the actions were able to accomplish when planned. But in the year 2009 the achievements have exceeded the target considerably and it compensates the loss from the year 2010 (Sharma & Bhatti 2010). When comparing the planned activities to the actual achievements, the results do not vary much. Based on the figure 3 the planning and managing the project has been effective and profitable. In the figure the number of actions are presented yearly. In the planning phase 2008 the target amount of different activities has been set and SWC has observed the actual achievements on the field in 2010.



Year	Activities	Target	Achievement
2009	Trainings	8	8
2010	Trainings	8	6
2009	Workshop	2	3
2010	Workshop	2	0
2009	Tourist Shelter	4	7
2010	Tourist Shelter	4	5
2009	Toilet	2	1
2010	Toilet	1	2
2009	Waste Bin		200
2010	Waste Bin		400
2009	Maintenance trail		6000 m
2010	Maintenance trail		6000m
2009	Wooden signs	60	60
2010	Wooden signs	100	150
2009	Tree plantation	5000	5000+
2010	Tree plantation	2000	2000+
2009	Clean up campaign	4	4
2010	Clean up campaign	4	10

Figure 3: Chart of activities and achievements

Adding to the actions seen in the figure, there were three other actions that were already done in 2009. There were 10 incinerators built in 2009 when the planned number was 8. One entrance gate was built which undercut the target by one; the planned goal was to build two gates. Also two community centers were established in 2009 even though the planned goal was four centers (Sharma & Bhatti 2010). According to Könönen (2011b), the SWC report only gives a subjective vision because the council was not present in the beginning of the project in 2008. They do not have any concrete idea where to compare; they only focus on the numerical information by the project plan and gives their report based on those. This creates difficulties to measure the goals of the project.

Könönen (2011b) does his own observation twice a year and he has seen the improvements in the project area. The infrastructure of the trekking trail is improved and now the KVCTT is a tourism product with shelters, toilets and signs. These have helped tourists, trekking agencies and local people to enjoy the nature. Also the enhanced co-operation between hoteliers and communities has improved the waste management and employment in the community (Könönen 2011b). According to NETIF's observation, already 60% of the villagers are using the rubbish bins instead of throwing the waste to the nature (Shestra 2011). Over 40% of the villagers has been started their own micro enterprise with the help of trainings and workshops held during the project. There has been a free flow of information among the actors of tourism development because of the various workshops, meetings and trainings that have

increased the co-operation and networking among the stakeholders (Könönen 2011b; Shestra 2011).

According to tourism statistics by MOCTA (2010), the visitor number in National Parks has increased over 50%. In Shivapuri National Parks the amount of visitors increased from over 76 600 to over 167 800 between the years 2008 and 2010. This might be because of NTOEDP and the promotional activities in the area by NETIF. Also many locals in Shivapuri National park have constructed lodges and turned their homes to guesthouses to attract tourists and gain revenue. In general the environmental conservation has been receiving more focus from the local villagers and stakeholders during the project. The farmers have started growing organic vegetables instead of harming the nature with toxics. Based on interviews by NETIF on site, the tourism stakeholders are taking more initiative to contribute their responsibilities towards their community (Könönen 2011b; Shestra 2011).

The project has been successful when concentrating for the practical actions and their achievements. All the actions have been done even the target amount was not achieved in every case. The planning and management of the actions has been proper and profitable. But most of the actions presented and planned were only focusing on the constructing and maintenance of the track; towards the ecological sustainability. Only workshops and trainings were focusing more to the community involvement and this way to the socio-cultural and economical sustainability. Evidently, all the actions will effect to every aspects of sustainability but the lack of focus in the economical and socio-cultural aspects will effect to the overall succeeding of the project by the year 2010. In the following the three main goals are studied and analyzed.

## 6.2 1<sup>st</sup> goal: More environmental consideration in tourism sector and communities

In this category the waste management and nature protection in the project area is on focus. There have been improvements from the 2008 to 2010 in recycling, waste disposal and composting. The incinerators along the KVCTT have helped in the waste disposal but there are negative effects to the nature. Incinerators convert waste materials into gas, heat, ash and steam. Burning in an incinerator is not always flawless and there have been concerns about micro-pollutants in gaseous emissions from incinerator masses. Specific concern has focused on some very tenacious organics such as dioxins which may be formed within the incinerator and which may have severe environmental consequences in the area close to the incinerator. On the other hand, this method produces heat that can be used as energy (Greenwall 2011) but placing the incinerators in the forest outside of villages there is no benefit. In the project area the incinerators are located in the forests along the track as well as next to the villages. Unfortunately, there is no information showing that is the heat used

as an alternative energy or not. With the use of already existing wind power this alternative energy would be added to the different alternative energy sources in the project area.

Nepalese have a problem with alcohol. Illegal alcohol is normally produced in National parks where the producers can easily cut firewood (Könönen 2011b). This is causing deforestation and harming the nature. During the project the briquettes have been introduced and there has been briquette-making courses for over 80 local entrepreneurs in Dhulikhel, Chisapani, Nagarkot and Mulkharka (Sharma & Bhatti 2010). The problem still is that the producers do not care about the nature because their life is depending on the manufacturing. Without proper awareness the entrepreneurs do not understand the effect that cutting trees will eventually stop the business. While using the briquettes the business would maintain and stay sustainable. The government of Nepal is weak in front of this issue and only by increasing awareness the tree cutting could be decreased (Könönen 2011b). This is one of the main problems in Nepal; the government support is too low to maintain the tourism in the area in the long run. Without proper support and control, the national parks will be destroyed and tourists are no longer attracted to the destination.

According to an observation and interviews done by two Finnish voluntary workers, the waste management is still the biggest issue in the project area. The observation was done in April 2010 so the situation may have been improved by the end of 2010. Nevertheless, it is remarkable to mention their findings during the observation. Even though there are over 600 waste bins placed to the area they are not located relevantly. There were many bins in the villages but only few in along the trail and in the tourist shelters. In the picnic spots in Chisapani and Shivapuri National park there were no trash bins or too small bins in the disposal site and people were throwing the trash to the nature. One reason for this was the unsuccessful co-operation between NETIF and National park management. Also many respondents, especially farmers, were asking for more training for waste management and composting (Metsälampi & Kauppinen 2010).

In the observation of SWC the findings showed some improvements. There were trash bins located throughout the trail but the observation was only done in five districts of the trail when the voluntary workers investigated almost the whole track: from Sundarijal via Mulkharka and Chisapani to Nagarkot and from Nagarkot to Dhulikhel, Namobuddha and Panauti. Voluntary workers find out that the main reason for not having that many trash bins along the trail outside the villages was that there were no one to take care of them. Only in the villages there were people hired to do waste disposal and outside area was lacking maintenance. Even though there are people hired to do maintenance of the track the waste disposal was not part of their work tasks (Metsälampi & Kauppinen 2010; Sharma & Bhatti 2010). The co-operation and MoU with Dhulikhel Municipality is focusing on waste

management, gardening and tree plantation in the business area of Dhulikel. There are seven workers employed but the work field is only in the village. This is evidently a case where the project would need some improvement; more people should be hired to collect the trashes.

In April 2010 there were no facilities next to the tourists shelters, which made them quite useless. SWC reports that the public toilets have been constructed but voluntary workers noticed the problem also in the maintenance of the toilets (Metsälampi & Kauppinen 2010; Sharma & Bhatti 2010). While observing the trekking maps only few public toilets were pointed and it seemed that there were not enough toilets along the 72 kilometers long trekking trail. Based on the actions done during the project only three toilets were built or constructed. This is evidently not enough in such a long area where the distances of the villages are quite long. Human waste in the area is increasing and makes the destination unpleasant to visit.

Another weakness about the waste management was the lack of awareness signs. Because of not having trash bins along the trail the signs could point out where to take the trashes. Also clearer instructions about waste disposal as well as information about the community's efforts to reduce the amount of waste would increase the awareness of the trekkers and this way enhance the environmental consideration. Especially Nepalese tourists do not understand the effect of their action while throwing trashes to the nature. Also by April 2010 there were no awareness signs about the flora and fauna, wildlife and culture of the area. By increasing the awareness in these fields too might help visitors to understand the importance of the nature conservation (Metsälampi & Kauppinen 2010).

During the observation and interviews along the trail the voluntary workers noticed that almost everyone mentioned the improvement of waste management with the content of NETIF. For many locals the project and NETIF was equal to the waste management issues. Also SWC reported that many local stakeholders did not know the exact project activities and the waste management was clearly the most known activity along the project. Even though the waste management was known the villagers were still asking for more awareness about it (Metsälampi & Kauppinen 2010; Sharma & Bhatti 2010). As discussed in the previous chapter waste management was the biggest issue and this is why the project has been focusing and promoting environmental conservation activities more than other activities. According to NETIF, the awareness has improved the situation of tree cutting in Shivapuri National park. Villagers there have been creating other income sources than tree cutting and firewood selling. They have opened lodges and turned their homes to guesthouses to make income. Also in general the waste disposal and recycling has improved even though there are still problems in that sector (Shestra 2011).

To conclude, the 1<sup>st</sup> goal was succeeded partly in a way it was planned. There is still a lot to

improve and the results will be seen better in the future after the whole project ends. Also the CC is suggested to calculate to maintain the area attracted and harmful in the future. Awareness of the waste management needs to be increased as well as incentives to carry it out in practice. One big challenge for this research is the misleading results from different sources. For example, SWC reports that there was 10 incinerators built in the project area when Shestra (2011) mentions only 7 incinerators all together. It is difficult to measure which information is correct and which incorrect. This is why the results of the overall succeed is challenging to present.

### 6.3 2<sup>nd</sup> goal: More community involvement in tourism

Based on the SWC report the community involvement was active in the project area. Locals were participating to construction, cleaning and maintenance of the track and they were trained in many tourism related works. NETIF also encourage the minority groups, women, Dalits, Janjati and Muslims, to take part of the tourism industry through the community centers that were built during the project (Sharma & Bhatti 2010).

The problem with community involvement in the project area was that people were cynical towards foreign aid projects because they have not seen the results in the long run. And without any government support the sustainability is difficult to maintain. Normally when the funding has ended the work that was supposed to be continuing has ended too. This is because of the lack of finance, motivation and employees (Könönen 2011b). SWC suggested that NETIF need to increase the number of members to maintain the work that has been started within the project to achieve sustainable development. This obviously will need more capital and the international marketing of the KVCTT needs to be improved to attract more visitors who will bring finance to the area.

Nepal has problem with Maoists. The civil war time's hoteliers have much more money comparing to small farmers. The income rates differentiate and divide people in communities and hotels do not co-operate with the community members. There has not been enough effort to create working relationship within the community. Some hotels are employing the community members and using community products, but there are too few of these. Because the community cannot understand how the tourism would improve their living the community participation into tourism business is low. The hoteliers should share the income and show that tourism has positive impact to poor communities. Luckily the situation is improving. Some hoteliers have understood the meaning of sharing and local communities are collecting money from the donation boxes in the hotels. Hotels are part of funding the waste management or other main issues in the community. Nut to keep in mind the help goes both ways to increase the co-operation in communities. Farmers need to provide demanded products for hotels to use (Könönen 2011b).

The interviews made along the KVCTT by voluntary workers in April 2010 showed the unfortunate situation in communities; women were not pleased in the trainings. They would have wanted more training about managerial and hospitality because now there were mostly men taking part of them. Women also felt that men had gained more in the project and this caused negative criticisms about the project. Those who gained most out of the project gave really positive feedback about the NTOEDP. Also in the decision-making the women were not that much involved which created even more criticisms towards the project. But to keep in mind there were only six women interviewed in the 18 interviews all together so the result is quite subjective (Metsälampi & Kauppinen 2010). Based on articles and NETIF's website the women are more involved to the tourism business and decision-making (NETIF 2011; Shestra 2011; Inter Press Service 2011) but MOTCA (2010) presents the figures that only less than 15% of tourist and trekking guides in Nepal in 2009-2010 were women. Men definitely were gaining more out of the industry than women.

In the SWC report the number of local people trained was positive. Over 150 people were involved to different trainings, which give an optimistic hope that the knowledge is then taught to employees and other stakeholders. In the report the women participation was not presented so it is difficult to measure the real situation which gender was participating and which not. Once again this goal achievement is problematic to estimate while the relevant information is lacking and the information varies from different sources.

#### 6.4 3<sup>rd</sup> goal: More people benefitting from tourism

This goal was certainly the most challenging to define. With the lack of specific statistics or analysis in the area, e.g. the number of people involved to tourism business, the benefit is difficult to measure. According to NETIF, the situation has improved and people are benefitting more from tourism than before but there is no statistical prove of it (Shestra 2011). MOTCA only gathers statistics of the whole Nepal and they do not show any specific figures of the project area. The results are only based on the information that NETIF has collected through interviews and social audits. Also most of the interviewed people by voluntary workers were mentioning that there have been some benefits from the project and they hope that NETIF will continue working in the area. Some even mentioned that they would improve the waste management independently after the project ends, which gives a positive hope for the sustainability at least in that area. The fund boxes along the track were not placed and promoted well in the hotels. The aim of the boxes is to gather money to the community but the visibility of the boxes was not good enough. Voluntary workers suggested that donation should also be promoted in NETIF's website and people could do the donation as a money transfer (Metsälampi & Kauppinen 2010). Unfortunately there is no mention about the boxes or donation in NETIF's website so far.

The only numerical fact is that the visitor number in Shivapuri National Park has increased over 50% from 2008 to 2010. The park covers only one part of the KVCTT and the direct benefit can be estimated to go to the villagers inside the National Park. Other fact is that in the beginning of the project when the maintenance of the track started there were a lot of local people employed. But after the waste collection, tree plantation, landslide protection and other construction work were done most of the workers were unemployed again. Evidently there are still some people employed to the maintenance of the track, which partly offers sustainable and on going work for some people, but unfortunately not for all. In the statistics of MOTCA (2010) the number of trekking and tourist guides has increased from 2009 to 2010 but it is difficult to measure is it because of the project because the location of these guides is not told.

The promoting of the KVCTT is vital to achieve the straight benefit for locals. With more visitors the more money is brought to the area. NETIF has been able to do the promotion in the national market but the wide international marketing is still missing. Based on the statistics of MOTCA (2010) the Indians and Chinese are the biggest tourist groups to visit Nepal and in 2010 there were only approximately 3300 Finnish tourists registered in Nepal. This proves that the marketing only reaches to the neighbor countries and Finland through Suomen Latury. It is evidently not enough and the marketing should be conducted more worldwide. The Internet offers an open access to everyone, but consumers need to find the websites. The KVCTT has been introduced in international tourism fairs in Fiji and Kenya (NETIF 2011; Sharma & Bhatti 2010) but evidently this is not enough in the long run.

With in the years 2008 -2009, there has been more lodges constructed and the employment of locals have been increased in tourism sector (Shestra 2011). It has been possible to help locals to start their business while the project is on going. To fund the process and give education and trainings about tourism related businesses. But what will happen after the project ends? Are these entrepreneurs understood the meaning of sustainable development and be able to continue the work and keep the businesses self-sustain. This will only be measured after some time. In two years it is impossible to tell and especially while the project is still on process. But by studying the goal in the grass root level with the present information about the situation, the goal has been succeeded. As a matter of fact all the three goals has been succeeded according to the plan. But the question in this research was “How has the Nepal Tourism Outdoor and Environment Development Project (NTOEDP) reached the planned goals when it comes to sustainable development?” The key here is the last part of the question; *when it comes to sustainable development?* This is concluded next in the last chapter.

## 7 Conclusion

To achieve sustainable development and long-term sustainability all the three dimensions must be in balance (UNEP 2004). As seen in the research the main effort in the project has been done in the ecological dimension. Socio-cultural and economical dimension are affected by the ecological improvements but more focus should be put on these minority dimensions. In the rural poor area the nature and heritage are the main attractions to increase visitor number, but without taking care of the villagers well being, cultural impacts, economical benefits and community involvement the project is not achieving the sustainable development, only a partial first aid in the area.

Regarding on the theory introduced in the second chapter tourism is a key to alleviate poverty. In the project area people do live under the poverty line and tourism can help the wellbeing and quality of life of the villagers. Nepal has the wildlife, nature and heritage to attract visitors and with proper management the economical improvements can be massive. Tourism as an industry also offers job opportunities to women because it is not gender-specific. Women can have better self-esteem and opportunities to be more powerful in the society and be part of decision making. This is the aim of NETIF to improve and encourage women to be more active in the area but based on the voluntary workers report and statistics the situation is not yet as good as it should be. But to keep in mind two years is not that long time to change things radically but hopefully in the future women could be more involved in the societies in Nepal.

To analyze the project as a whole the SWOT analysis (see figure 4) was done. In the analysis the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were studied. One of the strengths of the project was the continuation of it. The project received extra funding from Finland and is able to continue the work to achieve more sustainable development. Also the active participation of voluntary workers from Finland was seen as a strength to do the observation and helping on site. The co-operation with Suomen Latury is working fine and with the knowledge and experience of the association the NTOEDP have been gaining good groundwork and basis so far. The high focus on waste management issues is important to the project site and Nepal overall. SWC has been seeing the improvements and activities and they can share this experience to other parts of Nepal too. The strongest strength of the project is the area and the location of it. The nature, heritage and wildlife are richness to the place to attract visitors, which will increase the economical status in the area.

Concentrating on the weakness of the project one was the lack of statistics from the area. The results are difficult to measure without any relevant figures and statistical data. The foreign aid is seen as strength but also as a weakness. The support will end by the year 2013



and then there is no funding. The area and communities should be able to maintain the sustainable development and carry on with own 'earnings'. Unfortunately there are not many cases where this has happened and the project work has been wasted, which is also a threat for the project. As SWC suggested there are not enough employees in NETIF and the lack of employed workers to do the maintenance of the track in waste management is a definite weakness. Even though the co-operation with the two ringleaders has been profitable the cultural differences are increasing the challenges. There are different worldviews and ways of working, which can also be seen as strength; commissioners can learn from each other.

The main weakness in the project area and in Nepal is the waste management. Although there has been improvement the issue still stays on the way of sustainable development because it is harming the nature and environment a lot. Without major waste management improvement and CC calculation the ecological aspect of sustainability suffers. The awareness of the issues should be increased among the locals and visitors. Könönen (2011b) saw that the bigger problem is the Nepalese tourist than western tourists in the waste issues. Also the feedback from the visitors should be collected e.g. having questionnaires in hotels, restaurants, along the track and in the villages. The other perspective of the product KVCTT could give improvement ideas and functionality of the trail. More focus should be put on international marketing and socio-cultural and economical aspects in the sustainability.

Regarding to the opportunities of the project sustainable development can be achieved if the failures and mistakes will be improved in the second phase of the project. The international marketing would help to bring more tourists to the area and the community involvement would be higher if the benefit from tourism would be seen and shared in the communities. This would improve the quality of life for the villagers and the employment would increase, which would gain the income for the communities and individuals. Also new ways of finding and using alternative energy is an opportunity the gain sustainable development. More fund boxes in the hotels and restaurants would increase the income to the community with the help of awareness. People would easily invest money to something they are familiar with and to know that their money goes for good cause. Also the possibility to do money transfer electronically would be an idea to market in the NETIF' website and other promoting materials. Also in the long run it would be profitable to have trainings and workshops of alternative ways of livelihood than tourism because in reality not everyone can rely on one business, in this case tourism business.

The biggest threat of the project is the failure of the opportunities. If the findings so far are not taking under consideration there is a threat that the project has been waste of time, money and resources. The sustainable development will suffer the consequences after the project and foreign fund ends if there are no improvements done while the project is on

process. Also it is extremely important to have government support and co-operation for maintaining the KVCTT as a sustainable tourism product. NETIF and SWC need to emphasize the benefit for government out of the KVCTT to receive financial support in case needed. The weakness of not calculating the CC will be threat to overload the destination, which will lose the natural attractiveness and tourism in the area decreases. Also the important awareness of deforestation in Natural Parks will effect to the natural scenery and this way to tourism and wildlife.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuation</li> <li>- Foreign aid</li> <li>- Co-operation with Suomen Latu ry</li> <li>- Voluntary Workers from Finland</li> <li>- High focus on waste management</li> <li>- Cultural differences</li> <li>- Nature, heritage &amp; wildlife</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustainable development</li> <li>- Improve the quality of life for villagers</li> <li>- More income to the communities</li> <li>- Attract more tourists</li> <li>- Alternative energy</li> <li>- Fund boxes, donation</li> <li>- Introduce other ways to increase income</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of relevant statistics</li> <li>- Foreign Aid, lack of capital</li> <li>- Lack of employed workers</li> <li>- Cultural differences</li> <li>- Waste management</li> <li>- Lack of carrying capacity calculations</li> <li>- Awareness</li> <li>- Lack of feedback from tourists</li> <li>- Low focus on socio-cultural and economical aspects</li> <li>- Promotion and marketing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunities will not succeed</li> <li>- End of finance, end of sustainability?</li> <li>- No government support (financially)</li> <li>- Overload the destination with tourists</li> <li>- Harming the nature (deforestation)</li> </ul>

Figure 4: SWOT analysis of NTOEDP

Without having any specific records of visitors or revenue of tourism in the project area it gives a very limited view to the overall outcome. Also the goals cannot be seen in reality while the project is still on going with its second phase. Two years will not show how the sustainability in the area maintains. After the project it is more effortless to measure have the local stakeholders, hoteliers and other entrepreneurs understood the concept of sustainability; will they harm the environment or improve it. Evidently this has straight

impact on tourism in the area. This is something that the time will tell in the future and it would be good to do a similar research about the project after 10 years and redo it every 10 years to see the actual results.

The overall object of the project was better environment for better tourism. In the other words it means “sustainable environment for sustainable tourism”. In the scale of positive-neutral-negative the project has reached the designed goals but the overall long-term goal is not yet reached. Nevertheless, it is scaled to positive rather than negative because there were more achieved goals than failed ones. Suomen Latu ry and NETIF are in a positive way of reaching the overall object if the SWOT is used as a tool for the project in the future.

The challenge of measuring the success of the project was because the information varied from different sources. The best way of having better results would have been to observe the project site myself and make the conclusion with the help of interviewing the local people. They are in the first hand the ones that know if the project is succeeding or not. NETIF, Suomen Latu ry and SWC can only give their own subjective view and numerical achievements in case the analyzing is not made properly. The collection of feedback, creating relevant statistics and hire more people to do the observation would give actual and correct vision of the successes and failures. As a researcher it is almost impossible to make any precise conclusions based on the materials given to this study. The results can be misleading and based on my personal subjectivity.

As a researcher I have learned a lot. It has been challenging to do a study based on mostly secondary data. The lack of primary data increased the challenges and during the study I realized that there should have been more primary data; the two interviews were not enough and there should have been more interview questions. Also the lesson learned in this kind of research is that the ethnographic observation on site should have been done instead of doing the research from Finland based on mostly secondary data. The cultural differences, language barrier and lack of communication to Nepal raise the frustration out of the study. The personal findings of the study were only concentrating on the already written data and with the use of own experiences on site would have given the study better results and the process would have not been so challenging. Also it was very difficult to be objective. Even though the personal opinions about the research results vary a lot from the findings, as a researcher those opinions do not matter. This is a scientific research and only the results and findings matter.

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Appendix 1: Characteristics of developed and developing countries (Hobbs 2009)

<i>Traits</i>	<i>Developed countries (MDCs)</i>	<i>Developing countries (LDCs)</i>
Per capita GDP and income	High	Low
Percentage of population employed in manufacturing	High	Low
Energy use	High	Low
Percentage of population living in cities	High	Low
Percentage of population living in rural settings	Low	High
Birth rate	Low	High
Death rate	Low	Higher than in MDCs
Population growth rate	Low	High
Percentage of population under age 15	Low	High
Percentage of population that is literate	High	Low
Amount of leisure time available	High	Low
Life expectancy	High	Low

## Appendix 2: International tourism receipts 2008-2009 (UNWTO 2010)

	International Tourism Receipts				US\$			Euro		
	Local currencies, constant prices, change (%)			Share (%)	Receipts			Receipts		
	07/06	08/07	09*/08		(billion)	per arrival	2009*	(billion)	per arrival	2009*
<b>World</b>	5.5	1.3	-5.7	100	941	852	970	640	611	690
<b>Advanced economies<sup>1</sup></b>	4.9	1.9	-6.7	64.2	613	547	1.160	417	392	830
<b>Emerging economies<sup>1</sup></b>	6.8	0.1	-3.8	35.8	328	305	740	223	219	530

Appendix 3: International tourism arrivals 1990-2009 (UNWTO 2010)

	International Tourist Arrivals (million)							Market share (%)	Change (%)		Average annual growth (%)
	1990	1995	2000	2005	2007	2008	2009*	2009*	08/07	09*/08	'00-'09*
<b>World</b>	438	533	683	802	901	919	880	100	2.0	-4.2	2.9
<b>Advanced economies<sup>1</sup></b>	300	339	423	451	496	494	470	53.4	-0.4	-4.9	1.2
<b>Emerging economies<sup>1</sup></b>	139	194	260	351	405	425	410	46.6	4.9	-3.4	5.2

Appendix 4: List of criteria for WHL (UNESCO 2011c)

**Selection criteria:**

- i. to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- ii. to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- iii. to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- iv. to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- v. to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- vi. to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);
- vii. to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- viii. to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- ix. to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- x. to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

The protection, management, authenticity and integrity of properties are also important considerations.

Since 1992 significant interactions between people and the natural environment have been recognized as **cultural landscapes**.



Appendix 5: National and Local Partners (NETIF 2011)

**National Partners**

Nepal Tourism Board

The Ministry of Tourism

Kathmandu University,

Shivapuri - Nagarjun National Park

Government line agencies related to Tourism and Environment and Local Development

Hotel Association Nepal (HAN)

Resort and Hotel Association of Nepal (RAHAN).

**Local partners**

DDC's (Kathmandu, Kavre and Bhaktapur)

Tourism Information Centre Dhulikhel

Nagarkot-Naldum Tourism Development Committee

Tourism Development Committees on the trekking trail

Women Self Help Groups

Leading Farmer's Group along the trekking trails.

Appendix 6: Tentative timetable (Könönen 2008)

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1.1.-30.6.2009

- Hiring staff for the project
  - Cleaning up the trekking trail
  - Upgrading the old parts of the trail
  - Constructing new trail (when needed)
  - Marking the trail with wooden signs (50) and information sign boards (15)
  - Constructing 2 entry gates
  - Constructing 4 resting places/shelters with attached recycling facilities
  - Planting trees
  - Forming local clubs
  - Workshop for local level stakeholder
- 

1.7.-31.12.2009

- Establishing 4 community based centers for tourism activities (finding/leasing an empty building, which will be renovated and facilitated)
  - Continuing the trekking trail activities
  - Starting the partnering with existing tourism information centers: Promotional material will be distributed through centers
  - Publishing promotional material
  - Promotional clean-up campaigns in villages
  - Forming of local clubs
  - Eight trainings in tourism and product development for communities and SMEs
  - Workshop for national level stakeholders
  - FAM trip for media and tourism sector
  - The first year evaluation
  - Starting to shoot the promotional documentary DVD
  - Developing NETIF's web site
  - Finding sponsors for NETIF
- 

1.1.-30.6.2010

- Workshop for local level stakeholders
  - Continuing the establishment of 4 community based centers for tourism activities
  - Releasing of promotional documentary DVD
  - Promotional clean-up campaigns in villages
  - Producing promotional material for Environmental awareness raising campaign
  - Environmental awareness campaign in the project area
  - Training for local clubs
  - FAM trip for local level stakeholders (VDCs, DDCs, Municipalities)
  - Reporting to the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs
  - Developing NETIF's web site
  - Establishing NETIF membership card
  - Four trainings in tourism and product development for communities and SMEs
- 

1.7.-31.12.2010

- Workshop for national level stakeholders
  - FAM trip for media and tourism sector
  - Promotional clean-up campaigns in villages
  - Training/meeting for local clubs
  - The second year evaluation
  - Developing NETIF's web site
  - Four trainings in tourism and product development for communities and SMEs
  - Promotional tourism campaign
-

## Appendix 7: Interview questions

**Better tourism/sustainable tourism:**

1. The overall object for the project in Nepal is *Better environment for better tourism*, what does this mean? What is *better tourism* in this project?
2. In the aspect of ecology, is the seasonality in products (e.g. food, natural materials for souvenirs etc.) taken in to the consideration? Where are the products from? (Are the products local or transported from elsewhere?)
3. How is the carrying capacity calculated in the project area?
4. Which one is the aim of the project; *sustainability of tourism* or *tourism sustainability* and why?

**Decision-making and management:**

5. How are the local communities involved to tourism business? Has this happened voluntarily? (Or has there maybe happened some kind of pressure e.g. from the government?)
6. In what ways are the local communities involved to decision-making? How are women involved?
7. How is the government participating to this project in Kathmandu Valley?
8. How are the organizations involved to this project managing their economy? (Are they depending on foreign support?)
9. Are there international companies taking share of the tourism market in Kathmandu Valley, especially in the project area? If so, how is the income of tourism shared with the local communities? (Assuming the companies are located in communities)
10. In case only providing local community products and services, how is the economical benefit shared? (Between the community or just individually?)

**Marketing:**

11. How is the marketing of the Kathmandu Valley Cultural Trail done? Where is it promoted and what is the wanted customer segment?  
**Extra question:** Is the marketing purposely done to the readers of Suomen Latu magazine, thinking that trekkers are more responsible visitors than "normal" tourist to this area?

**Evaluation and future:**

12. How is the success of the project (2008-2010) evaluated? How the project has improved the living standards in communities or individually (quality of live, economical benefits, psychological benefits..) ?
13. What happens next? How to make sure that the sustainability maintains in the project area?