Volunteer Tourism:
A Catalyst for Promoting Community Development and Conservation

by

Christopher Anthony Lupoli

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Auburn University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Auburn, Alabama
May 5, 2013

Keywords: volunteer tourism, impacts, community,
conservation, sustainability, Latin America

Approved by

Wayde Morse, Chair, Assistant Professor of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
Conner Bailey, Professor of Rural Sociology
John Schelhas, Research Forester
Ken McNabb, Professor of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences

Abstract

Volunteer tourism is a rapidly growing form of alternative travel. One of its central pillars consists of benefiting host communities and facilitating development in resource poor and developing country contexts. However, little research exists demonstrating how volunteer tourism programs impact host communities or how impacts can be assessed. Few mechanisms have been proposed or developed to understand, identify or assess the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. One strategy to assess these impacts is by developing indicators to reveal the social, personal, economic and environmental impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. This research employed four phases representing distinct approaches to understanding the ways that volunteer tourism impacts host communities and how such impacts can be assessed through indicators. It incorporates the perspectives of multiple stakeholders and culminates in an effective and useful tool of impact evaluation that can be employed by volunteer tourism organizations and host communities. Its goal is to encourage collaboration among volunteer tourism organizations and host communities in the impact evaluation process to ensure that volunteer tourism can address mutual goals and needs.

Phase one explored the use of indicators to evaluate the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities, based on an online questionnaire sent to 183 volunteer tourism organizations. Phase two involved a comparison of questionnaire data and telephone interviews conducted with numerous questionnaire respondents. It explored the complex relationships that exist between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities to understand the potential of volunteer tourism to promote community development and empower host communities to take control of their development process. In phase three, a participatory methodology of indicator development was tested in five host communities of volunteer tourism in Ecuador and Costa Rica. In each workshop, host community members and representatives of volunteer organizations collaborated and systematically identified and prioritized indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism. In phase four the data from the questionnaire and host community workshops were compared and contrasted to understand how they can be fused into a hybrid framework of indicator development that reflects the interests of both stakeholder groups (volunteer tourism organizations and host communities) in the impact evaluation process.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my wife, Mery, for her unconditional support during the difficult and challenging moments of my doctoral studies. I am also grateful to my two beautiful daughters, Ayana Irene and Ayla Ismelda, for their love and the beautiful smiles with which they greet me every day. They are a lifelong inspiration for me. I would also like to thank my parents, George and Mary, for their everlasting love. I thank Dr. David Shannon and Minerva Brauss for supporting me with much needed statistical advice. Lastly, I would like to thank my committee members (Dr. Wayde Morse, Dr. Conner Bailey, Dr. John Schelhas and Dr. Ken McNabb) for their support, guidance and constructive critiques that have helped me to achieve success through the arduous dissertation process.

Table of Contents

Abstract....ii

Acknowledgements....iii

List of Tables....vii

List of Figures and Illustrations....viii

Research with Human Subjects....ix

Chapter 1. Literature Review and Methods 1

Rationale for proposed study 1

Research questions 3

Volunteer tourism: A review of the literature 5

Applicable theoretical frameworks 23

Work plan and methods 30

Phase I of research 32

Phase II of research 39

Phase III of research 41

Phase IV of Research 53

References 54

Chapter 2. A survey of volunteer tourism organizations: Understanding how indicators are used to evaluate the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities 63

Introduction 63

Methods and sample selection 70

Results 72

Discussion 83

Conclusions 87

References 89

Chapter 3. An examination of the linkages between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities: understanding how volunteer tourism promotes citizen engagement and empowerment 95

Introduction 95

Methods 101

Results and Discussion 104

Conclusions 119

References 122

Chapter 4. An examination of an indicator development methodology to identify and prioritize the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities 126

Introduction 126

Research Purpose 128

Selecting a framework and methodology for indicator development 129

Methods 131

Case study profiles 133

Workshop procedure 134

Data Analysis 138

Results 139

Discussion 145

Conclusion 150

References 153

Chapter 5. A framework for assessing the local impacts of volunteer tourism: Comparing two unique approaches to indicator development 157

Introduction 157

Methods 164

Data analysis 166

Results 167

Discussion 177

Conclusions 184

References 186

Final thoughts: Lessons learned and looking ahead 190

Appendix 1. Indicators derived from the literature used to develop an initial indicator set (for the questionnaire) relevant to volunteer tourism programs. 196

Appendix 2. Online questionnaire (excluding graphics) 206

Appendix 3. Interview guide for conducting telephone interviews 218

Appendix 4. Interview guide for interviews conducted after community workshops 220

Appendix 5. All indicators developed in the five community workshops 222

Appendix 6. Ranking of questionnaire indicators based on usefulness values 232

List of Tables

Table 1.1..... 38
Table 1.2..... 52
Table 2.1..... 66
Table 2.2..... 78
Table 2.3..... 79
Table 2.4..... 81
Table 2.5..... 82
Table 3.1..... 103
Table 4.1..... 140
Table 4.2..... 142
Table 4.3..... 144

List of Figures and Illustrations

Figure 1.1..... 32
Figure 2.1..... 74
Figure 2.2..... 75
Figure 3.1..... 104
Figure 3.2..... 105
Figure 3.3..... 106
Figure 3.4..... 111
Figure 3.5..... 116
Figure 4.1..... 131
Figure 4.2..... 136
Figure 4.3..... 137
Figure 4.4..... 140
Figure 4.5..... 141
Figure 4.6..... 143
Figure 4.7..... 145
Figure 5.1..... 168
Figure 5.2..... 170

Research with Human Subjects

The Auburn Institutional Review Board granted permission for research to be conducted on human subjects for this dissertation study. The protocol number is 11-303 EX 1110. Permission for research on human subjects was granted from October 12, 2011 to October 11, 2012.

Chapter 1. Literature Review and Methods

Rationale for proposed study

International travelers are increasingly combining travel with volunteering to work on humanitarian aid, community development or environmental conservation projects. This type of travel is commonly referred to as volunteer tourism or voluntourism (hereafter referred to as "volunteer tourism"). Volunteer tourism is one of the fastest growing trends in the tourism industry (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008; Brown & Morrison, 2003; Butcher & Smith, 2010; Tomazos & Butler, 2009; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008) and is part of a broader trend of ethical consumerism which aims to make positive differences in the communities of less developed countries (Butcher & Smith, 2010). A central idea to volunteer tourism is that it generates positive impacts to locals in host-destinations and that it fosters a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship between the host and guest in a tourist destination (McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Sin, 2009; Sin, 2010).

There has been only limited attention accorded by tourism scholars to the phenomenon of volunteer tourism and there is a critical need for research to provide a firm foundation for a deeper understanding of volunteer tourism, in both its positive and negative aspects (Sin, 2009; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004). Current literature on volunteer tourism overwhelmingly focuses on the profiling of volunteer tourists and organizations (Brown & Morrison, 2003; Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Gray & Campbell, 2007; Keese, 2011; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004) or motivations for volunteer tourists and the benefits of the volunteer experience on self and society (Broad, 2003; Brumbaugh 2010; Butcher & Smith, 2010; Coghlan, 2007; Halpenny & Caissie, 2003; Simpson, 2004; Sin, 2009; Wearing & Deane, 2003). Sue Broad (2003) and Lyons, Hanley, Wearing & Neil (2012) argue that there has been very little empirical research into many aspects of volunteer vacations, particularly impacts and outcomes, the nature of volunteer experiences, and the motivations of tourists. A recent media review of volunteer tourism suggests that there is a need for a regulatory body to assess the validity of volunteer tourism organizations and maintain honesty in the industry (Clothier, 2010). Butcher & Smith (2010) and McGehee (2012) address the fact that volunteer tourism is under-theorized.

One of the most significant gaps in volunteer tourism research consists of the diverse impacts that volunteer tourism has in host communities. There is a well-recognized need for further research in order to fully gauge the impacts that volunteer tourism is having on localities, peoples and the global order (Halpenny and Cassie, 2003; Lyons, 2003; Lyons et al., 2012; Wearing, 2004). While the local impacts of volunteer tourism are often assumed and asserted in promotional materials, they are generally not research-based and do not include the voices of host communities (Fee & Mdee, 2011; Lyons et al., 2012; Mdee & Emmott, 2008; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008; Woosnam & Lee, 2011). There has been very little research on how to achieve mutual benefit between volunteers and host communities in volunteer tourism, how volunteer tourists work interactively with local communities on local projects, and the perceptions and attitudes of community members exposed to volunteer tourists (Benson & Wearing, 2012; Butler & Hinch, 1996; Gray & Campbell, 2007; McGehee, 2012; McGehee & Andereck, 2009; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Raymond, 2008; Sin, 2010). Few studies have examined volunteer from a host community perspective or submitted it to high level of scrutiny (Guttentag, 2011), research does not assess the cultural divide between volunteers and residents, and little empirical work has been conducted on why misunderstandings occur between host and guest (Woosnam & Lee, 2011). In a recent study, McGehee & Andereck (2009) found no literature that measures the perceptions and attitudes of residents who were regularly exposed to and host volunteer tourists. There has also been very little systematic research that explores volunteer tourism in relation to its impacts on conservation (Lorimer, 2009) and the views of diverse stakeholders in conservation-oriented volunteer programs (Gray & Campbell, 2007).

There is a growing recognition of the importance of better understanding the local impacts of volunteer tourism. Guttentag (2011) suggests that it is necessary to understand the long-term impacts and potential unintended consequences of volunteer tourism, while Sin (2009) urges future research to focus on the social responsibilities of volunteer tourism. Similarly, Uriely, Reichel & Ron (2003) and Wearing (2004) argue that studies on volunteer tourism must encompass all host community members to understand the role that they can play in the tourist experience. Numerous other scholars recognize a need for further research to gauge the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities and understand the perspectives of the aid-recipients (Halpenny & Cassie, 2003; Lyons, 2003; Raymond, 2011; Sin, 2009; Wearing, 2004). However, mechanisms and criteria have not been developed to assess the impacts of volunteer tourism

programs in host communities, and most current evaluations contain little empirical data and are highly anecdotal (Benson & Wearing, 2012; Kennedy & Dornan, 2009; Lyons et al., 2012).

Research questions

This research contributes to a critical knowledge gap on the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. It is international in scope and incorporates the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, including volunteer tourism sending organizations based around the world, organizations based in Latin America that coordinate volunteer tourism projects, and host communities in Costa Rica and Ecuador that receive volunteer tourism projects.

This research embraces three overarching inquiries: 1) How do different stakeholders currently identify and assess the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities? 2) How do the diverse relationships between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities impact the host communities and the nature of impact assessments? and 3) What future strategies can be taken to identify and evaluate the diverse ways in which volunteer tourism impacts host communities? This research is divided into four phases that represent unique inquiries and approaches to data collection to answer the aforementioned questions. Each phase of inquiry represents one chapter of this dissertation.

The first phase (chapter 2) addresses the existing and potential impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities from the perspective of: 1) organizations based in the U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia and New Zealand that recruit volunteers for international service; and 2) organizations based in Latin America that receive incoming international volunteer tourists. These local impacts of volunteer tourism are organized according to a framework of indicators that reveal social, personal, economic and environmental changes in host communities as a result of volunteer tourism activities. Data is drawn from an online questionnaire (see Appendix 2) of volunteer tourism organizations to answer the following questions: 1) What types of impacts do volunteer tourism organizations desire to achieve in host communities? 2) To what degree are the impacts currently assessed or measured by volunteer tourism organizations? and 3) Do nuances within the diversity of volunteer tourism organizations help to explain how they prioritize and/or assess such impacts?

The second phase of research (chapter 3) addresses the processes of communication and collaboration between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities. It also incorporates and compares the perspectives of organizations based in the U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia and New Zealand that recruit volunteers for international service and organizations based in Latin America that receive incoming international volunteer tourists. Data is drawn from an online survey of volunteer tourism organizations as well as telephone interviews conducted with representatives of volunteer tourism organizations (based in the U.S. and U.K.) that recruit volunteer tourists for international service. Survey and interview data are compared to answer the following questions: 1) How do volunteer tourism organizations select host communities and volunteer work projects? 2) What is the nature of the communication and decision-making processes between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities? and 3) What are the roles of host communities and volunteer tourism organizations in the assessment of the local impacts of volunteer tourism?

The third phase of research (chapter 4) explores a participatory method that can be used to assess the diverse impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. This method was implemented in the form of community workshops in volunteer tourism host communities in Ecuador and Costa Rica. The indicator framework employed in phase one is also used in this phase to guide the organization and identification of phenomena which, from the perspective of host community members, reveal social, personal, economic and environmental changes in host communities as a result of volunteer tourism activities. Results and observations from the workshops were used to accomplish several goals: 1) to assess the appropriateness of the method in the context of volunteer tourism in small rural communities; 2) to generate an extended list of potential indicators for monitoring the community impacts of volunteer tourism; 3) to examine the effectiveness of the selected method as an organizational scheme for indicators; and 4) to refine the method as an instrument that can be useful in guiding future impact evaluations. At each research site, the researcher also conducted in-person interviews with host community representatives and in-country representatives of volunteer tourism organizations.

The fourth and final phase of research (chapter 5) consists of a summation of data and conclusions gathered during the first three phases. Comparisons are made among data that were obtained from three key sources: 1) organizations based in the U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia and New Zealand that recruit volunteers for international service; 2) organizations based in Latin

America that receive incoming international volunteer tourists; and 3) host communities in Latin America that receive volunteer tourists. Such comparisons were used to answer two critical questions: 1) Can a bottom-up participatory approach to indicator development (in host communities) and a consideration of the priorities, needs and desired impacts of volunteer sending organizations (top-down) be blended to promote a collaborative process of indicator development, prioritization and monitoring? and 2) Can the method tested and refined in phase three be used as an effective method of indicator development and organization to achieve multi-stakeholder collaboration? The interviews conducted after community workshops were used to corroborate and complement the findings of this final phase of data analysis.

Volunteer tourism: A review of the literature

A broad overview of volunteer tourism

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world and much of the development in the tourism sector in the last 50 years has focused on mass tourism, such as large-scale and all-inclusive resorts. However, this form of travel does not permit the tourist to closely connect with the destination or its people, and in recent years travelers are beginning to seek a more hands-on experience with the places they are visiting. Many such experiences are made available through locally-based and small-scale tour operators that enable travelers to form closer ties to the places and people they are visiting (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008). Volunteer tourism is one emerging form of alternative tourism that allows travelers to closely engage with the sociocultural aspects of destinations. Wearing (2001) places volunteer tourism within the context of alternative tourism experiences that include cultural-heritage tourism, ecotourism, educational tourism, scientific tourism, adventure tourism, nature tourism, sustainable tourism and agri-tourism.

Volunteer tourism programs may also be referred to as “working holidays” (Heuman, 2005), “voluntary work holidays” (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008), “voluntourism” (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008), or “volunteer vacations” (Broad, 2003; Brown & Morrison, 2003; Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008). Despite the differing nomenclature, they are all manifestations of the same concept: combining a pleasurable travel experience with volunteer work. Wearing (2001, p. 1) defines volunteer tourism as “a type of alternative tourism in which tourists volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty

of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment." VolunTourism.org, a website devoted to disseminating information and research on the volunteer tourism industry, defines it as "the *conscious*, seamlessly integrated combination of voluntary service to a destination and the best, traditional elements of travel — arts, culture, geography, history *and recreation* — in that destination" (VolunTourism.org, 2013). Bakker & Lamoureux (2008, p. 6) define volunteer tourism as "a travel experience during which the traveller dedicates a portion of time to rendering voluntary services to a destination – its residents, environment, or infrastructure – in an effort to create a positive impact on the destination."

Much discourse on volunteer tourism centers on its beneficial impacts for both participants and destination communities. Some suggest that it fosters a reciprocal and mutually beneficial narrative and relationship between the host and guest (McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Wearing & Neal, 2000). Sin (2010) suggests that volunteer tourism rhetoric is centered on its ability to generate positive impacts in host destinations and the ability of volunteer tourists to make tangible improvements to host communities or their environment. Volunteer tourism can achieve economic and social goals and contribute to the "greater good" of society, promoting knowledge transfer and knowledge-sharing as a means of enhancing opportunities for developing countries and benefiting stakeholders (Ruhanen, Cooper & Fayos-Solá, 2008). Volunteer tourism can help to break down stereotypes and can aid host communities to acquire a different image of foreigners (Elliot, 2008).

Volunteer projects are diverse and may include activities focused on environmental conservation, socio-cultural interaction or economic development (McGehee & Andereck, 2009). A study by the University of California San Diego revealed that among U.S. volunteer tourists, the most popular projects included youth education/outreach, adult education, small business development, healthcare/medical assistance and environmental clean-up/waste management (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008).

One of the defining characteristics of volunteer tourism is the degree of interaction between visitor and guest: volunteer tourism generally involves more social interaction with the host community than conventional tourism. Unlike conventional tourism in which tourists "gaze" from a distance, volunteer tourism tends to break down conventional "tourism bubbles" which artificially exclude the activities of locals (Sin, 2009). In reference to a volunteer tourism project

examined by scholar Stephen Wearing, Gray & Campbell (2007) emphasize the "extensive interaction between volunteers, local residents and the environment, the involvement of and benefits to the local community, and the conservation ethic underlying the programme." Wearing (2004) sees volunteer tourism as a 'best practice' example of tourism, as it is leading the way for the tourism industry by providing a change in focus from the tourist experience to the community and its participation in the creation of an experience. Volunteer tourism projects tend to involve a more direct interaction between tourists and community members than conventional tourism.

The size of the volunteer tourism market and its growth rate are difficult to ascertain, but recent proliferation of volunteer tourism organizations and programs suggests that it is substantial and increasing (Brown & Morrison, 2003; Butcher & Smith, 2010). According to *Time* and *Condé Nast* magazines, it is one of the fastest-growing and encouraging trends in the tourism industry (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008). Numerous surveys have been recently undertaken, by Condé Nast, cheaptickets.com, the Travel Industry Association (TIA) and travelocity.com, all finding that there is a growing interest in taking a volunteer holiday (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008). One recent study published by a tourism research firm estimates that the most significant growth in the volunteer tourism sector has occurred since 1990, and currently about 1.6 million people participate in volunteer tourism projects every year (Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008). An estimated 800 organizations exist which offer approximately 350,000 overseas volunteering placements in 200 countries worldwide (Jones, 2004). The United Kingdom (U.K.) has been considered the forerunner in the movement, and the U.S. and Australia are other major players. It is one of the fastest-growing travel markets in the U.S., touching people who value environmental and social responsibility (Brown & Morrison, 2003). Lorimer (2009) argues that the number of people volunteering on conservation projects in the U.K. has increased dramatically since the 1980s, linked to a growing popularity of the pre- and post-university gap year, growing numbers of active retirees, and the broader enthusiasm for volunteering in British society as a whole.

Tomazos & Butler (2009) identified India, Costa Rica, Peru and Ecuador as being the most popular volunteer tourism destinations at a global scale, while Callanan & Thomas (2005) identified India, Ecuador, Costa Rica and Ghana as top receivers of volunteer tourists. Several other studies focus specifically on the destinations of British volunteer tourists: Lorimer (2009)

found that the top destinations for British volunteers were South Africa, Costa Rica and Indonesia; Cousins (2007) confirmed South Africa as the top destination; and studies carried out by the *Year Out Group* and *University of California San Diego* placed India, Peru and Tanzania as the top destinations for British volunteer tourists (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008).

Volunteer Tourism: An alternative choice for travelers

According to Butcher (2000, p. 45), alternative tourism is "counter posed to a conception of mass tourism as problematic, destructive of the environment and insensitive to cultural differences." Thus, the alternative travel experience is constructed in opposition to the mass tourist experience from the outset. While conventional tourism is generally inclined towards a specific focus on relaxation and excitement, most forms of alternative tourism seek to fulfill higher-level needs such as self-esteem, belonging and self-actualization (Wearing, 2004). Cohen (1989) categorizes alternative tourists as being in pursuit of the primitive and the remote, searching for authentic and unspoiled areas beyond the boundaries of established touristic circuits. Butcher (2000) claims that alternative tourists are more aware of their capacity as tourists to impact upon indigenous cultures and are not satisfied with staged cultural demonstrations. Young (2008) similarly states that alternative tourists search for authentic experiences different to those of commodified and mass tourism, and that among alternative tourists there is a growing interest in and appreciation of indigenous cultures and traditions.

As a form of alternative tourism, volunteer tourism contrasts with conventional tourism in its ideologies and intentions. In comparison with conventional tourism, volunteer tourism is seen to provide a more reciprocally beneficial form of travel, in which both the volunteer tourist and the host communities are able to gain from the experience (Raymond & Hall, 2008). Although volunteer tourism is often considered a sector of the tourist industry, its social and economic ramifications and its effects on tourists differ greatly from conventional tourism. Conversely, the phenomenon of volunteer tourism may also enlarge the boundary of what has previously been considered 'tourism.'

Volunteer tourists tend to have lower expectations than conventional tourists regarding on-site amenities (Gray & Campbell, 2007). Volunteer tourists require resources such as accommodations, food and transportation in a different and more sustainable form than mass tourists (McGehee & Andereck, 2009). Many volunteer tourists also tend to avoid "touristy"

activities and places, and seek places and environments where they can have more genuine personal interactions (Lepp, 2008). Other characteristics of volunteer tourism which distinguish it from conventional tourism include non-monetary transactions of goods and services, reciprocal transactions (such as free accommodations in exchange for volunteer work), gift giving, obedience to the expectations of local culture, the practice of traditional concepts of hospitality, and local community members providing security to ensure the safety of volunteers (Heuman, 2005). Relationships formed tend to be much more long-lasting in contrast to the superficial, monetary-based human interactions which dominate conventional tourism (Heuman, 2005).

Not all volunteer tourists see themselves as tourists or are perceived by host organizations and communities as tourists. How a volunteer tourist perceives him/herself may depend on whether the primary motivation of his or her trip is travel or altruism (Gray & Campbell, 2007). Furthermore, volunteer tourists may characterize themselves not as tourists, but as participants of international service-learning, whose main focus is on learning and personal development (Sin, 2009). Volunteer tourists may consider what they do to be a special kind of tourism or something separate from tourism. Gray & Campbell (2007) label this as a form of alternative consumption, which is a way for individuals to make a difference in the world. In addition to the volunteer tourist's self-perception of "not being a tourist," volunteer tourists are often not perceived as tourists by the host community and are not associated with the negative impacts of tourism (Heuman, 2005).

Classifications of tourism are nuanced and extend beyond a simple dichotomy of conventional tourism versus volunteer tourism. However, Lyons & Wearing (2008) argue that the classification of different sectors of the tourism market may cause some programs to be left out of the discussion of the benefits of volunteer tourism. They compare volunteer tourism to cultural exchange programs and adventure travel programs with a volunteer or development component, arguing that similarities can be drawn. This raises the question: "are being a conventional tourist (or other kind of traveler) and a volunteer tourist mutually exclusive?" Instead of pigeonholing and classifying by travelers by characteristics and behaviors, it is more valuable to focus on how volunteering and tourist behaviors can intersect and manifest in a variety of ways (Lyons & Wearing, 2008). Additionally, many volunteer service trips incorporate a service component of one or more days up to several weeks into a longer trip

focused on adventure or recreation. In such cases it may not be possible to categorize some such trips as uniquely ‘alternative’ or ‘conventional’ tourism.

Key characteristics of volunteer tourists

Volunteers tourists are generally young, either just finishing high school or college or seeking experience while in school. For example, one report found that 75% of the U.K. volunteer tourism market consists of people 25 years or younger (Mintel’s Working and Experience Holidays 2007, cited in Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008). Another segment of volunteer tourists are early retirees who have sufficient financial means and yet are young enough to get involved in programs that can be physically challenging. Many of these early retirees travel to foreign countries on a yearly basis to participate in working holidays (Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004). Most volunteer tourists originate in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Australia and Japan (Keese, 2011). As stated in a media article, 70% of all volunteer travelers are women according to tour operators and industry experts (Palk, 2010). Annette Pritchard, director of the Welsh Center for Tourism Research, argues that this may be because volunteer tourism caters to women’s hopes and wants and offers women a sense of empowerment and freedom (Palk, 2010). Nancy McGehee, associate professor in tourism at Virginia Tech University, argues that “voluntourism is a safe way for women travelers to culturally immerse themselves and experience a new place” (Palk, 2010).

Volunteer tourists differ from non-volunteer tourists in terms of what they are looking for and what motivates them. While a conventional tourist may find satisfaction in fulfilling lower-level needs of stimulation and relaxation, satisfaction for the volunteer tourist tends to come from self-actualization and education, and may not come from the experience itself but from the reward of having promoted community development and having made a contribution to the destination region (Wearing, 2004). A typical volunteer tourist seeks discovery, enlightenment and personal growth (Wearing, 2004) and comes to learn from the community, learn about the country, and has an interest in helping (Gray & Campbell, 2007). Some volunteers seek an aesthetic experience such as witnessing a sea turtle, while others seek a lived experience such as working in the community and feeling involved and useful in a particular program (Gray & Campbell, 2007). In contrast to conventional tourism, the main motivation for participating in

volunteer tourism may relate to volunteering, working, giving, and experiencing a service project (McIntosh & Zahra, 2007).

Despite these key motivations, many volunteer tourists also seek an aesthetic experience and tend to visit places with visual attractions, such as programs working with megafauna in Africa (Cousins, 2007). A detailed analysis of international conservation volunteers from the U.K. (Lorimer, 2009) reveals that volunteers express a strong preference towards working with mammals over all other groups, and furthermore, the big five of Africa (rhino, elephant, lion, leopard and buffalo). Furthermore, Lorimer (2009) found that volunteers also show a strong preference for volunteering in tropical countries, particularly in tropical forests and coral reefs. The majority of preferred destinations are middle-income countries, particularly due to the safety of travel, accessibility, and minimal cultural barriers. Volunteer tourists also express a preference for traveling to areas of relative safety and such concerns of safety, health, and violence deter volunteers from traveling to vast areas of the world, including much of the Middle East and Central/West Africa (Lorimer, 2009). Despite its disadvantage of being located within the turmoil of the Middle East, the Kingdom of Jordan was the first country to officially announce volunteer tourism as a target market segment, and the Jordanian Tourism board seeks to promote this as a more hands-on travel experience (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008).

Bussell & Forbes (2002) suggest that a volunteer must have some altruistic motive. Although the concept of volunteer tourism is founded on notions of altruism and self-development (Wearing, 2001), volunteers are motivated by many other factors and altruism is not always a primary motivator. The many potential benefits that may accrue to the volunteer worker are important motivators (Sin, 2009). The primary motivators for volunteer tourists to participate in such programs often are the opportunity to travel, do something new and exotic, escape from mundane tasks at home, to develop social connections, to meet and interact with people in different cultures, a love of specific places and animals, and for career development (Lorimer, 2009; Lyons & Wearing, 2008; Sin, 2009; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004). In analyzing volunteer vacation tours offered in the U.K., Broad (2003) finds that as the typical volunteer is both a volunteer and a vacationer, he or she will have motivations associated with volunteering (such as altruism) as well as motivations typically associated with recreational travel (fun, excitement, adventure, meeting others). For many volunteer tourists, the volunteer tourist experience allows them to acquire an identity of a well-traveled person who knows and

understands the world (Sin, 2009). Sin also concludes that the motivating factors for a volunteer tourist are not necessarily different from what motivates people to participate in conventional tourism, although volunteer tourists may still be seeking a more genuine cultural exchange or to develop personal relationships with hosts. The objective of "traveling" and "getting to know the world" generally supersede the objectives of volunteering or addressing social injustices through volunteer tourism (Sin, 2009). Depending on the nature of the program, volunteer motivations may be more or less altruistic. Many volunteers seek to give as well as to receive in the sense of being thanked for their efforts and to feel good about what they have done, particularly through face-to-face interactions with members of the community (McGehee & Andereck, 2008).

Benefits of volunteer tourism for the volunteer tourist

The personal benefits derived from participation in volunteer tourism are significant. Participation in a volunteer tourism project can lead to personal growth and development and provide cross-cultural experience, all of which are significant and difficult to attain in other ways (Lepp, 2008). Such experiences can be energizing, fulfilling and reduce 'corporate burnout' (Brown & Morrison, 2003). In addition to personal gains and self-development, such volunteer experiences offer career development (Broad & Jenkins, 2008) as first-hand experiences can provide significant knowledge and first-hand experience in many fields of study and work. Heath (2007) labels this as "cultural capital," which is generated through cross-cultural experiences and may benefit a volunteer in the course of his or her career. Furthermore, some of the greatest personal benefits of volunteer tourism are not easily measured immediately during or after the volunteer experience but are played out in the course of one's career and life, leading one to act more ethically in favor of those less well-off and increasing one's participation in social movements (McGehee, 2001). Dwyer (2004) argues that long-term volunteer programs generate tremendous benefits for participants including language acquisition, a motivation to acquire graduate degrees, an increased tendency to seek international careers, and the cultivation of long-term cross-cultural friendships.

The increased level of social interaction with host destination locals in volunteer tourism can generate substantial benefits for the volunteer. McIntosh & Zahra (2007) characterized this by defining three levels of the volunteer tourist experience: their experiences with local culture, their experiences relating to self, and their interaction and relationship with the hosts. McIntosh

& Zahra observed that volunteer tourists are able to self-reflect and develop personal and meaningful relationships with community members. Such self-reflection often allows participants to become more self-critical, refigure their sense of self and identity, make connections with their culture and community at home, and evaluate their own behaviors (Sin, 2009; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004). Volunteer tourism programs often take place in impoverished communities and such experiences can help the volunteer to achieve a greater awareness of the realities of poverty in the developing world (Guttentag, 2009; Lepp, 2008).

Such experiences can also influence volunteers to participate in social movements after their volunteer experiences (Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004). McGehee (2001) found that volunteers establish relationships that extend beyond the brief volunteer experience and develop network ties which can motivate them to continue future social activism. Participation in volunteer tourism prepares individuals to become global citizens and motivates them to become involved in social improvement projects (McGehee, 2002; McGehee & Santos, 2005).

Volunteer projects can also have negative effects on a volunteer. As volunteer tourists are often unskilled or lack appropriate skills for the project at hand, this can result in them feeling unneeded, that their presence is not vital, or that there is not enough for them to do (Gray & Campbell, 2007). As they often observe that locals appear to be happy despite their lack of material wealth, it may lead them to rationalize poverty on the basis that material wealth is unnecessary, and even to romanticize poverty and associate it with social and emotional wealth (Simpson, 2004).

Short-term versus long-term volunteer tourist experiences

McIntosh and Zahra (2007) argue that the short time frame and generalist nature of most cultural tourism experiences render them shallow and less authentic. Similarly, in a study of volunteers at the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project in Thailand, Broad & Jenkins (2008) argued that although the program had the potential to carry out its goal of wildlife conservation, this would require longer commitments from volunteers. As many volunteer placements require knowledge of another language and other specialized skills, Callanan & Thomas (2005) expressed concern at the numerous short-term projects worldwide which do not require volunteers to have skills in the local language or teaching qualifications. Particularly in the field of teaching, which is one of the most popular activities within volunteer tourism, critics claim that short-term and non-

professional volunteers can do little to educate a student population and that the short-term nature of most projects can disrupt the learning process (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008).

There is an increasing prevalence of long-term volunteer programs and many fall under the category of "GAP Year programs." These typically take place at a time between high school and university in which young people can engage in a variety of work, travel and volunteer practices. These programs typically cater to young and often un-skilled volunteers. Dwyer (2004) argues that longer programs generate greater benefits for participants, including language acquisition, a motivation to acquire graduate degrees, an increased tendency to seek international careers, and the cultivation of long-term cross-cultural friendships. The gap year concept has become very popular, particularly in the U.K., as a time to leave home to travel and work in the world before deciding on a vocation to follow in adulthood (Söderman & Snead, 2008). This gap year experience predominantly focuses on the individual's self-development and enhancement of one's curriculum vitae, as employers in the U.K. highly value candidates with volunteering experience (Callanan & Thomas, 2005). In the U.S. the gap year program has yet to acquire much popularity, in part due to the high cost of university education in the U.S. and the fact that many graduates are not financially able to take a year off. However, a "career gap" is becoming more popular in the U.S. as the younger generation is becoming increasingly interested in taking off a few months of time to explore personal interests and engage in volunteer work (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008).

Volunteer tourism as a commodity

As volunteer tourism is arguably a niche within the international travel industry, analysts have tended to focus upon such issues as satisfying tourists demand, marketing destinations and experiences, and managing tourism to achieve greater growth rates and profits (Higgins-Desboiolles & Russell-Mundine, 2008). In this way volunteer tourism is treated as a commodity on the international (and often free) market (McGehee, 2012). Highly commodified tourism can lead to detrimental sociocultural impacts and the exploitation of host communities and their natural resources. In an early study on the decommodification of ecotourism, Wearing & Wearing (1999) perceived a tremendous challenge in moving the philosophy and practice of ecotourism beyond market priorities and decommodifying it. Wearing also argued that doing so would require operators to instill a conservation ethic in their clients, establish carrying

capacities, promote environmentally sensitive behavior, develop codes of ethics and industry standards, use promotional materials that provide realistic images of destinations, ensure benefits of the sales go directly to host communities, provide culturally-specific guidelines to visitors, and generate employment opportunities for local community members. Lyons & Wearing (2008) stated that "areas such as ecotourism have not been able to resist the global commodification in international tourist markets." The reality was a privatized, competitive and highly commodified tourist industry that faces decommodified principles of ecological values, human impacts and sustainability. The recent growth in the publication of guidebooks oriented to adventure tourism, volunteer tourism, and other forms of alternative tourism can also be viewed as the commodification of these emerging forms of tourism (Young, 2008).

Conventional tourism is characterized as a commodification of people, places, and experiences to be consumed by the tourist, often with little personal interaction that moves beyond superficiality. A major critique of the more recent field of ecotourism has been that it also commodifies people and places for the aesthetic consumption of self-indulgent tourists (Gray & Campbell, 2007). The emerging field of volunteer tourism may be seen as a new and commodified form of alternative consumption. Wearing (2001) places volunteer tourism projects on a continuum, ranging from highly commodified (a consumer product resembling conventional tourism) to decommodified (strives to involve and benefit host communities). One prerequisite for decommodification is that profits must be directed towards the local community rather than outside companies. According to Wearing, the distinguishing factor of a decommodified volunteer tourism project is whether or not it moves beyond a commodified tourism experience to a level of genuine exchange between hosts and guests (Wearing, 2001). Lyons & Wearing (2008) suggest two crucial questions: 1) Can the philosophy and practice of volunteer tourism that extends beyond market priorities can be sustained in the global tourism marketplace?; and 2) If volunteer tourism becomes commodified, will it still provide valuable assistance to projects and communities? These questions are critical because the commodification of volunteer tourism may result in an over-emphasis on profits and client satisfaction over its beneficial and long-term social and development impacts in host communities

Key critiques of volunteer tourism

Although volunteer tourism is heralded as providing a genuine educational experience for volunteers, fostering friendships between host communities and visitors, and generating sustainable and beneficial impacts for host communities, it has also been widely criticized. Volunteer tourists, just like conventional tourists, can impact the day-to-day lives of residents in both positive and negative ways (McGehee & Andereck, 2009). Some argue that volunteer tourism does little to improve the lives of host community members. For example, Voluntary Services Overseas director Judith Brodie stated that "many volunteer tourism trips to developing countries are expensive, poorly planned and unlikely to help local people (Griffiths, 2007).

Mowforth & Munt (2003, p. 58) challenge the assumption that emerging forms of alternative tourism will surmount the problems that have been identified in conventional tourism. They argue that volunteer tourism (and other forms of alternative tourism) should not be seen as ethically and morally superior to conventional forms of tourism, and that there are many potential negative impacts of volunteer tourism, particularly in programs that are not properly organized. Local community desires can be neglected, volunteer tourists can be motivated by self-interest, volunteer tourism can become commodified by large tour operators, volunteer tourists tend to focus on promoting their own environmental values instead of appreciating the desire for development, volunteers often lack specific skills sets applicable to the project at hand, they can be burdensome, they can perform unsatisfactory work, they can undercut competing local laborers (as they work for free), they often do not understand the foundations and dynamics of social injustice, poverty, and inequalities, and the volunteer tourism process can promote a cycle of dependency (Guttentag, 2009; ; Guttentag, 2011; Sin, H., 2009). Benson & Wearing (2012) argue that although volunteer tourism has an implied altruistic philosophy, it still caters more to the needs of tourists than needs of host communities. Guttentag (2011) also argues that volunteer motivations can influence their preferences, which influences the selection and design of projects as project operators strive to attract volunteers. MacKinnon (2009) observes in the context of Malawi that many volunteer projects serve the egos of the tourists more effectively than they serve the locals. McIntosh & Zahra (2007) argue that volunteer tourism may also curtail self-sufficiency in host communities.

Volunteer tourists may adopt a giving attitude and instead of understanding the foundations and dynamics of social injustice, poverty, and inequalities, they may see themselves as the "richer" and "better off' providing aid to the "poor" and "worse off." Volunteers may also

rationalize or romanticize poverty, focusing on the happiness of hosts to justify their situation (Guttentag, 2011). Volunteer tourists may therefore not change their perception toward the nationality or culture of host residents and instead may consider them as inferior or less able and in need of volunteer aid (Woosnam & Lee, 2011). When volunteer programs fall into the habit of giving, they can create a state of dependency that undermines hosts communities and the dignity of local residents (McGee & Andereck, 2008; Sin, 2010). Simpson (2007, cited in Raymond, 2008) claims that "the best volunteers are those who feel that they have as much if not more to learn as they have to give."

Volunteer tourists are often not encouraged to question why communities in host-countries need volunteer services; in forming a dichotomy between volunteers and aid-recipients, such tourism may not fulfill its purpose of achieving greater societal well-being (Sin, 2009). Marketing schemes for volunteer tourism projects consequently tend to focus on the neediness of host communities and their situation of poverty (Simpson, 2004). In doing so, volunteer tourism programs can easily re-create misunderstandings and stereotypes (Lyons & Wearing, 2008; Simpson, 2004).

A frequent critique of volunteer projects linked to environmental conservation is that such programs tend to be situated in enticing and attractive areas such as tropical rain forests, lagoons or beaches (Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004). Lorimer (2009) argues that one of the greatest problems with volunteer tourism in conservation is that volunteers express strong preferences towards areas of charismatic fauna and places deemed "Edenic," such as tropical rainforests and coral reefs. Most volunteers also desire interaction with charismatic wildlife. For this reason, there is a scarcity of volunteer programs dedicated to less visible and accessible organisms and more mundane destinations. Callanan & Thomas (2005) make a point that many organizations promote the environmental aspects of destinations using images of natural beauty which often are in sharp contrast with the actual nature of volunteer activities that are often not environmentally related.

Young and unskilled volunteers can also be a drain on a community's resources if they require constant support and training, challenging the perception that a volunteer can make a valuable contribution to a community in a short duration. When volunteers are unqualified or do not speak the language they can be a burden rather than an asset and may not be able to make a genuine contribution (Raymond, 2008). Callanan & Thomas (2005) found that only 24% of

community welfare projects worldwide require volunteers to have linguistic skills. They also found that only 12% of teaching projects require individuals to have a professional teaching qualification, which questions the learning experiences of the children and ability of volunteers to make a substantial contribution. As most young volunteers have few or no skills to offer, many organizations stress that they do not require volunteers to have specific skills, qualifications or experience, thus increasing their appeal to young people as alternative travel experiences (Callanan & Thomas, 2005). Callanan & Thomas (2005) also question whether such young, unskilled volunteers are equipped to manage the emotional and physical strain of working on social welfare projects, particularly in working with people of mental and physical disabilities. Sin (2010) similarly argues that volunteer tourism rhetoric suggests that volunteer tourists can teach others despite having little experience or knowledge to do so. According to a magazine publication (Frean, 2006), Kate Simpson of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne stated that problems arise when unskilled workers engage in work that they would not be allowed to do at home, such as working in hospitals and teaching.

When volunteer tourists take on the role of expert regardless of experience or qualifications, this reinforces the perception of Westerners as racially and culturally superior (Raymond & Hall, 2008; Raymond, 2011). It also promotes deference in the local community to outside knowledge, restricting the community's capacity for self-sufficiency (Wearing, 2004). Raymond & Hall (2008) warns that volunteer tourism programs tend to trivialize poverty, leading volunteers to assume that host communities accept their poverty. Raymond & Hall also argue that volunteers are assumed to be "good" because they travel long distances to volunteer, leading to the assumption that putting volunteers into contact with host community members will naturally lead to a broadening of horizons and cultural understanding. Raymond (2008) similarly argues that mutually beneficial programs and the development of cross-cultural understanding are not an automatic result of sending volunteers overseas, but actually reflect very careful planning and management on the part of the volunteer sending organization.

Higgins-Desbiolles & Russell-Mundine (2008) criticize volunteer tourism as a story of Western privilege and an opportunity for the wealthy to visit the poor and marginalized communities of the world. Sin (2010) points out underlying assumptions that volunteer tourists are from the developed world, host nations and communities are in developing countries, and that the developing world is deemed incapable of eradicating poverty and needs assistance and

resources of the "North." In this fashion, volunteer tourism is portrayed as a new and lucrative niche market for travel agencies to specialize in attracting privileged volunteer tourists to engage in volunteer work in developing nations. Under the assumption that travel and tourism are a human right, underpinned by a number of declarations of the U.N. and World Tourism Organization, Higgins-Desbiolles & Russell-Mundine (2008) argue that volunteer tourism must not continue to operate in a unidirectional way. Lyons & Wearing (2008) also challenge the notion that volunteer tourism is a unidirectional phenomenon of volunteers from developed nations serving the needs of developing nations.

While one of the central tenets of volunteer tourism is poverty reduction, many destinations of high poverty are overlooked by volunteer tourists and volunteer tourism organizations. Several studies suggested that top destinations for volunteer tourism include India, Costa Rica, Peru, Ecuador, Ghana, South Africa, Indonesia and Tanzania (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008; Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Cousins, 2007; Lorimer, 2009; Tomazos & Butler, 2009). However, the study by Tomazos & Butler (2009) also found that of the 3441 volunteer projects analyzed, 905 were based on countries with a high HDI (human development index) score, 2347 in medium HDI countries, and only 147 in countries with a low HDI score. This suggests that poverty and need for international assistance may not be a principal driving factor in determining the geographic placement of volunteer tourism projects. Furthermore, Callanan & Thomas (2005) found that among the ten top destinations for volunteer tourists worldwide, Italy and England were two top recipients. They therefore question why two of the greatest political powers of the European Union are at the top of the list. One caveat in using the HDI and other such nation-level aggregate data to determine volunteer need is that many countries, regardless of their placements on the HDI scale, have areas of poverty and ecological threats worthy of volunteer support.

Tomazos & Butler (2009) suggest that conventional market forces are the most influential factor in driving the development of volunteer tourism, rather than a response to the need for assistance. Benson & Henderson (2011) assert that there is a moderate to high risk of operating in developing countries that are politically and economically unstable; consequentially some of the top destinations of volunteer tourism are often not the poorest or neediest. Richard Hawkes, director of Volunteer Service International, shared this concern by stating that "if people are encouraged to pick and choose where they give help, instead of making the choice based on the

community's need for their skills, some countries will inevitably suffer" (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008, p. 7).

Impacts of volunteer tourism on the host community

Literature on the community impacts of volunteer tourism is scant. The majority of current literature focuses on the motivations of volunteer tourists, the market for volunteer tourism, and the benefits of volunteer tourism experiences for volunteer tourists. A few studies have focused on the contributions of volunteer tourism programs for the communities in which they operate, as well as negative or unexpected consequences. Lough, McBride, Sherraden & O'hara (2010) suggest that short-term international volunteers may assist local organizations by supplying extra hands, providing technical or professional skills, contributing information and resources, and enhancing intercultural understanding and the cultural competency of staff members. Volunteers may also alleviate the resource squeeze on host organizations, bring in diverse perspectives and contribute to increased tolerance and broader perspectives on problem-solving.

Other studies on the community impacts of volunteer tourism consist largely of case studies and are not applicable to other programs nor do they provide data or methods that can be applied at a larger scale. For example, in undertaking a study of a volunteer tourism program for Australian youth in indigenous Maori communities of New Zealand, McIntosh & Zahra (2007) found that the program was mutually beneficial for both volunteers and residents. As a form of cultural (indigenous) tourism, community residents stated that the program brought positive role-models and volunteers who were interested in the Maori people and their culture, making many Maori people proud to be Maori. The program also allowed for an engaging, genuine, creative and mutually beneficial narrative between host and guest and the forging of genuine friendships. A similar study was conducted by McGehee & Andereck (2009) in which they analyzed volunteer tourism programs in Tijuana, Mexico. Their intention was to study the resident attitudes toward such programs. They sought to understand how residents understood the positive and negative impacts of volunteer tourism, finding that a significant factor in determining residents' perceptions of volunteer tourism was the amount of personal benefit that the volunteer tourism program generated. In addition, they found that residents with higher education levels were more aware of volunteer tourism's negative consequences.

Other observations on the community impacts of volunteer tourism are negative but generic in nature. For example, Wall and Mathieson (2006) suggest that community impacts can be negative, such as when volunteer tourists draw attention to their lifestyles at home and economic wealth and affluence. Locals may respond by trying to imitate such consumption patterns, reaching discontent when such things are beyond their reach. Clifton and Benson (2006) similarly observe that the economic differences between visitor and resident can lead to jealousy or aspirations that are impossible to achieve. Volunteers may be a burden to local organizations as they absorb or deplete staff time and resources; volunteers also require training, support, resources (Lough et al., 2010).

Much of volunteer tourism has its roots in missionary movements and relief work of the Catholic and Protestant churches as early as the 19th century (McGehee & Andereck, 2009; Callanan & Thomas, 2005). Many short-term mission trips place different levels of importance on the religious elements of their trips and the amount of spiritual or religious impact that these trips have on host communities varies widely. Wearing (2001) argues that this desired religious impact inherently prevents this form of volunteer tourism from valuing a host community's culture or allowing a genuine exchange between volunteers and hosts. In McGehee & Andereck's study (2009) of volunteer tourism in Tijuana, they observe that many community residents have learned to expect that the "God talk" is an expected price that they will pay in exchange for volunteer work. Despite the religious intentions of many such trips, one of their key driving forces was often to curb the growing class divisions in society (Callanan & Thomas, 2005).

Impacts of volunteer tourism on the environment

Little scholarly attention has been placed on the environmental impacts of volunteer tourism and its role in creating awareness of conservation issues (Rattan, Eagles & Mair, 2012). Rattan, Eagles & Mair (2012) point out that volunteer tourism has the potential to raise awareness about conservation issues, bring funding to projects, and affect policy decisions. Literature on this topic is limited and largely focuses on the ability of volunteers to aid researchers in carrying out ecological surveys and their ability to finance such projects. For example, Ellis (2003) details some of the conservation benefits of volunteer tourism that focuses on ecological research: financial contributions that allow scientists to focus on research and

purchase equipment, influencing the long-term attitudes and behaviors of the public towards wildlife and the natural environment, influencing the political mandate for an area, agency or species, promoting an increased public understanding and support for scientific research and environmental conservation, producing a greater pool of trained volunteers, and generating environmentally friendly behaviors among the public. Jeffries (2009) suggests that volunteering in international conservation projects can generate more local interest in environmental improvement, develop small-scale sustainable tourism infrastructure, and provide organization and project management skills to partner organizations.

Links between ecotourism, conservation research and volunteer tourism is emerging, as companies are beginning to work with researchers to create volunteer opportunities to attract financial and human capital for conservation research (Wearing, 2001, 2004). Brightsmith, Stronza & Holle (2008) used an example in Peru to show that biological research, ecotourism and volunteer tourism can work together and promoted each entity's agenda in a positive way. They conclude that ecotourism operators and volunteer organizations have the potential to provide long-term funding for research, especially in the developing world where biodiversity is concentrated and resources are scarce.

Matthews (2008) suggests that conservation-oriented volunteer tourism programs often represent a conflict of values between volunteers that operate within a paradigm of environmental conservation and host community members who value natural resources for consumptive values. In reference to a sea turtle conservation program in Costa Rica, Matthews found that the volunteers operated under discourses of environmentalism and were bringing their own global codes and values into a local space, which had a very different underlying set of values including turtle consumption. In interactions with local vendors who made handicrafts out of turtle shell, it became clear that the volunteers and the locals were often ontologically opposed and such opposing values often represented the divergence between a global perspective (in this case, protection of the worldwide population of sea turtles) and local perspective (in this case, the local economy and the harvesting of sea turtles and their eggs). The globally sanctioned ethics of protecting sea turtles clashed with the question of livelihood and tradition. In light of this, Matthews concluded that despite the positive intentions of volunteer tourists and travelers to experience connection with the local culture, to belong, and to be engaged, there can be

discursive interference and roadblocks in the process. Guttentag (2011) similarly found that NGOs sometimes promote conservation against the wishes of local communities.

Applicable theoretical frameworks

Theoretical foundations have been difficult to establish in volunteer tourism (McGehee, 2010). This is due in part to the multiple approaches and diversity of programs and perspectives represented within volunteer tourism. In addition, most theories currently applied to volunteer tourism have largely focused on student outcomes, social movements, pedagogy, relationships of privilege and the use of experiential education as a learning strategy, rather than on the interactions between program participants and the host community.

Researchers have applied numerous theories to understand the phenomenon of volunteer tourism, though little has been done to unify them into a single theoretical framework. Examples include social exchange theory (Clifton & Benson, 2006; McGehee & Andereck, 2009); altruistic surplus theory (Clifton & Benson, 2006); social movement theory (McGehee, 2001; McGehee & Santos, 2005); post-development and neo-populist theories (Butcher & Smith, 2010); modern and postmodern Theories (Uriely et al., 2003); postcolonialist, feminist, poststructuralist, and postmodern Theories (Wearing & Neil, 2000); post-structuralism and feminist theories (Wearing et al., 2005); and development, life cycle, equity and stakeholder theories (McGehee & Andereck, 2009).

An appropriate theoretical framework for this research consists of an examination of theories of international development, which can help form an appropriate foundation to understand the role of volunteer tourism in promoting community development. Early theories of the modernization and development of underdeveloped countries focused on macroeconomic growth, infrastructure development and technological advancements (Crabtree, 2008). This form of development was largely governed by a top-down approach in which powerful political and economic forces dictated the development processes of underdeveloped places of the world, favoring large-scale development projects with macroeconomic impacts. This process was indifferent to the concerns of rural and indigenous communities and was not conducive to participatory and collaborative approaches to development. These early theories of international development assumed that developing countries would strive for a level of development similar

to that which the first world has achieved (Green & Haines, 2008). Such theories focused on the deficiency of natural resources, capital and infrastructure, as well as social and cultural factors within the developing world.

These early top-down approaches have been somewhat replaced by alternative models of development which focus on decentralized, rural, community-level interventions that emphasize partnership and participation at a micro level (Crabtree, 2008; Ingram, 2011). For example, Raymond (2011) argues that the ideal approach to volunteer tourism is bottom-up, in which the needs of the host community are identified and volunteers are found to match those needs. In this paradigm of development the beneficiaries have a greater participatory role in project design, implementation, and assessment (Crabtree, 2008). This paradigm focuses strongly on participatory development, the role of small NGOs (non-governmental organizations), and the incorporation of indigenous knowledge and organizational structures. Volunteer tourism initiatives fit into this line of thought as they generally consist of small-scale and community-level initiatives that promote community development and poverty alleviation by way of international assistance.

As a corollary to theorizing on international development, numerous critics recognize the inequalities in the global power structure which allow First World development initiatives to dictate Third World development processes in a top-down fashion. The manner in which tourism intentionally or inadvertently reinforces power inequalities and the dependency of developing countries on developed countries for economic and intellectual assistance is often referred to as neo-colonialism or imperialism (Butcher & Smith, 2010; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Seen through a lens of neo-colonialism theory, volunteer tourism can promote an “us and them” mentality, an imposition of Western values, an assumption that volunteers can make a positive contribution to communities due to their Western country origin, and an assumption that their presence has no negative impacts on the host community (Fee & Mdee, 2011). Benson & Henderson (2011) and Guttentag (2011) suggest that the relationship between host community and volunteer tourist may not be equal as a privileged group (volunteers) is donating time and an underprivileged group (host communities) is receiving assistance and therefore has relatively little power and does not exercise control over firms that recruit volunteers. Raymond (2008) argues that host organizations and communities must be involved in decision-making processes and that

volunteer sending organizations cannot impose foreign values and principles to avoid being associated with the colonialist attitude of mass tourism.

Another manifestation of the domination of Western values in volunteer tourism, parallel to being labeled as a form of neo-colonialism, consists of the market ideology of neo-liberalism. Discourse within international tourism often promotes this free market-driven approach to economic development that emphasizes growth rates, profits and macroeconomic development rather than the social and small-scale impacts of tourism (Higgins-Desbiolles & Russell-Mundine, 2008). Vodopivek and Jaffe (2011) portray volunteer tourism as a neoliberal form of development practice which has become privatized and undermines the capacity of local states to stimulate community development.

Theories of globalization in relation to community development strengthen this argument and reveal the consequences of top-down and macroeconomic development processes. Craig (1998, p. 5) suggests that community development is forced upon small communities as a means of "helping people to adapt their way of life to the changes they have had imposed on them by wider economic and political forces little concerned with their needs and desires." In the context of globalization, it is common that far-away economic decisions generate local community impacts while such communities have little to no voice in objecting or changing the course of action of such economic processes. In this way globalization is forcing a top-down decision-making process onto rural communities, as outside experts become the precursors of structural adjustment (Craig, 1998). Lyson (2006) suggests that communities and local economies which are able to organize around small-scale, locally-controlled enterprises are associated with a more-balanced economic life and higher levels of social well-being and political welfare. This "civic community" approach (Lyson, 2006) is in direct contrast to the economic globalization approach of the corporate community. Furthermore, such communities with higher "civic spirit" are better able to nurture social capital and civic engagement, and consequently to meet the social and economic needs of all residents. These propositions of globalization theory are relevant in the context of volunteer tourism as they suggest that: 1) communities can overcome a dependence on international aid by identifying community assets which can be strengthened from volunteer tourists, thus promoting greater independence within the development process; and 2) the promotion of locally- and community-run enterprises would foster greater social

capital, help local businesses to grow, and would address community needs in a more egalitarian fashion and increase social welfare.

Inequalities in the global power structure that lead to top-down development initiatives (including volunteer tourism to an extent) are explained in part by critical theory. McGehee (2010) suggests that the interplay of oppression and human emancipation in volunteer tourism merit the application of critical theory to frame these concepts. Critical theory is a response to increasing issues of domination, oppression, and unequal power distribution in the world. It argues that these are largely the result of economic, social and political forces that are both entrenched in history and the result of the hegemony of growing economic and political forces of modernity. In its basic sense, critical theory asks the question: who has power and why? (McGehee, 2011). Critical theorists argue that there are many forms of power beyond economic power, including forms of oppression tied to race, class, and or gender (Jordan & Aitchison, 2008). Although critical theory has many variations, Kincheloe & McLaren (2003) identified commonalities among the numerous perspectives of critical theorists, some of which are: 1) thought is mediated by socially/historically constituted power relations; 2) certain groups in society are privileged over others and the oppression that characterizes today's societies is reproduced when subordinates accept their status as inevitable; and 3) mainstream research practices are generally implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression.

McGehee (2010) asserts that the goals of many volunteer tourism organizations closely relate to the propositions of critical theorists, particularly for two reasons: 1) certain groups in society are privileged over others, such as wealthy volunteer tourists who are able to travel and visit impoverished communities; and 2) the first step in reducing these inequalities is by exposing the power relations that exist between these various social groups. McGehee & Andereck (2008) similarly argue that the very foundation of volunteer tourism serves as a stronghold for the privileged. Volunteer tourism may also perpetuate inequalities and work against human emancipation due to its nature of economically and socially powerful individuals paying to volunteer in less powerful host communities that often play a passive role and tend to be exploited or dominated (McGehee, 2012).

Theories of public participation in community development, democratic processes and social capital formation also provide justification and useful frameworks to guide the

juxtaposition of volunteer tourism and community development. This is based on an underlying proposition that for volunteer tourism programs to produce beneficial impacts for host communities, they should focus on increasing democratic citizen participation in project planning, implementation and assessment. A consideration of current discourse on public participation is essential as this research aims to form a causal link between levels of public participation and the success of volunteer tourism in generating beneficial community impacts.

Value placed on citizen participation arises from the classic theory of democracy (Kweit & Kweit, 1981). Terchek & Conte (2001) argue that prevailing theories of democracy hold several common attributes: they reject the idea that one or a few persons have a warrant to rule the rest; they view each member of a political community as possessing elementary rational capacities that are sufficient to judge the behavior of the government; public office is not the property of political officers, but theoretically belongs to the citizens who can reclaim it in an orderly way; and public power flows from public approval and the law reflects public preferences. Kweit & Kweit (1981) argue that citizen participation has three goals: the redistribution of power, improvements in citizen attitudes, and improvements in service delivery.

This fundamental theory of democracy would argue for a high degree of public participation in the management of a community-based volunteer tourism project. However, this leads to critical questions: what degree of participation is appropriate, and is such a level of participation well understood and agreed upon by policy-makers and citizens? The "ladder of public participation," proposed by Arnstein (1969), is a framework that considers levels of citizen participation in political decision-making and helps to understand nuances among participation levels. Differing degrees of participation and public power are divided into eight rungs, ranging from manipulation to citizen empowerment. Rocha (1997) expanded on the ladder of public participation, instead using the term "ladder of empowerment" to incorporate theories of empowerment. In this context, the notion of empowerment is both a means and a goal, used to acquire basic needs, education, skills, and the power to achieve a higher quality of life. Citizen empowerment is also fostered by an individual's inclusion in an organization and its decision-making processes (Rocha, 1997). Rowlands (1997) argues that empowerment is more than just participation in decision-making; rather it also must include processes that cause people to perceive themselves as capable of making decisions. A consideration of the aforementioned propositions of citizen participation and empowerment suggests that volunteer tourism can be a

tool of empowerment when its approach to working with host communities is participatory and democratic.

However, in the realization that much of what is labeled “citizen participation” largely consists of simply informing the public rather than true collaboration, scholars have generated additional and more recent theoretical distinctions of citizen participation. For example, Creighton (2005) suggested four distinct levels of public participation that routinely occur: 1) public information, which is a one-way communication process to inform the public; 2) procedural public participation, which usually consists of informing the public of decisions through public hearings and reports, allowing for citizen feedback, often simply a checklist or hoop for policy makers to jump through; 3) consultation and collaborative problem-solving, which often results in informed consent and often forced consensus; and 4) consensus building, which is a process that strives to reach unanimous agreement through citizen participation. Similarly, Langton (1978) proposed four types of public participation: public action, public involvement, electoral participation, and obligatory participation. In public action, citizens control and initiate activities; Green & Haines (2008) argue that this is the best approach for participatory and collaborative management.

Theories behind social capital and social capital formation are a strong justification for participatory processes in volunteer tourism due to the fact that collaborative action builds social capital. Green & Haines (2008) define social capital as the aspects of social structure such as trust, norms and social networks that facilitate collective action. Social capital theory suggests that a stronger connection between citizens and public officials can create synergy and promote local development. In addition, strong social capital can increase organizational integrity, trust, accountability of public officials, and organizational capacity (Green & Haines, 2008). Regarding participatory and collaborative management processes, social capital can work as a two way feedback loop: the social relationships and ties that characterize high social capital can facilitate collective action in communities, while successful collective action can build social capital that increases social relationships and ties. Participatory processes in volunteer tourism can therefore build social capital as well as benefit from communities that possess high social capital. As communities vary naturally in the degree of social capital present, this can serve as an explanatory variable in the success (or failure) of volunteer tourism in promoting participatory community development.

Participatory processes and citizen engagement in volunteer tourism require a high degree of collaboration and communication. Theories in collaboration and communication are therefore highly relevant and useful in guiding the process of citizen participation in volunteer tourism management. Collaboration is defined by Jamal & Getz (1994) as a process of joint decision-making to resolve tensions that exist among various autonomous stakeholders, public and private. Gray (1989) outlines five characteristics of this collaboration process: 1) stakeholders are independent; 2) solutions emerge when differences are dealt with constructively; 3) decisions must be achieved with joint ownership; 4) stakeholders must assume collective responsibility of the direction of the domain; and 5) collaboration is an emergent process through which organizations cope with the growing complexity of their environments. Significant obstacles also exist that can prevent effective collaboration. For example, the process of collaboration can be blocked by unequal power relationships (Okazaki, 2008) and the conventional power structure of a community can be a constraint against the collaborative process. For this reason, Medeiros de Araujo & Bramwell (1999) argue that the identification of key stakeholders is crucial at the time of planning. Collaboration theory would suggest that an understanding of the aspects and challenges of successful collaboration are necessary to achieve multi-stakeholder collaboration in volunteer tourism.

Theory of communicative action, and its underpinnings of solidarity and emancipation, is a logical corollary to critical theory, theories of social collaboration and social capital theory. Habermas (1990) argues that the key to emancipation is found in communication that is situated in discourses among equal citizens. Communicative action transmits and renews knowledge in a process that achieves mutual understandings, coordinating action towards social integration and solidarity. It is based on the fundamental assumption that human communication has evolved a capability to reach mutual understanding. It promotes a form of discourse that allows all participants in a discussion equal opportunities to ask questions with the aim of determining truth, rightfulness and sincerity (Jacobson & Kolluri, 1999). In essence, this theoretical approach argues that when two or more individuals are able to communicate on an equal level, free of pre-existing power structures, the end result is a greater mutual understanding and the emancipation of subjugated person(s). The theory of communicative action can be used as a conceptual framework to promote participatory communication (Jacobson & Kolluri, 1999). It is therefore a

strong justification and guiding framework for participatory and collaborative approaches to working with host communities of volunteer tourism.

Many of these theoretical considerations serve as a guide for this doctoral research, which represents an attempt to better understand how different approaches to conducting volunteer tourism programs and engaging citizens in host communities generate unique social and cultural impacts. In particular, theories of international development suggest a bottom-up approach to volunteer tourism which is reflected in the community-based approach to indicator development in this research. This grassroots approach is also reflected in theories of community development, public participation, democracy, collaboration, and communicative action. Critical theory and neo-colonialism theory also provide a backdrop and lens through which volunteer can be seen as a form of top-down and disempowering development (at one extreme) or an empowering and participatory approach centered on emancipation (at another extreme). The aforementioned theoretical considerations also serve as a justification for this research, they frame the methods and conclusions, and they also help to explain and communicate many of the results.

Work plan and methods

Underlying assumptions

Due to the strong qualitative component of the proposed research, an interpretivist paradigm dictated the choice of research design. According to Glesne (1999, p. 294), "since interpretivists assume that they deal with multiple, social constructed realities or 'qualities' that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables, they regard the research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them." The indicator-based approach to this research must also be cognizant of the fact that although the impacts of volunteer tourism can be categorized, they are not mutually exclusive, and are perceived in different ways by different stakeholders. The researcher was the principle instrument of data collection for a significant portion of this proposed research, in which values and beliefs may influence the research process, so precautions were taken to minimize the potential effects of these. For example, during on-site data collection, the researcher allowed the research participants to freely generate ideas without excessive examples

or detailed explanations that would have biased the results or brainstorming processes. On-site interviews also involved open-ended questions that did not exert significant influence over responses.

The research was conducted within the boundaries of a pragmatic worldview. According to Creswell (2009), in this mode of inquiry "researchers emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem." Due to the necessity of both qualitative and qualitative data collection, the diversity of variables and factors to be considered, and the exploratory/explanatory facets of the research, this was the most practical approach. Furthermore, the focus of this investigation was not only to explain a phenomenon, but also to address a research problem and find practical solutions using pluralistic approaches. In addition, collecting diverse types of data allowed the researcher to best understand the research problem and find potential solutions.

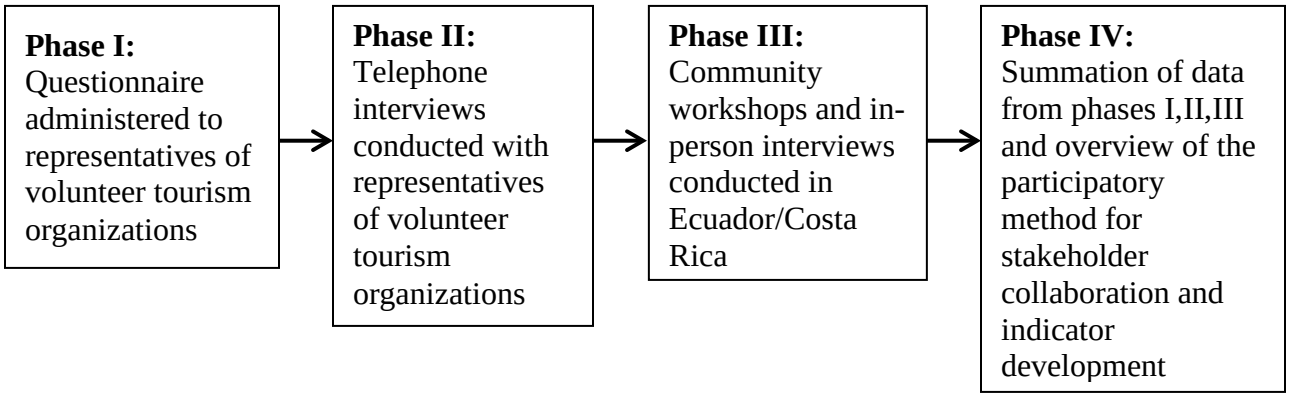
A review of previous literature (including indicator development, ecotourism and sustainable tourism) suggested that a mixed-methods approach was appropriate in order to better understand both the qualitative and quantifiable aspects of how volunteer tourism programs impact host communities. Due to the exploratory nature of the research and the necessity of incorporating qualitative data such as community attitudes and perceptions, the research had a strong qualitative aspect. Quantitative analyses of the current practices of volunteer tourism organizations, including indicators prioritized and the frequency/nature of local impact assessments, increase the generalizability of the findings across the spectrum of organizations which participate in volunteer tourism. In addition, quantitative data obtained in the questionnaire complement and triangulate qualitative data obtained from host communities. This is particularly important due to the near impossibility of true random sampling for qualitative data collection in the host communities.

Sequence of research plan

The research process followed the sequential explanatory strategy as outlined by Creswell (2009). This approach to research "is characterized by the collection and analysis of quantitative data in a first phase of research followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data in a second phase that builds on the results of the initial quantitative results" (Creswell, 2009, p. 211). Due to the present lack of literature on the community impacts of volunteer

tourism, the research had a significant exploratory component and required both quantitative and qualitative inquiries. This began with quantitative data collection (phase I) via a questionnaire regarding volunteer tourism sending organizations. This provided a baseline of knowledge of the characteristics of sending organizations, the communities they work with, their on-site activities, approaches to working with communities and the local impacts of their programs. It also provided a framework upon which successive qualitative data collection processes were based. According to Creswell (2009), the sequential explanatory design is "typically used to explain and interpret quantitative results by collecting and analyzing follow-up qualitative data" (p. 211). In this research process, the follow-up qualitative data collection consisted of telephone interviews with questionnaire respondents (phase II) as well as workshops and in-person interviews conducted in volunteer tourism host communities (phase III). This provided an in-depth and in-context understanding of volunteer tourism programs built upon the results of the initial phase of data collection. Phase IV consisted of a summation of the data acquired in the first three phases and presents a thorough critique and guidelines for the future employment of a participatory method for identifying and evaluating the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. Figure 1.1 illustrates the sequential pattern of this research.

Figure 1.1. Sequence of Research Plan



Phase I of research

This first phase of the research consisted of an exploratory online questionnaire, designed by the researcher, sent to international volunteer tourism organizations which focus on natural resource conservation and community development projects. Much of the questionnaire was framed around understanding how volunteer tourism organizations employ indicators to evaluate

the impacts of their programs in host communities. In order to maximize the quantitative component of the survey and facilitate data analysis, questions required questionnaire respondents to select from among pre-determined initial indicator sets. The indicator sets were organized according to an indicator development framework called the "Compass of Sustainability" (AtKisson, 2011). In order to produce initial sets of indicators, the research and literature regarding community indicator development for ecotourism, sustainable tourism and community well-being was systematically used and adapted to the unique program structures of volunteer tourism. Appendix 1 represents a compilation of the broad themes, organizational approaches and suggestions from this literature which provided an initial indicator set relevant to volunteer tourism programs. It incorporated the positive and negative economic, environmental and sociocultural impacts of ecotourism and community-based natural resource management, as well as indicators previously established to measure the impacts of ecotourism and sustainable tourism.

In addition to the aforementioned indicator sets, the questionnaire covered numerous other topics that are relevant to the theme of local impacts:

- Size of host communities served by volunteer tourists
- Demographic nature of volunteer tourists
- Destination countries
- Years of existence of the volunteer tourism organization
- Number of volunteer tourists recruited per year
- Nature of service activities performed in host communities
- Strategies of host community and project selection
- Nature of communication between host community and volunteer tourism organization
- Indicators that are useful or currently used to assess the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities

A text version of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2.

Selection of sampling frame and sample

Identification of the sampling frame began with a comprehensive list of volunteer tourism organizations which currently send volunteers to work on community-based natural resource conservation and community development projects. A systematic sampling process based on specific criteria was employed, in lieu of random sampling. The list was derived from five popular guide books that provide information on volunteer tourism organizations for interested

volunteers (Ausenda, 2011; Brodowsky, 2010; Hindle et al., 2010; Lynch, 2009; Mersmann et al., 2010) and one research publication with an extensive list of international volunteer tourism organizations (Tourism Research & Marketing, 2008).

The aforementioned publications were systematically reviewed to identify volunteer tourism organizations which recruit volunteers and have environmental conservation or community development as at least one goal of their volunteer program. In addition, all organizations had to fulfill one of the following criteria to be considered: 1) organizations based in the U.S.A., U.K., Canada, Australia or New Zealand and offer one or more international volunteer tourism options; or 2) organizations based in Spanish-speaking Latin American countries that recruit volunteer tourists from outside of the host country. These criteria helped to capture both the viewpoints of international sending organizations and those of in-country organizations from Latin America (which was the geographic focus of phase three of this research). It also necessitated a Spanish version of the questionnaire instrument to be employed for Latin American organizations.

In order for an organization to be considered a "volunteer tourism organization" and for its inclusion in the sample, it had to offer some type of unpaid work that directly or indirectly promotes natural resource conservation or community development. The sample excluded organizations that: 1) function as a directory, list serve, or travel agency and do not organize, coordinate or evaluate the volunteer tourism programs that they offer; 2) only offer programs greater than one year in duration; 3) focus specifically on teaching English, teaching orphans, foreign language study, or providing medical care; or 4) place volunteers in isolated settings void of human communities, such as the Arctic/Antarctic regions and on ships or ocean voyages. This selection process eliminated long term volunteer placements such as the U.S. Peace Corps, which are typically considered as approaches to fomenting long-term international development rather than as a form of tourism and consequentially may have unique impacts. It also excluded mission trips; although there is a strong link between mission trips and the origins of volunteer tourism, many mission trips are focused on religious purposes rather than development and cultural exchange. In addition, there is no convenient database for identifying mission trip programs that would be suitable to include in this study. This selection process also limited the sample to organizations with strong environmental and social impacts and also promoted a focus on short-term programs, which represents the majority of the volunteer tourism market. The

stipulations of this sampling process reduced the sample size to approximately 200 organizations.

Questionnaire administration

The author identified a program director or appropriate representative for each volunteer tourism organization using e-mail and telephone communication. In this communication process, many organizations recommended the most appropriate person to receive the questionnaire. When this did not occur, the author used best judgment to determine who at each organization should receive the questionnaire. An e-mail address was acquired for each representative, as all following correspondences were conducted through e-mail. The Dillman method (Dillman et al., 2009) for survey implementation was then employed, as outlined below:

Pre-notice letter

A few days before surveys were sent out a pre-notice letter was e-mailed to the representative of each organization to inform them of the upcoming survey, including the purpose and potential outcomes of the study. Each correspondence was personalized and addressed to a specific and pre-identified respondent for each organization. As an incentive to decrease nonresponses, this letter included a thorough explanation of the research program and its potential usefulness to current volunteer tourism organizations in improving their programs and maximizing community and conservation benefits.

Cover letter and questionnaire mailing

A cover letter was sent by e-mail to the designated representative of each organization that included a link to the online questionnaire. The cover letter reiterated much of the information included in the pre-notice letter, including the purpose of the study and its potential usefulness to volunteer tourism organizations.

Reminders for nonresponses

Approximately one week after the cover letter mailing, a thank you postcard was mailed (by regular mail) as a reminder to those who had not yet completed the survey. Two weeks after the postcard mailing, an additional reminder was sent by e-mail to nonresponses. This reminder

e-mail included the original cover letter and online link. Three weeks after this reminder, nonresponses were contacted by telephone.

Quality control: Validity

The questionnaire was designed so that meaningful and useful inferences could be drawn. However, inherent in its design were several threats to validity that had to be addressed. These consisted of two dimensions. Internal validity threats, according to Creswell (2009), may threaten the researcher's ability to draw correct inferences from the data. Of particular concern in this study was the lack of a random sampling process. In order to address this threat of internal validity, two steps were taken: 1) the questionnaire was administered to the maximum number of international volunteer tourism organizations (within the parameters of this study) that could be identified; and 2) all organizations in the sampling frame that met the aforementioned criteria received the survey (with the exception of those who declined to participate during initial communications). This approach minimized the possibility of sampling errors or biases. Another approach to addressing internal validity is recognition of the highly exploratory nature of this research study. According to Yin (2009), internal validity is a lesser threat in highly exploratory studies due to a lack of existing knowledge and rival explanations for observed phenomena.

External validity threats are defined by Creswell (2009) as those which arise when incorrect inferences are drawn from the sample data to other persons, settings or situations. In order to avoid this, questionnaire results were not generalized beyond the types of organizations within the sample frame. Much of the information derived from the quantitative portion of the survey, such as the size and nature of sending organizations, characteristics and numbers of volunteers, types of activities performed, and the social, economic and ecological characteristics of destination communities limits the generalizability of the findings to similar organizations and programs. Furthermore, the aim of this research was not to generalize the findings to other volunteer tourism projects or organizations, but rather to generalize the tool for impact assessment so that it can be applied in other situations within the domain of volunteer tourism. By generalizing the tool rather than the data acquired, more useful inferences could be drawn within this particular domain of volunteer tourism organizations and programs.

Construct validity involves the identification of the correct operational measures for the concepts being studied (Yin, 2009). To assure high construct validity, it was necessary to

specifically define concepts presented in the survey and identify specific operational measures which match the concepts. This reduced the potential for survey respondents to interpret concepts in their own manner, which would likely make them less comparable to responses of other questionnaire respondents. This was particularly important with terms such as “indicators” or “development” which need to be specifically defined due to the potential of multiple interpretations. Construct validity was also strengthened due to the fact that questions addressed real life practices and consequences of actions (not hypothetical concepts), thereby allowing for explanations of concepts to be given in real-life terms.

Quality control: Reliability

Reliability, in particular with qualitative studies, is important because it indicates the consistency of a researcher’s approach across different projects (Creswell, 2009). It involves a minimization of random error, in which repeated measures will yield similar results (Singleton & Straits, 2010). This is particularly important because it allows future researchers and studies to conduct similar studies and make similar inferences to other situations and populations. A high degree of reliability makes a research study easily repeatable. The limited nature of this study (types of programs analyzed and destinations) mad reliability extremely important. To increase reliability, the questionnaire implementation process was documented precisely so that any errors or biases can be later addressed and corrected, should they present themselves. An effort was made to avoid the use of terms that can be interpreted in multiple fashions, which could be a source of error and misinterpretations. This was addressed by preliminary work as suggested by Singleton & Straits (2010), in which a rough draft of the survey was reviewed by two personal contacts of the author who have expertise in international volunteer tourism. They provided numerous feedback regarding unclear questions, potential misinterpretations, missing questions, or other problems which may lead respondents to inadvertently give inaccurate responses or not answer the questions intended to be asked. An item-by-item analysis as suggested by Singleton & Straits (2010) was also employed to ensure that questions discriminated well on particular variables and did not lend themselves to all or most organizations producing similar answers.

Another potential bias to be addressed was the possible tendency of respondents to provide information about their most successful programs, while refraining from providing information about programs which may be more controversial or more easily scrutinized for

deficiencies. To reduce this bias, it was important for the survey to make the respondent aware that all responses were confidential and that data obtained was for the benefit of all organizations involved.

Table 1.1. Quality control of phase I research

Type of Quality Control	**Techniques to increase quality**
Internal Validity	1) questionnaire sent to maximum number of organizations within study parameters 2) all organizations in sample received questionnaires in lieu of random sampling process 3) the exploratory nature of this survey
External Validity	1) generalizability of the findings focused on generalizing the tool for its application in other settings 2) inferences were only drawn within particular domain of volunteer tourism programs
Construct Validity	1) specifically defined concepts that were presented in the survey 2) identified specific operational measures which matched the concepts 3) asked questions will address real life practices and consequences of actions (not hypothetical concepts)
Reliability	1) process documented precisely so errors or biases can be later addressed & corrected 2) avoided the use of terms that could be interpreted in multiple fashions 3) preliminary work with respondents to “test run” questions from survey 4) item-by-item analysis 5) ensured respondents of confidentiality

Data analysis

Data from all close-ended questions were analyzed using SPSS (PASW Statistics 18). Basic summary statistics provided a clear understanding of the demographics/qualities of volunteer tourists, destinations, types of volunteer programs offered, the most common methods of selecting host communities and projects, the frequency of program evaluations, the most common methods used to conduct such evaluations, the types of stakeholders which are involved in such evaluations, the degree to which different types of impacts are assessed, and the

usefulness of different indicators to evaluate such impacts. Correlations and numerous statistical tests generated useful insights among and between variables.

Phase II of research

Following the questionnaire administered to volunteer tourism organizations in phase I, it was necessary to acquire a more in-depth understanding of the nuances among volunteer tourism organizations, their perspectives and current practices regarding impact assessments, and their strategies in collaborating with host communities. This was designed to build upon the data acquired through the questionnaire, following the guidelines of a sequential explanatory strategy. This phase of data collection also served as a triangulation strategy to confirm and/or challenge the data provided by questionnaire respondents in phase I.

Telephone interviews with questionnaire respondents were used to acquire in-depth qualitative data to complement questionnaire results. The final question on the questionnaire asked respondents if they would be willing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview. This was limited to organizations based in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia and New Zealand, in order to focus on the perspectives of volunteer sending organizations rather than receiving organizations. Questionnaire respondents from organizations based in Latin America were not interviewed because phase three of this research focused on acquiring the perspectives of in-country communities and organizations. Twenty one questionnaire respondents volunteered to be interviewed after completing the questionnaire. They were contacted and interviewed over the telephone by the author. The telephone interviews examined in-depth the nature of the relationship between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities. The same set of questions was used for each interview, and probing questions were used when necessary to explore the answers provided or seek greater detail. All questions were open-ended. Appendix 3 shows the interview guide in its entirety, including probing questions. The interview guide consisted of the following basic questions:

1. How do you select the host communities in which your organization carries out volunteer tourism projects?
2. How do you select projects for volunteers in host communities?
3. How do you maintain communication between your office and host communities?

4. Do you provide training for local organizations or NGOs, and what type? What are your motivations for providing this training?
5. How do you evaluate the local impacts of your volunteer tourism programs?
6. How do you define success in working with a host community?

Data analysis

Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and coded using NVIVO software. Some a priori coding themes were first created based on initial research questions: 1) impact evaluation; 2) communication and collaboration with host communities; and 3) project and community selection. Within the coding theme "impact evaluation," the a priori code "people providing input" was created in response to one of the initial research questions. Two more a priori codes within the theme of "impact evaluation" were created as they were directly related to probing questions in the interview protocol. These are: "future plans to evaluate impacts" and "indicators used to evaluate impacts." Within the coding theme "communication and collaboration with host communities" the a priori code "via field staff" was added because one of the purposes of this research study is to investigate how local field staff or project directors involve host community members in decision-making. Within the coding theme "project and community selection," the code "stakeholder selection" was added a priori due to the emphasis on understanding who is involved in the selection and decision-making process. Two additional a priori coding themes were derived from the interview questions: "definition of success" and "training provided." The coding theme "nature of volunteer work" emerged as a principal coding theme and consisted of a diversity of comments regarding how volunteer tourism organizations approach volunteer work. All other codes identified were emergent in the interview transcripts and were placed within the a priori coding themes in a hierarchical structure. The resulting coding hierarchy consisted of the following themes and codes:

1. Communication and collaboration with host communities (7 codes)
2. Project and community selection
    - criteria (10 codes)
    - selection by stakeholders (5 codes)
3. Impact evaluation (9 codes)

- people providing input (6 codes)

4. Definition of success (10 codes)
5. Nature of volunteer work (7 codes)
6. Training provided (4 codes)

Due to the fact that the first interview transcripts were reviewed without the complete structure of emergent codes, they were re-read in the same order that they were originally read and some elements of the text were assigned to the emergent codes that appeared later in the coding process. This was performed until an interview was reached in which no additional changes were made. This occurred on the ninth interview of 21.

To increase the validity of the coding process and ensure the accuracy of the findings, the coding process was peer-reviewed. A colleague not affiliated with this research project reviewed two coded interviews and confirmed that the coding process was logical and that codes were clearly defined and understandable.

Phase III of research

Phase three consisted of on-site data collection via community workshops and in-person interviews. The complexity and context-specific nature of volunteer tourism merit thorough qualitative research which aims to discover "the multiple ways in which individuals perceive, interpret and act within a particular time and place" (Kiely and Hartman, 2011). Very little qualitative research has been conducted for volunteer tourism, particularly dealing with community impacts. In order to fill this knowledge gap and simultaneously develop a practical tool for impact assessment that can then be employed by organizations and communities, this phase tested a method designed to elicit indicators that can be used to assess the local impacts of volunteer tourism. This method (as described below) was applied in five volunteer tourism host communities (two in Ecuador and three in Costa Rica) to explore assess the usefulness of the method in developing sets of local indicators of the impacts of volunteer tourism. For these reasons a multiple-case study was the most appropriate approach to data collection. The case-study approach is most appropriate when researches focus on discovery and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing or when it is not possible to separate a phenomenon's variables from its context (Merriam, 1998). The exploratory nature of this research proposal and highly context-

specific nature of the data collected warranted this approach. This case-study approach accomplished three general goals: 1) to test the effectiveness of the method for indicator development in each of the five host communities; 2) to understand the unique impacts of volunteer tourism in each community and how impacts are uniquely prioritized among communities; and 3) to reveal the nature of collaboration and communication between each host community and the volunteer tourism program.

Just as the literature on indicator development for ecotourism and sustainable tourism provided an indicator framework for phase one of the research, it also guided the indicator development process in phase three. The literature stresses a dual approach: establishing a general set of indicators to be used across sites, prepared from previous research on indicator development through a project facilitator, as well as site-specific indicators relative to the concerns and needs of particular communities, ecosystems and cultures, decided on and refined through direct community input. For this reason a framework for indicator development was identified before the community workshops were conducted. In addition to the indicator development process, phase three of research revealed suggestions regarding methods for community participation in the indicator development process.

Due to the high degree of variability among communities and diverse cultural, social, environmental, economic and political factors, it would be extremely difficult to extrapolate any results or conclusions beyond the five particular communities under study. The case study approach therefore focused on producing and testing a method to assess the diverse impacts that volunteer tourism may have in each host community and provide strategies on how to incorporate the diverse range of stakeholders that may be affected by such impacts. This set the foundation for a community or sending organization to formulate a plan of action to maximize the beneficial impacts of volunteer tourism. After being tested in five unique communities, this method can now be adapted to other communities that receive volunteer tourists.

Overview: the compass method

Alan AtKisson (2011) developed a method for the purpose of guiding the sustainable development of communities (or groups of communities) that was adapted for this case study approach. AtKisson's method consists of two integrated concepts: the "compass of sustainability" and the "pyramid". The compass framework aims to incorporate the diverse

impacts that development may have on a community, divided into four categories: nature (N), which refers to the "underlying health and sustainable management of key ecosystems, bio-geo-physical cycles and natural resources"; economy (E), which "refers to all the ways human beings work with Nature, with knowledge and with each other to produce the things and services that they need or want"; society (S), which refers to "the social systems, structures and institutions that are driven by people acting collectively"; and well-being (W), which "focuses on the individual, as well as on the smaller webs of intimate relationships that are crucial to health and happiness" (Atkisson, 2011, p. 145-146). These represent the four points on a compass and are intended to all be of equal value and therefore equally considered. AtKisson proposes a method for conducting community workshops which divides participants (stakeholders) into these four categories. This includes purposely incorporating diverse individuals into each group with the goal of information-sharing and allowing each participant to hear diverse viewpoints, while at the same time reaching common ground and seeking potential opportunities for change.

This compass concept is integrated with the construction (real or virtual) of a four-sided pyramid, with four levels, in a process called "ISIS" (indicators, systems, innovations, strategies), also developed by AtKisson (2011). The bottom level consists of indicators, in which participants attempt to address all of the trends which indicate that each of the four compass points is moving in the direction of sustainability (or in the case of this research proposal, that they are promoting positive impacts of volunteer tourism/service-learning). Above this list of indicators is the systems level, in which workshop participants attempt to illustrate the interconnectedness between indicators and the linkages between all trends, showing how all of the elements in the system work together. Participants then identify leverage points on the systems map, indicating where a small amount of introduced changes can have the most beneficial impacts across the entire system. These are the key indicators which would become very important in the indicator implementation and monitoring process. The final steps (innovation and strategy) were beyond the scope of this research, as they require more direct planning with the community and a long-term implementation and monitoring process.

The compass and pyramid methodologies have been applied across a diversity of environments and scales, and have been found to be highly versatile and adaptable to differing circumstances. Some particular advantages to this approach include its ability to allow participants to understand the complexity of the systems under analysis, to stimulate participants

with new ideas and creative thinking, to support the understanding on how different stakeholders view different issues, to achieve consensus on the most appropriate and effective actions, and to give a sense of energy, enthusiasm, and fun to the process of developing indicators and plans of action (AtKisson et al., 2004). While this method was designed with the intent of promoting and evaluating sustainable development, there are many parallels between the goals of sustainable development (as indicated by positive trends in the four compass points) and those of volunteer tourism (environmental, community, social and economic benefits), which made this an appropriate method to be tested in the proposed research.

The employment of the compass method sought to answer each of the four following questions in each community workshop:

1. How has the volunteer tourism program impacted personal well-being? What are the most appropriate indicators to assess this and how can they be measured?
2. How has the volunteer tourism program impacted social well-being? What are the most appropriate indicators to assess this and how can they be measured?
3. How has the volunteer tourism program impacted ecological well-being? What are the most appropriate indicators to assess this and how can they be measured?
4. How has the volunteer tourism program impacted economic well-being? What are the most appropriate indicators to assess this and how can they be measured?

In-person interviews

For each case study, some additional background information was collected using personal semi-structured interviews with two to three individuals in each case study. They were generally workshop participants who were also very knowledgeable about the history of the volunteer tourism program in the community. In many cases one of the interviewees was a community leader, project leader or host organization representative, while another interviewee was a representative of the volunteer tourism organization that sends volunteer tourists to the host community. The interviews took place after the workshop to avoid introducing any additional biases into the workshop. They interviews solicited qualitative and in-depth information regarding the effectiveness of the workshop, potential for improvement of the

workshop method, and the nature of partnerships, collaboration and communication between the volunteer tourism organization and the community.

The same set of questions was used for each interview, and probing questions were used when necessary to explore the answers provided or seek greater detail. All questions were open-ended. Appendix 4 shows the interview guide in its entirety (in Spanish with English translation) including probing questions. The interview guide consisted of the following basic questions (translated from Spanish):

1. What did you think of the workshop?
2. What do you think would be the next step after this workshop?
3. How was this community selected as a destination for volunteer tourists?
4. How were the projects selected for volunteer tourists in this community?
5. How does this community communicate with the organization that recruits volunteer tourists?
6. Does the organization that recruits volunteer tourists also provide any type of training for members of the community? Please describe.
7. Up until now, how have the impacts of volunteer tourism been evaluated in the community?
8. How do you feel about the idea of evaluating the impacts of volunteer tourism in the community?

Propositions

Yin (2009) suggests the use of propositions to justify the case study approach. Each proposition should direct attention to something that should be examined within the scope of study. Based upon the literature review described earlier in the proposal, three broad propositions were made: 1) there are no universally understood or agreed-upon practices or tools for assessing the social, well-being, economic or environmental impacts of volunteer tourism programs for local communities (or for developing indicators to do so); 2) partnerships and collaboration between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities vary widely and this may influence the local selection of indicators; and 3) there is a need for developing and understanding processes by which volunteer tourism organizations and host communities can collaboratively develop indicators and implement them in order to maximize the beneficial

impacts of volunteer tourism. These three assumptions formed a direction and purpose for the research.

Units of analysis and stakeholder selection for workshops

The units of analysis had to be defined in direct relation to the initial research questions. The overall aim was to test a method to identify the community-level impacts of volunteer tourism and develop indicators to assess them. However, in order to do this it was necessary to obtain information from stakeholders who represent various socioeconomic sub-sectors of the population, such as political leaders, NGO and program representatives, educators, farmers, business owners, and other groups. According to Yin (2009), it is important that the case study returns to the unit of analysis (the community) to understand how all of the individual stakeholders fit together and affect the whole.

Each case study was composed of one community, composed of multiple stakeholders. As only a small number of community members were present in the workshop to provide information, the author collaborated with the volunteer tourism organization and/or local contacts to select a variety of workshop participants that represent diverse points of view, including individuals directly involved in volunteer tourism and others not directly involved. This followed the guidelines established by the WTO (2004) regarding the types of community stakeholders to include in the indicator development process. The author requested that approximately twelve individuals be invited to each workshop, based on the following example list of participants (these were suggestions and not all were present in every workshop):

1. include both men and women
2. a representative of a local school
3. a representative of an environmental organization or project
4. a representative of local leadership or a city planner
5. a representative of a health care facility
6. a farmer or fisherman, or representative of a unique local activity
7. a local business owner
8. an owner of a local hotel or restaurant
9. a member of a host family that receives volunteers

10. a person directly involved in working with volunteers
11. a person not directly involved in working with volunteers
12. representatives of local ethnic/cultural groups (if applicable)
13. a young community member or member of a youth group
14. a community elder
15. a representative of a community group, interest group, or cooperative

Site selection for workshops

Five case studies were chosen. The results of phase I combined with internet research and personal communication with program representatives were the primary methods used for identifying appropriate sites. Potential case studies consisted of all volunteer tourism programs based in Costa Rica or Ecuador that were offered by any of the questionnaire respondents.

The case study selection process was limited to Costa Rica and Ecuador for three reasons: 1) the author of this paper has considerable experience working with tourism initiatives in Ecuador; 2) several respondents of the questionnaire who work in Costa and Ecuador expressed interest in hosting community workshops for this research; 3) Costa Rica is the most popular destination for volunteer tourism in Latin America; 4) the author has the Spanish language abilities to conduct community workshops in Latin America; and 5) travel logistics and cost permitted these two countries to be visited in one trip.

An effort was made to identify five distinct communities and approaches to volunteer tourism. Such distinctions consisted of: 1) indigenous versus non-indigenous communities; 2) volunteer tourism projects that focus on environmental conservation versus community development; 3) volunteer tourism projects coordinated by an in-country volunteer recruiting organization versus those that collaborate with an out-of-country volunteer recruiting organization; and 4) projects coordinated by very large organizations (recruiting over 250 volunteers abroad per year) versus those coordinated by smaller organizations (recruiting less than 100 volunteers abroad per year).

As the case study results focused on how to use the indicator development tool (pyramid/compass) rather than on the communities themselves, this did not require that all five communities be extremely alike to make inferences and generalizations. It was essential that the

community/program was willing to participate in the workshop, for which reason the author prepared an informational brochure that was to be shared with the organization sponsoring the workshop and the community leader(s) or local program representative(s).

Employing the Compass-Systems Method

Upon arrival in each community, the author confirmed that workshop participants had been selected and were able to participate in the workshop. As necessary, the researcher collaborated with the community representative or host organization to identify and invite any additional participants for the workshop. Each workshop lasted 4-5 hours. Guidelines of the compass method as outlined by AtKisson (2011) were followed. The workshop began with an icebreaker activity in which each participant presented him/herself and his/her involvement with volunteer tourism. The workshop facilitator then presented the main points and purpose of the workshop: 1) establish the desires and priorities of the community; discuss the diverse local impacts of volunteer tourism in the community; 3) develop a list of impacts that are of high priority to the community; 4) identify strategies for evaluating or measuring the high-priority impacts in order to establish future goals; and 5) establish a path for the future of volunteer tourism in the community.

(1) Community desires and priorities

To accomplish this first goal of the workshop, the group was presented with a large paper entitled “community vision” and then brainstormed numerous ideas to add to the paper. All participants were encouraged to present ideas.

(2) The diverse local impacts of volunteer tourism

To organize the diverse impacts of volunteer tourism in the community, the “compass of sustainability” was used as the organizational framework. The participants divided into four small groups, and each group was assigned one compass point (nature, economy, society or well-being). Each group then made a list of the local impacts of volunteer tourism, focusing only on those that corresponded to their compass point. The author reiterated that such impacts could be positive or negative and they could be impacts already observed or theoretical or desired impacts that had not been observed yet. The groups placed their papers on the wall to form a visual

compass, and took turns presenting their ideas. To recognize the linkages between nature, economy, society and personal well-being, the participants used strings to connect several ideas on the compass, forming a "concept map."

3) Prioritizing the impacts

To prioritize the numerous impacts that participants identified, each participant received three stickers in four different colors, and placed stickers on the three most important or desired impacts (according to his/her perspective) in each compass category. By doing this, participants were able to visualize which were the high-priority impacts for the group.

(4) How to evaluate or measure the impacts

The facilitator spoke about the importance of establishing community goals that can be achieved through volunteer tourism, and about the importance of being able to evaluate or measure the desired impacts of volunteer tourism. In this way, the community was able to assess whether or not such goals were being accomplished. The facilitator presented on a paper the most important impact from each compass category (as identified from the sticker count) and the participants brainstormed ideas on how each impact could be measured or evaluated in the long term.

(5) Looking towards the future

The aspects discussed and shared during the workshop helped the participants to acquire a future outlook on volunteer tourism. Participants recognized what has been accomplished, what they would like to achieve through volunteer tourism, and how to recognize or evaluate the future benefits of volunteer tourism. The facilitator clarified that the results of the workshop would be used to produce a useful tool for developing indicators of the environmental, economic, social, and personal well-being impacts of volunteer tourism, with the hope that organizations and host communities could collaborate in measuring and monitoring the impacts.

As a corollary to the future outlook at the end of the workshop, the ISIS pyramid by AtKisson (2011) was visually presented. The author defined the four levels of the compass (indicators, systems, innovations, strategies). The author then reiterated that the "indicators" level of the pyramid was accomplished in the compass exercise, in which participants identified

numerous indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism, organized into the four compass categories. The author explained that the concept map produced in the workshop was an example of the "systems" on the pyramid. The concept map established linkages among indicators and cause-effect relationships, and also showed the interconnectedness of the system of indicators. The author then explained how the concept map helped to identify the indicators which appear to be most interconnected with multiple other indicators, referred to as "leverage points." These are points where changes introduced will have more positive overarching affects across most or all of the system. This led to the "innovations" step of the pyramid. The author then clarified that the "innovations" and "strategies" levels of the pyramid were beyond the scope of the workshop and may represent an area of future inquiry and interest for the community.

Quality control: Internal validity

Also referred to as credibility in the context of qualitative research, internal validity is largely connected to the degree to which findings are credible and make sense to the study participants, and how well the findings match the experience and reality of the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1994). To ensure high internal validity, it is essential that information is interpreted in ways that are accurate in the eyes of the informants and that the same information can be used to accurately explain social, economic and ecological impacts. In the case of this research, it was important that the results of the workshops accurately reflected the realities and perspectives of the workshop participants, and to a lesser to degree, the community at large. Although the workshops did not intend to capture community perspectives in their entirety, the results of the workshop may be generalized to the community as a whole. For this reason, it is important that care is taken in the stakeholder selection process.

One threat to internal validity is therefore the process of selecting stakeholders to participate in the community workshop. The process of selecting stakeholders for the workshops was non-random and potentially biased, as key informants and community leaders were likely to recommend colleagues, friends, persons with similar opinions or persons of special-interest relationships as participants for community workshops. It is also possible that persons of specific qualities were more likely to be recommended as participants due to education level, political clout, popularity, or other factors. Individuals initially responsible for selecting participants therefore had the power to guide the rest of the selection process. These potential biases must be

addressed because they could have led to incomplete or biased conclusions about important indicators, and threatened the author's and community's ability to draw correct inferences from the data (Creswell, 2009). In order to best address these issues, it was necessary for the author to provide an initial master list (as earlier described) to increase the likelihood that the workshop participants represented the diversity of the community in terms of socioeconomic status, gender, age, livelihood, political affiliation, and relationship with the volunteer tourism program under study. While some bias in the participant selection process was likely to have occurred, the all-encompassing and collaborative nature of the compass concept (with four points of equal importance) and the specific focus on indicators still produced useful data and helped to refine a method that can be repeated by organizations and communities in the future.

The in-person interviews conducted after each community workshop also represented a potential threat to validity and a source of bias for two reasons: 1) only a small number of interviews were conducted (two or three) per each case study; and 2) the interviewees may have been individuals recommended by the volunteer tourism organization sponsoring the workshop. In order to address this, the author attempted to interview at least one individual in each host community that represented the interests of the community. Although this did not likely eliminate all bias, it must be taken into consideration that the interview data was complementary to the more all-encompassing and in-depth information acquired from the community workshops.

Several other strategies helped to maintain high internal validity in the research process. The format of the workshop was conducive to simultaneous member-checking, in which community participants confirmed or questioned the statements and themes that emerged during the workshop. The multiple-case study approach enabled the author to test the proposed method in five distinct communities, reducing the possibility that an external variable or bias in one community might highly influence the overall results.

Quality control: External validity

In order for this research to be applicable beyond the five communities under study, the results had to be generalizable to other communities receiving volunteer tourism projects. A case study by nature relies on analytical generalization, in which a particular set of results are generalized to a broader theory, not necessarily a broader population. This newly developed

theory would then become the domain to which further case studies could be generalized (Yin, 2009). In the context of this research proposal, the compass-systems method was the phenomenon under analysis, not the communities themselves. This method of indicator development was the "theory" to be developed or refined, and it will become generalizable to other communities in the sense that the same tool can be used in any community which receives volunteer tourists. Four subsequent case studies after the initial case study helped to validate this method across a range of different environments. By generating an assessment tool with high external validity, it can also be more easily applied to different types of volunteer tourism programs (beyond the scope of this study) and therefore be increasingly useful for a variety of volunteer organizations.

Quality control: Reliability

Due to the large number stakeholders to be considered, the diversity of communities involved in volunteer tourism, and the diversity of organizations involved, it is likely that further research will be conducted that is very similar to the topic of this research. Considering the lack of current data on this aspect of volunteer tourism, it is highly likely that this study will also become a platform for additional research. For these reasons it was essential for all data analysis and collection procedures followed by the researcher to be precisely documented. The researcher took digital photos of all the community visions, indicator sets and concept maps produced in the workshops, as documentation that will also serve as part of an audit trail. In addition, another strategy proposed by numerous authors is to include substantial direct quotations to ground the findings in the voices of the study informants (Kiely & Hartman, 2011). This will allow for future investigators to understand how conclusions were drawn from quotations in order to further develop and test theories and conclusions. Many of the conclusions drawn in this research were based on quotes from the telephone interviews, and were documented in the research results.

Table 1.2. Quality control of phase III research

Type of Quality Control	Techniques to increase quality
Internal Validity	1) selected workshop participants that represented a diversity of community voices to minimize non-random sampling bias 2) simultaneous member-checks during workshops

	3) multiple-case study (multiple sources of evidence) 4) two formats of data collection (workshops and interviews)
External Validity	1) results were generalized to a broader applied tool 2) repetition (multiple case-studies)
Reliability	1) all data analysis and collection procedures followed by researcher were precisely documented 2) included direct quotations to ground findings in the voices of study informants 3) digital photos were taken of all indicator sets and concept maps produced in the workshops

Phase IV of Research

This final stage of this research consisted of a combined analysis of the data acquired from volunteer tourism organizations during phase I and the data acquired from host communities in phase III. It did not involve any new data collection; rather it is a synthesis of much of the data acquired in this research for the purpose of future application of the data. It focused on comparing top-down strategies of indicator development (based on the perspectives of volunteer tourism organizations) and bottom-up strategies (based on needs and priorities as identified by host communities). Priority indicators as identified in phases I and III were first compared according to those that correspond to each compass point. Due to the presence of some workshop-derived indicators on multiple compass points, all indicators were then categorized into unique themes and again compared by theme. Numerous participatory methods of prioritizing indicators were tested in the workshops and then compared.

Commonalities and gaps were identified in the indicators that were prioritized by volunteer tourism organizations and host communities. Areas or themes were identified where numerous indicators emerged in workshops that were absent in the questionnaire, and vice versa. This analysis merged two approaches of indicator development (top-down versus bottom-up) into a hybrid method that recognizes the needs, interests and preferences of multiple stakeholders. This in turn represents a step forward in providing a practical and effective tool for volunteer tourism organizations and host communities to collaborate in the assessment of the local impacts and benefits of volunteer tourism. The ultimate goal of phase IV is to culminate in the development of a framework and toolkit that can be used by sending organizations, partner

organizations, and communities to help them develop, implement and monitor indicators to assess and measure the community benefits of volunteer tourism.

References

Arnstein, S. (1969). A Ladder of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35*(1), 216-224.

AtKisson, A., Hatcher, R.L., & Green, S. (2004). Introducing Pyramid: A versatile process and planning tool for accelerating sustainable development. Draft paper for publication. Retrieved from http://www.rrcap.unep.org/uneptg06/course/Robert/PyramidArticle-v4b.pdf

AtKisson, A. (2011). *The Sustainability Transformation: How to Accelerate Positive Change in Challenging Times*. UK: CPI Antony Rowe.

Ausenda, F. (2011). *Green Volunteers: The World Guide to Voluntary Work in Nature Conservation*. Milan, Italy: Green Volunteers di Fabio Ausenda.

Bakker, M., & Lamoureux, K.M. (2008). Volunteer tourism – international. *Travel & Tourism Analyst, 16*, 1-47.

Benson, A., & Henderson, S. (2011). A strategic analysis of volunteer tourism organizations. *The Service Industries Journal, 31*(3), 405-424.

Benson, A., & Wearing, S. (2012). Volunteer tourism: Commodified trend or new phenomenon? In O. Moufakkir & P. Burns (Eds.), *Controversies in tourism* (242-254). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

B Brightsmith, D., Stronza, A. & Holle, K. (2008). Ecotourism, conservation biology, and volunteer tourism: A mutually beneficial triumvirate. *Biological Conservation,* 141, 2832-2842.

Broad, S., & Jenkins, J. (2008). Gibbons in their midst? Conservation volunteers motivations at the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project, Phuket, Thailand. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism,* (72-85). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Broad, S. (2003). Living the Thai Life – a case study of volunteer tourism at the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project, Thailand. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 63-72.

Brodowsky, P. (2010). *Ecotourists Save the World: The Environmental Volunteer's Guide to more than 300 International Adventures to Conserve, Preserve, and Rehabilitate Wildlife and Habitats*. New York, NY: The Penguin Group Inc.

Brown, S., & Morrison, A.M. (2003). Expanding volunteer vacation participation: An exploratory study on the mini-mission concept. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28,* 73-82.

Brumbaugh, A. (2010). The impact of diversity seeking and volunteer orientation on desire for alternative spring break programs. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 27,* 474-490.

Bussell, H. & Forbes, D. (2002). Understanding the volunteer market: The what, where, who and why of volunteering. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing, 7*(3), 244-257.

Butcher, J., & Smith, P. (2010). 'Making a difference': Volunteer tourism and development. *Tourism Recreation Research, 35*(1), 27-36.

Butcher, J. (2000). The 'new tourist' as anthropologist. In R. Sharpley & J. Swarbrooke (Eds.), *Reflections on International Tourism: Motivations, Behaviour and Tourist Types* (pp. 45-54). Sunderland, UK: Center for Travel and Tourism in Association with Business Education Publishers.

Butler, R. & Hinch, T. (Eds.). (1996). *Tourism and Indigenous Peoples*. London: International Thomason Business Press.

Callanan, M., & Thomas, S. (2005). Volunteer tourism: deconstructing volunteer activities within a dynamic environment. In M. Novelli (Ed.), *Niche Tourism: Contemporary Issues and Trends* (pp. 183-200). New York: Elsevier.

Clifton, J. & Benson, A. (2006) Planning for sustainable ecotourism: The case for research Ecotourism in Developing Country Destinations. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 14*(3), 238-254.

Clothier, J. (2010) Voluntourism: The benefits and pitfalls you need to know. *CNN Travel*. June 18, 2010. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2010/TRAVEL/06/18/voluntourism.pros.and.cons/index.html

Coghlan, A. (2007). Towards an integrated image-based typology of volunteer tourism organisations. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(3), 267-287.

Cohen, E. (1989). "Primitive and remote" hill tribe trekking in Thailand. *Annals of Tourism Research, 16*(1), 30-61.

Cousins, J. (2007). The role of UK-based conservation tourism operators. *Tourism Management* 28, 1020-1030.

Crabtree, R. (2008). Theoretical foundations of international service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, Fall, 18-36.

Craig, G. (1998). Community development in a global context. *Community Development Journal, 33*(1), 2-17.

Creighton, J. 2005. *The Public Participation Handbook: Making Better Decisions through Citizen Involvement.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Medeiros de Araujo, L. & Bramwell, B. (1999). Stakeholder assessment and collaborative tourism planning: The case of Brazil's Costa Dourada Project. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 7*(3/4), 356-378.

Dillman, D., Smyth, J., & Christian, L. (2009). *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-mode Surveys – The Tailored Design Method*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Dwyer, M. (2004). More is better: The impact of study abroad program duration. *The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* 10, 151-163.

Elliot, D. (2008). Voluntourism. *Conde Nast Traveler*. Retrieved from http://www.concierge.com/cntraveler/articles/12200

Ellis, C. (2003). Participatory environmental research in tourism – a global view. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 45-55.

Fee, L., & Mdee, A. (2011). How does it make a difference? Towards 'accreditation' of the development impact of volunteer tourism. In A.M. Benson (Ed.), *Volunteer Tourism: Theory Framework to Practical Applications* (pp. 223-251). New York, NY: Routledge.

Frean, A. (2006). Gap years create 'new colonialists.' *The Times*. Retrieved from http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/travel/holidays/gapyear/article1739027.ece

Glesne, G. (1999). *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction* (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.

Gray, N., & Campbell, L. (2007). A decommodified experience? Exploring aesthetic, economic and ethical values for volunteer ecotourism in Costa Rica. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(5), 463-482.

Gray, B. (1989). *Collaborating: Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Green, G. & Haines, A. (2008). *Asset Building & Community Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Griffiths, P. (2007). Charity attacks gap-year "voluntourism." In *Reuters*, 14 August 2007. London. Retrieved from http://uk.reuters.com/article/2007/08/14/uk-britain-travel-gap-idUKL1465130020070814

Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. (1989). *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Guttentag, D. (2009). The possible negative impacts of volunteer tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 11, 537-551,

Guttentag, D. (2011). Volunteer tourism: As good as it seems? *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 69-74.

Habermas, Jürgen. 1990. *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Halpenny, E.A., & Caissie, L.T. (2003). Volunteering on nature conservation projects: Volunteer experience, attitudes and values. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 25-33.

Heath, S. (2007). Widening the gap: Pre-university gap years and the 'economy of experience.' *British Journal of Sociology and Education, 28*(1), 89-103.

Heuman, Daniel (2005). Hospitality and reciprocity – Working tourists in Dominica. *Annals of Tourism Research, 32*(2), 407-418.

Higgins-Desbiolles, F. & Russell-Mundine, G. (2008). Absences in the volunteer tourism phenomenon: The right to travel, solidarity tours and transformation beyond the one-way. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 182-194). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Hindle, C., Cavalieri, N., Collinson, R., Miller, K., Richard, M., & Wintle, S. (2010). *Lonely Planet Volunteer: A Traveller's Guide to Making a Difference around the World*. Footscray, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd.

Ingram, J. (2011). Volunteer Tourism: how do we know it is 'making a difference'? In A.M. Benson (Ed.), *Volunteer Tourism: Theory Framework to Practical Applications* (211-222). New York, NY: Routledge.

Jacobson, T.L. & Kolluri, S. (1999), Participatory communication as communicative action. Chapter 9 in T.L. Jacobson & J. Servaes (Eds.), *Theoretical Approaches to Participatory Communication.* Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Jamal, T. & Getz, D. (1994). Collaboration theory and community tourism planning. *Annals of Tourism Research, 22*(1), 186-204.

Jeffries, A. (2009). BTCV international conservation holidays, Lesotho: Developing short-term volunteer vacations in international development. In K. Holmes & K. Smith (Eds.), *Managing Volunteers in Tourism* (pp. 237-249). Burlington, MA: Elsevier.

Jones, A. (2004). Review of gap year provision. Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Research Report RR555. University of London.

Jordan, F. & Aitchison, C. (2008). Tourism and the sexualization of the gaze: Solo female tourists' experiences of gendered power, surveillance and embodiment. *Leisure Studies, 27*(3), 329-349.

Keese, J. (2011). The geography of volunteer tourism: Place matters. *Tourism Geographies, 13*(2), 257-279.

Kennedy, K. & Dornan, D. (2009). An overview: Tourism non-governmental organizations and poverty reduction in developing countries. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 14*(2), 183-200.

Kiely R. & Hartman, E. (2010). Qualitative research methodology and international service learning: Concepts, characteristics, methods, approaches, and best practices. Chapter 13 in R. Bringle, J. Hatcher, & S. Jones (Eds.), *International Service-Learning: Conceptual Frameworks and Research*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Kincheloe, J. & McLaren, P. (2003). Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research. In N. Denzin & S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Kweit, M.G. & Kweit, R.W. (1981). *Implementing Citizen Participation in a Bureaucratic Society: A Contingency Approach.* New York, NY: Praeger.

Langton, S. (1978). What is Citizen Participation? In S. Langton (Ed.), *Citizen Participation in America: Essays on the State of the Art.* Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Lepp, A. (2008). Discovering self and discovering others through the Taita Discovery Centre Volunteer Tourism Programme, Kenya. In. K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 86-100). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Lorimer, J. (2007). International conservation volunteering from the UK: What does it contribute? *Oryx, 43*(3), 352-360.

Lough, B., McBride, A., Sherraden, M. & O'hara, K. Capacity building contributions of short-term international volunteers. (2010). *Journal of Community Practice,* 19, 120-137.

Lynch, P. (2009). *Wildlife & Conservation Volunteering: The Complete Guide*. Guilford, CN: The Globe Pequot Press, Inc.

Lyons, K. & Wearing, S. (2008). All for a good cause? The blurred boundaries of volunteering and tourism. In. K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 147-154). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Lyons, K.D. (2003). Ambiguities in volunteer tourism: A case study of Australians participating in a J-1 visitor exchange programme. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 5-13.

Lyons, K., Hanley, J., Wearing, S., & Neil, J. (2012). Gap year volunteer tourism: Myths of global citizenship? *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(1), 361-378.

Lyson, T. (2006). Global capital and the transformation of rural communities. In P. Cloke, T. Marsden & P. Mooney (Eds.), *Handbook of Rural Studies*. London: Sage Publications Inc.

MacKinnon, J.B. (2009). The dark side of volunteer tourism. *Explore,* November-December 2009. Retrieved from http://www.utne.com/Politics/The-Dark-Side-of-Volunteer-Tourism-Voluntourism.aspx

McGehee, N., & Andereck, K. (2009). Volunteer tourism and the "voluntoured": the case of Tijuana, Mexico. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 17*(1), 39-51.

McGee, N. & Santos, C. (2005). Social change, discourse and volunteer tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research, 32*(3), 760-779.

McGehee, N. (2001) Alternative tourism and social movements. *Annals of Tourism Research, 29*(1), 124-143.

McGehee, N. (2010). Voluntourism and human emancipation: Research propositions. *The Voluntourist Newsletter 6*(1). Retrieved from http://www.voluntourism.org/news-studyandresearch61.htm

McGehee, N. (2012). Oppression, emancipation, and volunteer tourism: Research propositions. *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(1), 84-107.

McIntosh, A., & Zahra, A. (2007). A cultural encounter through volunteer tourism: Towards the ideals of sustainable tourism? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(5), 541-556.

Matthews, A. (2008). Negotiated selves: Exploring the impact of local-global interactions on young volunteer travelers. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 101-117). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Mdee, A., & Emmott, R. (2008). Social enterprise with international impact: the case for Fair Trade certification of volunteer tourism. *Education, Knowledge & Economy, 2*(3), 191-201.

Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education: Revised and expanded from case study research in education* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mersmann, A., Havranek, C., & Ferguson, K. (2010). *Frommer's 500 places where you can make a difference*. Mississauga, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd.

Miles, M. & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Mowforth, M., & Munt, I. (2003). *Tourism and sustainability: New tourism in the Third World*. London: Routledge.

Okazaki, E. (2008). A community-based tourism model: Its conception and use. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(5), 511-529.

Palk, Susannah (2010). *Why do so many women go on volunteer vacations? CNN News*. June 2, 2010. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2010/TRAVEL/06/02/more.women.in.voluntourism/index.html?iref=obinsite

Rattan, J., Eagles, P. & Mair, H. (2012). Volunteer tourism: its role in creating conservation awareness. *Journal of Ecotourism, 11*(1), 1-15.

Raymond, E. & Hall, C. (2008). The development of cross-cultural (mis)understanding through volunteer tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(5), 530-543.

Raymond, E. (2008). 'Make a difference!': The role of sending organizations in volunteer tourism. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 48-60). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Raymond, E. (2011). Volunteer tourism: Looking forward. *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 77-79.

Rocha, E.M. (1997). A ladder of empowerment. *Journal of Planning Education and Research,* 17, 31-44.

Rowlands, J. (1997). *Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras.* Oxford: Oxfam Publications.

Ruhanen, L., Cooper, C. & Fayos-Solá, E. (2008). Volunteer Tourism Knowledge: a case from the United Nations World Tourism Organization. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 25-35). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Simpson, K. (2004). 'Doing development': The gap year, volunteer-tourists and a popular practice of development. *Journal of International Development, 16,* 681-692.

Sin, H.L. (2009). Volunteer tourism – "Involve me and I will learn?" *Annals of Tourism Research, 36*(3), 480-501.

Sin, H. (2010). Who are we responsible to? Locals' tales of volunteer tourism. *Geoforum, 41*, 983-992.

Singleton, R.A. and Straits, B.C. (2010). *Approaches to Social Research*. 5th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Söderman N. & Snead, S.L. (2008). Opening the gap: the motivation of gap year travellers to volunteer in Latin America. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 118-129). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Stoddart, H., & Rogerson, C.M. (2004). Volunteer tourism: the case of Habitat for Humanity South Africa. *GeoJournal, 60*, 311-318.

Terchek, R.J. & Conte, T.C. (2001). *Theories of Democracy*. Lanham: Rowman and Littelfield.

Tomazos, K., & Butler, R. (2009). Volunteer tourism: The new ecotourism? *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research, 20*(1), 196-211.

Tourism Research and Marketing. (2008). *Volunteer tourism: A global analysis*. Barcelona: Atlas.

Uriely, N., Reichel, A., & Ron, A. (2003). Volunteering in tourism: Additional thinking. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 57-62.

Vodopivek, B., & R. Jaffe (2011). Save the world in a week: Volunteer tourism, development and difference. *European Journal of Development Research, 23*, 111-128.

VolunTourism.org. (2013). Retrieved from http://www.voluntourism.org/

Wall, G., & Mathieson, A. (2006). *Tourism: Change, impacts and opportunities*. Pearson Prentice Hall: Toronto.

Wearing, S. & Wearing, M. (1999). Decommodifying ecotourism: Rethinking global-local interactions with host communities. *Society and Leisure, 22*(1), 39-70.

Wearing, S. & Neil, J. (2000). Refiguring self and identity through volunteer tourism. *Society and Leisure, 23*(2), 389-419.

Wearing, S. (2001). *Volunteer tourism: Experiences that make a difference*. New York: CABI.

Wearing, S. & Deane, B. (2003). Seeking self: leisure and tourism on common ground. *World Leisure Journal, 45*(1), 4-12.

Wearing, S. (2004). Examining best practice in volunteer tourism. In R. Stebbins & M. Graham (Eds.), *Volunteering as Leisure/leisure as volunteering: An International Assessment* (209-224). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Woosnam, K. and Y. Lee (2011). Applying social distance to voluntourism research. *Annals of Tourism Research, 38*(1), 309-313.

World Tourism Organization (2004). *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A guidebook.* Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organization.

Yin, R. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 4th Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Young, T. (2008). Mediating volunteer tourism alternatives: Guidebook representations of travel experiences in Aboriginal Australia. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 195-209). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Chapter 2. A survey of volunteer tourism organizations: Understanding how indicators are used to evaluate the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities

Abstract

This paper explores the use of indicators to evaluate the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities, based on an online questionnaire sent to 183 volunteer tourism organizations. Little research exists demonstrating how volunteer tourism programs impact host communities or how impacts can be assessed, but literature suggests the use of indicators to do so. Social indicator research and systems thinking assert that impact evaluation must be comprehensive and that indicators must consider interconnectivities present in the tourist system; we propose a framework of indicator development that addresses this. Data analysis focuses on volunteer tourist activities and how organizations prioritize indicators to assess diverse impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. Comparisons are drawn between organizations in Latin America and international organizations (based in U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia and New Zealand) that send volunteers abroad. Differing volunteer activities suggest unique approaches between in-country and international organizations. The usefulness and degree of assessment of diverse indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism are quantified, while discrepancies between indicator usefulness and assessment raise questions. Comparisons between international and in-country organizations, large and small organizations, and organizations focusing on long-term vs. short-term trips suggest differing organizational priorities and impacts of volunteer tourism.

Introduction

International travelers are increasingly combining travel with volunteering to work on humanitarian aid, community development or environmental conservation projects. This is commonly referred to as volunteer tourism, defined by Wearing (2001) as "a type of alternative tourism in which tourists volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society of environment." Volunteer tourism is one of the fastest growing trends in the tourism industry (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008; Brown & Morrison, 2003; Butcher & Smith, 2010; Tomazos & Butler, 2009; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008), and is part of a broader trend of ethical consumerism which aims to make positive differences in the communities of less developed countries (Butcher & Smith, 2010).

A central idea to volunteer tourism is that it should bring about positive impacts to locals in host-destinations and that it fosters a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship between the host and guest in a tourist destination (McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Sin, 2009; Sin, 2010). While the positive local impacts of volunteer tourism are often assumed and asserted in promotional materials, they are generally not research-based and do not include the voices of host communities (Fee & Mdee, 2011; Lyons, Hanley, Wearing, & Neil, 2012; Mdee & Emmott, 2008; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008). There has been very little research on how to achieve mutual benefit between volunteers and host communities in volunteer tourism, how volunteer tourists work interactively with local communities on local projects, and the perceptions and attitudes of community members exposed to volunteer tourists (Benson & Wearing, 2012; Butler & Hinch, 1996; Gray & Campbell, 2007; McGehee, 2012; McGehee & Andereck, 2009; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Raymond, 2008; Sin, 2010).

There is a growing recognition of the importance of better understanding the local impacts of volunteer tourism. Guttentag (2011) suggests that it is necessary to understand the long-term impacts and potential unintended consequences of volunteer tourism, while Sin (2009) urges future research to focus on the social responsibilities of volunteer tourism. Similarly, Uriely, Reichel and Ron (2003) and Wearing (2004) argue that studies on volunteer tourism must encompass host community members to understand the role that they can play in the tourist experience. Numerous other scholars recognize a need for further research to gauge the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities and understand the perspectives of the aid-recipients (Halpenny & Cassie, 2003; Lyons, 2003; Raymond, 2011; Sin, 2009; Wearing, 2004). However, mechanisms have not been developed to assess the impacts of volunteer tourism programs in host communities, and most current evaluations are therefore anecdotal (Benson & Wearing, 2012).

In spite of these research gaps, the majority of current literature and findings in volunteer tourism are still focused on the profiling of volunteer tourists and organizations (Brown & Morrison, 2003; Callanan & Thomas, 2005; Keese, 2011; Stoddart & Rogerson, 2004) or motivations for volunteer tourists and the benefits of the volunteer experience on self and society (Broad, 2003; Brumbaugh 2010; Butcher & Smith, 2010; Coghlan, 2007; Halpenny & Caissie, 2003; Simpson, 2004; Sin, 2009; Wearing & Deane, 2003).

This paper contributes to knowledge gaps in the literature on volunteer tourism by addressing three prominent questions: 1) What types of impacts do volunteer tourism organizations desire to achieve in host communities? 2) To what degree are the impacts currently assessed or measured by volunteer tourism organizations? and 3) Do nuances among volunteer tourism organizations, such as their location, size, and trips they offer, help to explain how they prioritize and/or assess such impacts? The data presented in this paper were collected via an online questionnaire sent to organizations that send volunteer tourists abroad to engage in volunteer work, as well as from organizations based in Latin America that receive inbound international volunteer tourists.

Evaluating impacts: An indicator approach with a systems perspective

The impacts of tourism in a host community can be extremely diverse, and many such impacts are difficult to identify and measure. To address this, numerous studies point to the establishment of a set of indirect measures, or indicators, as a strategy for assessing the diverse impacts of tourism in host destinations (Budruk & Phillips, 2011; Hughes, 2002; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005; Roberts & Tribe, 2008; WTO, 2004). Indicators are defined by the WTO (2004, p. 8) as "measures of the existence or severity of current issues, signals of upcoming situations or problems, measures of risk and potential need for action, and means to identify and measure the results of our actions." The development of indicators is increasingly viewed as fundamental to promote sustainable development in the tourism sector (WTO, 2004). Indicators serve to make information more manageable, provide a solid base for decision-making, simplify complex data to improve the quality of subsequent decisions, provide information necessary to understand critical changes, and provide meaning that extends beyond the attributes associated with statistics and raw data (Budruk & Phillips, 2011; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005; Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi, 2001; WTO, 2004). Indicators can provide an integrated view of the relationship of tourism with the economy, environment, and society (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005), and they serve to assess trends and indicate whether a situation is moving in an appropriate or sustainable direction. Blackstock et al. (2008, p. 277) recognize indicators as a way of operationalizing a concept such as sustainable tourism, turning what may be a "nebulous concept" into a "concrete and parameterized set of issues to be monitored."

Literature on social and sustainability indicators is prolific and spans several decades. A boom in social indicator thinking occurred during the 1960s and 70s, partially in response to problems associated with the shortcomings of economic indicators, such as gross national product and gross domestic project (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005). The sustainability movement of the late 1980s clarified links between environmental conservation, poverty and economic welfare, leading to recognition of the necessity of monitoring social, economic and environmental conditions simultaneously. After the Rio Earth Summit of 1992, many organizations began to develop indicators for monitoring progress towards goals of sustainability and sustainable development. The European Union proceeded to adopt a set of sustainable development indicators divided into ten themes: economic development, poverty and social exclusion, ageing society, public health, climate change and energy, production and consumption patterns, management of natural resources, transport, good governance, and global partnership (Ledoux et al., 2005). In another example, the United Nations (2007) produced a set of guidelines for sustainable development indicators that recognizes thematic linkages among indicators and the multi-dimensional character of sustainable development.

Despite these advances in indicator development and the demonstrated importance of indicators for measuring progress towards sustainability, many claim that such advances still provide few on-the-ground benefits and that the implementation of indicators has attracted much less attention than theoretical frameworks for developing indicators (Lyytimäki, 2012; Reed et al., 2006). There is still little consensus on the most appropriate methods of developing indicators. Frameworks and methodologies for indicator development are abundant and Table 2.1 exemplifies the diversity of frameworks for indicator development present in the literature on sustainable tourism and sustainability. Each is noticeably unique, but the lack of an established methodology for developing social or sustainability indicators is becoming a challenge for initiatives that focus on assessing the sustainability of tourism or the local impacts of tourism.

Table 2.1. Some existing frameworks for indicator development.

Author(s)	Domain	Essential Elements
AtKisson (1996)	Community sustainability	• Environment • Population and Resources • Economy • Youth and Education

		• Health and Community
AtKisson (2011)	Community sustainability (compass concept)	• Nature • Society • Well-being • Economy
Bossel (2001)	Sustainable development	• Human system (individual development, society, government) • Support system (economy, infrastructure) • Natural system (environment, resources)
Cox et al. (2010)	Community well-being	• Health, safe and inclusive communities • Dynamic, resilient communities • Sustainable, built and natural environment • Culturally rich and vibrant communities • Democratic and engaged communities
Njuki et al. (2008)	Community development	• Livelihood • Human capital and empowerment • Social capital
Roberts & Tribe (2008)	Sustainable tourism	• Economic sustainability • Environmental sustainability • Socio-cultural sustainability
Wood (2004)	Sustainable tourism/triple bottom line	• Conservation benefits • Economic benefits • Social/Cultural benefits

The frameworks in Table 2.1 represent attempts to organize indicators using thematic categories. Many experts recognize that there must be a clear logical framework in place to avoid long lists of unrelated indicators and to reduce the arbitrariness of indicator development (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005; Reed et al., 2005). However, placing indicators into thematic categorizations can also disregard the interrelations and causal chains between different systems at work (Meadows, 2008; Schianetz & Kavanagh, 2008) and there must be recognition of the interrelation between indicators, rather than seeing them as discrete variables that can be considered separately (Miller and Twining-Ward, 2005). Bossell (1999) also argues that a more holistic view must be adopted in the search for indicators. Roberts & Tribe (2008) claim that indicators must consider the interconnectivity present in the tourist system, as well as reflect the environmental, economic and socio-cultural attributes of the destination, while Schianetz &

Kavanagh (2008) argue that natural and social systems are interdependent and nonlinear, and that indicator development must consider this interrelatedness.

A systems-oriented approach to indicator development and the interrelatedness among all aspects of the tourist system, as described above, reflects the need for a wider consideration of systems thinking to help guide the indicator development process. Hall (2000) defines a system as an integrated whole whose essential properties result from the relationships between its constituent parts, and explains that systems thinking is the understanding of a phenomenon within the context of a larger whole. Miller and Twining-Ward (2005) make the point that although conventional tourism models are derived from the Newtonian/Cartesian paradigm that phenomena can be understood by disaggregating them into individual parts, many researchers now recognize that tourism is more than a collection of its parts, and that the tourist system cannot be separated from the wider community to which it is connected. For example, Jamal & Stronza (2009) and Liu (2003) argue that a systems perspective improves our understanding of how tourism patterns are the result of interactions with other sectors, including the natural, technological, social and economic environments. Farrell and Twining-Ward (2004; 2005) claim that natural and social systems have mutual interactions, are interdependent, and should be viewed and studied as complex adaptive systems or social-ecological systems. They also argue that tourism practitioners may understand social and ecological systems separately but know little about complex systems, and that researchers need to venture outside the core system of tourism and explore how tourism affects ways of life, economic wellbeing, and the people involved. Gallopin (2006) similarly contends that the natural analytical unit for research on sustainable development is the socio-ecological system, which is a system that includes societal and ecological subsystems in mutual interaction; as such, there is a need to investigate the whole system to anticipate the behavior of social and ecological components.

It is therefore widely recognized that a systems approach is appropriate for grasping the interconnectedness among social, economic and environmental dimensions of communities and sustainable development; this systems thinking can also be extended to the science of indicator development. For example, Bossel (1999; 2001) takes a systems approach to sustainability indicator development, postulating that indicators of system performance must reflect their impacts on other component systems and the total system under study. Bossell promotes a systems-based approach to indicator development that takes into consideration several

subsystems: individual development, social system, government, infrastructure, economic system, and resources/environment. Within the field of sustainable tourism, numerous researchers stress the development of comprehensive indicators that make connections between tourism and economic, environmental and social processes in tourism destinations (see Miller and Twining Ward, 2005, p. 111).

Drawing from this and the insights evident in Table 2.1, it is clear that such a systems-based approach must encompass numerous diverse but interconnecting subsystems, such as human society, the environment, and the economy. In order to avoid the arbitrariness of indicator development, a comprehensive framework must be used to identify indicators that cover all aspects of systems viability and sustainability (Reed et al., 2005). While a substantial number of indicators would be necessary to capture all aspects of sustainable development and complex systems, it is essential to define a practical and reduced set of representative indicators that can provide a comprehensive description of the destination under study.

In light of this, we searched for an indicator framework that considers the linkages among social, ecological and economic systems; organizes and limits the number of necessary indicators; and focuses on identifying connections among systems, all in accordance with systems thinking. There is little academic research on indicator development or frameworks that have been employed to evaluate the local impacts of volunteer tourism. For this reason, we have reviewed many of the concepts and literature on indicator development for assessing sustainability and sustainable tourism, which can then be applied to volunteer tourism.

We chose the “compass” framework, developed by AtKisson (2011), as a guiding framework to organize indicators for this research endeavor. The compass framework is a systems-thinking approach to evaluating sustainable community development, with three principle aims: 1) to awaken interest in sustainability; 2) to focus attention on long-term trends; and 3) to promote a more systemic understanding of sustainability (Atkisson, 2011). This framework was chosen because it stresses a holistic interdisciplinary and systems perspective of the environmental, economic, social and personal well-being aspects of a community. In addition, there are many parallels between the goals of sustainable community development and those of volunteer tourism, such as economic opportunity, poverty alleviation and natural resource conservation. This framework has also been found to be highly versatile, as it has been applied across a diversity of environments and has been adapted to differing circumstances.

The compass framework aims to incorporate the diverse impacts that development may have on a community, divided into four categories (corresponding to the four compass points): nature (N), which refers to the "underlying health and sustainable management of key ecosystems, bio-geo-physical cycles and natural resources"; economy (E), which refers to "all the ways human beings work with nature, with knowledge and with each other to produce the things and services that they need or want"; society (S), which refers to "the social systems, structures and institutions that are driven by people acting collectively"; and personal well-being (W), which "focuses on the individual, as well as on the smaller webs of intimate relationships that are crucial to health and happiness" (Atkisson, 2011:145-146).

A fundamental idea behind the design of the compass framework is that it offers four different directions of sustainability or well-being; while no one direction should be the sole focus of a community or development project, all four directions in unison promote a balance to which a community can aspire. While Atkisson argues that the compass framework is useful to divide indicators into these conceptually manageable clusters, the strengths of this approach are that it also shows how things are connected within a system and it maps the status of the system being managed in such a way that it supports the engagement of as many stakeholders as possible. Literature on this framework (Atkisson, Hatcher & Green, 2004; Atkisson, 2011; Atkisson, Inc., 2011) includes suggestions for on-the-ground implementation which focus on establishing linkages between indicators on the four compass points and recognizing the interrelationships among them by identifying trends, chains of cause and effect, system leverage points, and the creation of systems or connection maps. While this step of implementation is beyond the scope of the research presented in this paper, it demonstrates the systems-thinking approach inherent in this framework of indicator development.

Methods and sample selection

An online questionnaire using Qualtrics© online survey software was designed (see Appendix 2). Its principal aims were to understand how volunteer tourism organizations select work sites and projects, how they collaborate and communicate with host communities, the indicators they employ to assess the impacts of their programs in host communities, and numerous characteristics of volunteers, organizations, host communities, and volunteer work.

Most questions were close-ended in nature, including multiple-choice, number entry, and Likert scale questions. The compass framework was used to organize four lists of potential indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism. To develop an initial indicator list, an extensive literature search was conducted on the indicators of community well-being, ecotourism and sustainable tourism. All indicators relevant to volunteer tourism were organized according to the compass framework, and the most commonly cited indicators were chosen to produce four categories of approximately 10-15 indicators per category.

Two distinct sampling frames were identified. The first sampling frame (hereafter referred to as *sample 1*) consisted of volunteer tourism organizations based in the U.S.A., Canada, the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand which send volunteers abroad to work on environmental conservation or community development projects. The second sampling frame (hereafter referred to as *sample 2*) consisted of volunteer tourism organizations based in Latin America which offer or coordinate environmental conservation or community development programs for international volunteer tourists.

In order to derive a list of volunteer tourism organizations that comprise the two sampling frames, the authors consulted five guide books and one research publication that focus on volunteer tourism and provide extensive lists of international volunteer tourism organizations (Ausenda, 2011; Brodowsky, 2010; Hindle et al., 2010; Lynch, 2009; Mersmann, Havranek & Ferguson, 2010; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008). These publications were systematically reviewed to identify volunteer tourism organizations that publicize environmental conservation or community development as at least one goal of their volunteer program. The website of each organization was visited to confirm this.

Numerous criteria were used to ensure that organizations selected for the sampling frames fit the following characteristics of "volunteer tourism." To be selected, organizations had to offer volunteer opportunities which include some type of unpaid work that directly or indirectly promotes: 1) environmental conservation; or 2) community development. Only international volunteer programs were selected; for the first sampling frame, this required that organizations send volunteers to one or more countries other than the country of the organization's home office. For the second sampling frame, this required that organizations in Latin America receive some of their volunteers from other countries. This approach excluded organizations whose programs focused solely on domestic volunteering. Organizations that only

offered programs over six months in duration and organizations whose programs did not focus on work with host communities were also eliminated from the sampling frames. Organizations that function as a directory of other volunteer organizations and do not organize their own programs were also excluded from the sampling frame, on the assumption that they would have little to contribute regarding the impacts of their programs in host communities.

Sample 1 consisted of 149 volunteer tourism organizations based in the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Australia and New Zealand. Sample 2 consisted of 54 organizations in Latin America, representing Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

A modified Dillman method (Dillman, Smyth & Christian, 2009) for survey implementation was employed. After an appropriate contact person was identified at each organization (when possible), a pre-notice letter was sent by e-mail, which included a thorough explanation of the research program and its potential usefulness to volunteer tourism organizations for assessing the impacts of their programs. Each organization then received a cover letter with the online questionnaire via e-mail. Nonrespondents received e-mail, postcard and telephone reminders (in this order). Survey implementation began in October 2011 for the first sample, and in January 2012 for the second sample. The online questionnaire was closed in May 2012.

Results

Questionnaires were sent to 134 organizations from sample 1. Fifteen organizations declined to participate during initial correspondences. Seventy three responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 54.5%. Questionnaires were sent to 49 organizations from sample 2. Five organizations were removed because they declined to participate or did not have a functioning e-mail address. Thirty five responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 71.4%.

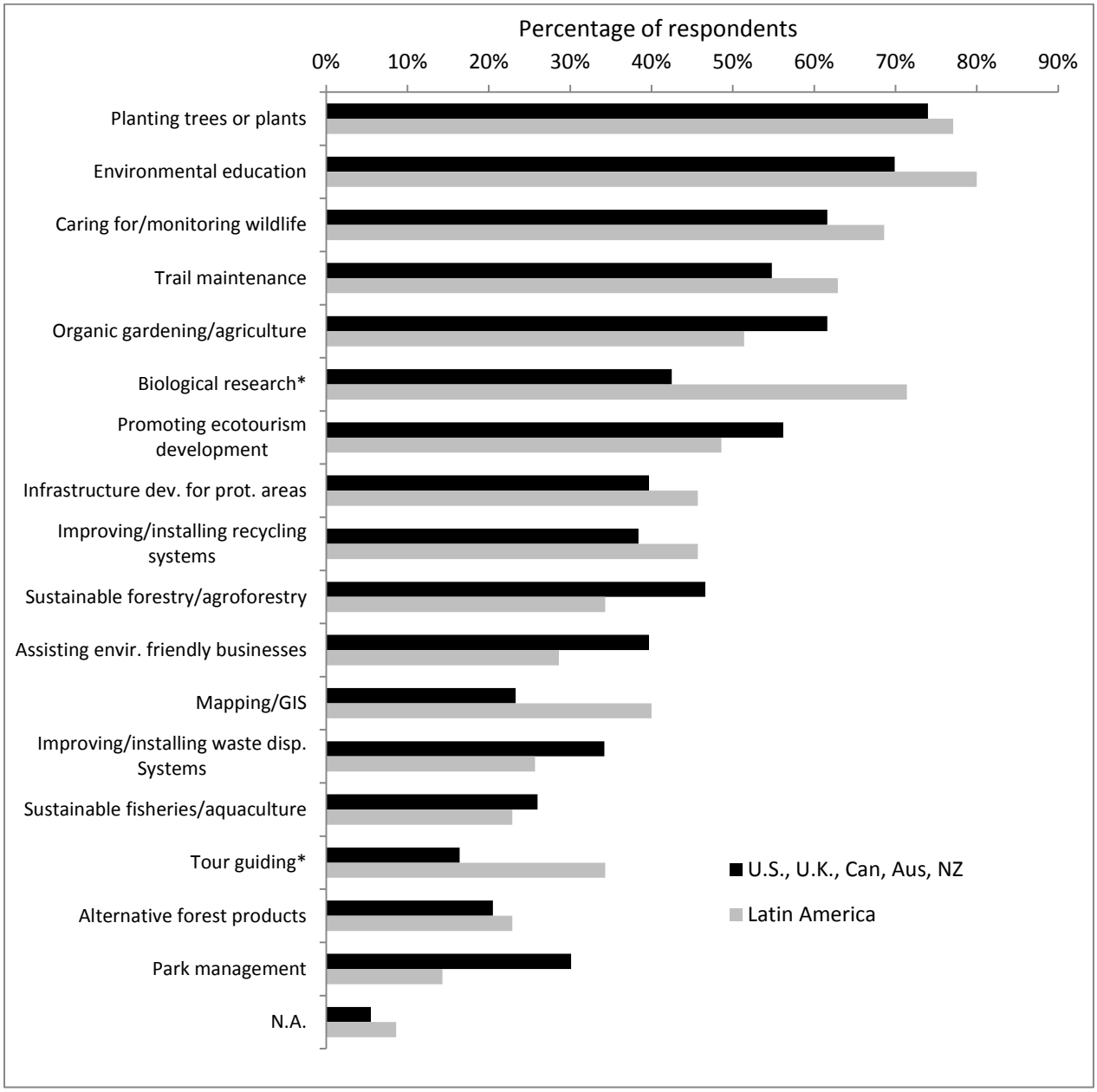
All quantitative data analysis was conducted with IBM© SPSS (PASW Statistics 18) software. Only a subsection of the questionnaire data and analyses are presented in this paper. In order to address our specific research questions, only two principal components of the

questionnaire will be discussed: 1) popular volunteer tourist activities; and 2) indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism.

Environmental volunteer work

Respondents were provided an extensive list of the most popular natural resource/environment related activities for volunteer tourists, and were asked to select all activities that their organization offers for volunteers. As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the most popular activities include planting trees/plants, environmental education, caring for or monitoring wildlife, trail maintenance, organic gardening/agriculture and biological research. Chi-square tests reveal that Latin American organizations offer biological research and tour guiding activities more so than sample 1 organizations.

Figure 2.1. Natural resource/environment related activities performed by volunteers



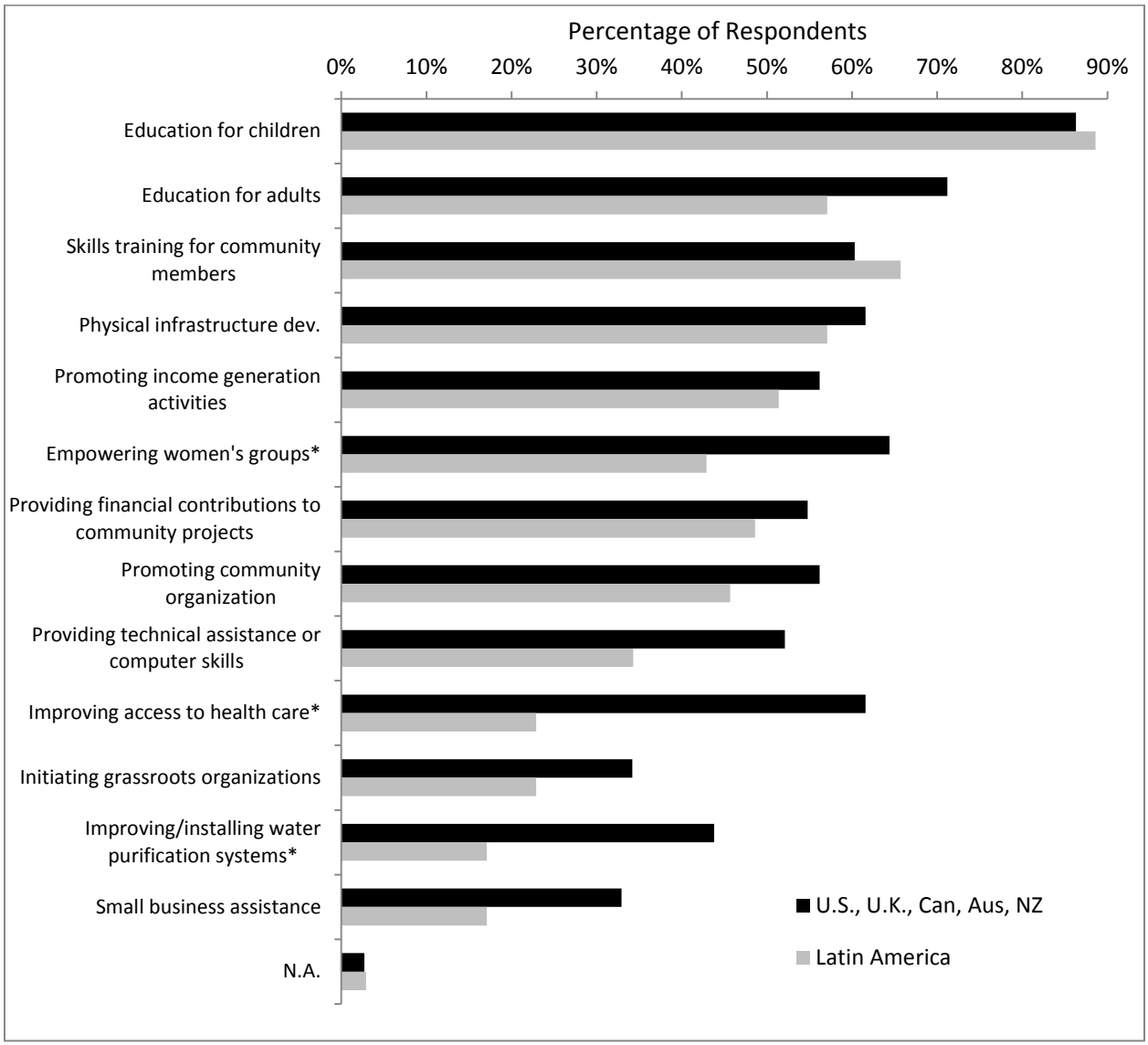
* = significant difference ($p \leq .05$ on chi-square test)

Community development volunteer work

Respondents were provided an extensive list of the most popular community development related activities for volunteer tourists, and were asked to select all activities that their organization offers for volunteers. As illustrated in Figure 2.2, the most popular community development related activity performed by volunteers was education for children, followed by

education for adults. Chi-square tests reveal that sample 1 organizations predominate in three activities: empowering women's groups, improving access to health care, and improving/installing water purification systems.

Figure 2.2. Community development related activities performed by volunteers



* = significant difference ($p \leq .05$ on chi-square test)

Indicators

The questionnaire presented four lists of indicators of potential local impacts of volunteer tourism, organized according to the compass framework. For each indicator, the respondent was

asked “How useful would it be for you to know this?” A Likert scale was used with the following choices: “not useful”; “somewhat useful”; “useful”; “very useful”; and “extremely useful.” The respondent was then asked “Do you assess or measure this?” and was given the following choices: “yes”; “no”; and “not applicable.”

Tables 2.2-2.5 illustrate the results. Each chart displays the data in several ways. First is a calculation of the average usefulness of each indicator. The Likert scale choices were quantified on a point scale, ranging from 1 (not useful) to 5 (extremely useful). Mean usefulness values are displayed for each sample. The indicators were arranged from top to bottom according to mean usefulness; the indicator at the top received the highest overall average usefulness score and the indicator at the bottom received the lowest overall average usefulness score. The percentage of respondents that responded “yes” to the question “Do you assess or measure this?” was calculated, and is displayed by sample. Those that responded “no” or “not applicable” were not included because this calculation only shows the degree to which each indicator is measured.

Independent samples t-tests revealed statistically significant differences between the mean usefulness of each indicator for the two samples. Significant differences with a p-value of under 0.05 are indicated with a single asterisk under each table, and significant differences with a p-value of under 0.10 are indicated with a double asterisk.

The mean usefulness value of all indicators was calculated for each indicator category (see bottom of each table, two values at left). To test for a statistically significant difference between the overall mean usefulness of each indicator category for the two samples, two steps were taken: 1) the mean usefulness value of all indicators was calculated for each respondent, per category (mean value must fall between 1 and 5); and 2) a t-test compared the mean values between the two samples.

To test for statistically significant differences between the number of respondents answering “yes” to assessing/measuring each indicator for sample 1 and sample 2, Fisher’s exact test was used. All “not applicable” answers were removed before this analysis was conducted, as it was assumed that certain indicators were irrelevant to the work of some organizations, and including them in this analysis would not have provided meaningful results. Fisher’s exact test was chosen due to the dichotomous nature of the data (1= “yes”; 2= “no”). Significant differences with a p-value of under 0.05 are indicated with a single asterisk, and significant differences with a p-value of under 0.10 are indicated with a double asterisk.

The overall mean percentage of respondents answering "yes" to assessing or measuring indicators (per category) was also calculated (see bottom of each table, two values at right). To test for a statistically significant difference between these two values for the two samples, three steps were taken: 1) All "not applicable" answers were removed from the data; 2) the mean value of all responses was calculated for each respondent (1= "yes"; 2= "no"; mean value must fall between 1 and 2); and 3) a t-test compared the mean values between the two samples.

Two alternate ways of dividing organizations were also explored as they provided other methods of analyzing and understanding variation in the data: organization size and length of volunteer trips. All questionnaire respondents provided the number of volunteer work sites offered per organization, and this was used as a proxy for organization size. Each respondent provided an exact number of volunteer work sites provided by his/her organization, with a median value of 12. Therefore, organizations were divided into two categories: ≤12 work sites (n=53); and >12 work sites (n=49). This produced two comparable groups (small organizations vs. large organizations) for additional statistical analyses.

Questionnaire respondents also provided the percentages of trips offered by their organizations, in four categories of trip length: 1-7 days; 8-15 days; 16-30 days; and over 30 days. It was not possible to place organizations definitively into one of two categories (short vs. long trips) because many organizations offer a mix of long and short trips. The best alternative was to classify organizations as offering mostly short trips if the percentage of trips under 30 days was over 60% (n=70), while classifying organizations as offering mostly long trips if the percentage of trips over 30 days was over 60% (n=31). Three organizations could not be classified, with 50% of their trips under 30 days and 50% over 30 days, and were excluded from the analysis. The resulting two groups (short term trips vs. long term trips) could then be compared for analyses.

Economic indicators

Table 2.2 shows that the most useful indicators of economic impacts were economic opportunities for women/disadvantaged groups and tourism expenditures that stay within the community, while local business ownership and availability of highly-skilled jobs were the least useful. The two samples differed significantly on three indicators: vocational/professional training programs for community members, locally-made marketable products, and availability

of highly skilled jobs. In all three cases, sample 2 found these indicators more useful than sample 1. There was a significant difference in overall mean usefulness of the economic indicators between the two samples (using a 0.1 alpha level), indicating that sample 2 overall ranked the economic indicators as more useful than did sample 1. Regarding the assessment/measurement of the indicators, sample 1 more commonly assessed local business revenues, while sample 2 more commonly assessed availability of highly-skilled jobs. There was not a significant difference in overall mean percentages of indicator assessment/measurement between samples.

Table 2.2. Indicators of potential local economic impacts of volunteer tourism

	How useful would it be for you to know this? *(scale of 1→5: least useful to most useful)*		Do you assess or measure this? *(% of respondents answering "yes")*	
Indicator	**Sample 1 *(U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, New Zealand); n=73***	**Sample 2 *(Latin America); n=35***	**Sample 1**	**Sample 2**
Economic opportunities for women/disadvantaged groups	3.6	4.0	43.1%	37.1%
Tourism expenditures that stay within the community	3.6	4.0	29.7%	26.5%
Economic opportunities for host families	3.7	3.8	31.7%	41.2%
Employment opportunities for community members	3.4	3.7	32.3%	34.3%
Vocational/professional training programs for community members	3.2*	3.8*	29.7%	26.5%
Locally-made marketable products	3.1*	3.8*	32.8%	38.2%
Creation of local businesses	2.9	3.4	22.2%	23.5%
Income distribution within the community	3.0	3.2	12.5%	15.2%
Per capita income	3.0	3.1	16.4%	18.2%
Local business revenues	2.8	3.2	21.9%**	6.1%**
Local business ownership	2.8	3.0	19.0%	15.2%
Availability of highly-skilled jobs	2.5*	3.1*	9.5%*	25.7%*
Averages:	**3.1****	**3.5****	**25.1%**	**25.6%**

* = significant difference ($p \leq .05$ on t-test or Fisher's exact test)
** = significant difference ($p \leq .10$ on t-test or Fisher's exact test)

Dividing the organizations by number of work sites produced unique results. Small organizations found two indicators to be significantly more useful than did large organizations: tourism expenditures that stay within the community (mean values 4 and 3.4) and local business revenues (mean values 3.2 and 2.6). Regarding assessment/measurement, small organizations assessed tourism expenditures that stay within the community significantly more than large organizations (38% vs. 15.9%). No statistically significant results were found when organizations were divided by trip length.

Environmental indicators

Table 2.3 illustrates that local community attitudes towards the environment was the most useful indicator, while assisting captured/injured wildlife was the least useful. The two samples differed significantly on almost all indicators, with sample 2 almost universally finding them more useful than sample 1. However, almost all indicators were identified as useful by both groups. There was a significant difference in overall mean usefulness of the indicators between the samples, indicating that sample 2 ranked the environmental indicators as more useful than did sample 1. Regarding the assessment/measurement of the indicators, sample 2 more commonly assessed three indicators: local community attitudes towards the environment, protecting natural areas/forests, and assisting captured/injured wildlife. There was not a significant difference in overall mean percentages of indicator assessment/measurement between the two samples.

Table 2.3. Indicators of potential local environmental impacts of volunteer tourism

	How useful would it be for you to know this? *(scale of 1→5: least useful to most useful)*		Do you assess or measure this? *(% of respondents answering "yes")*	
Indicator	**Sample 1 *(U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, New Zealand); n=73***	**Sample 2 *(Latin America); n=35***	**Sample 1**	**Sample 2**
Local community attitudes towards the environment	3.9*	4.4*	28.3%**	48.6%**
Protecting biodiversity	3.7*	4.4*	36.1%	54.3%
Protecting natural areas/forests	3.6*	4.4*	35.6%*	60.6%*
Sustainable use of natural resources	3.8**	4.2**	43.3%	42.4%
Community knowledge of conservation/ecological issues	3.6*	4.4*	31.7%	47.1%

Degree of community participation in conservation activities	3.6*	4.1*	30.5%	44.1%
Restoring natural areas/forests	3.5*	4.1*	31.0%	45.5%
Community participation in conservation/natural resource decision-making	3.5	3.9	30.0%	31.3%
Funding for conservation initiatives/protected areas	3.2*	4.0*	27.1%	31.4%
Water quality/clean water availability	3.5	3.7	35.0%	35.3%
Infrastructure for conservation areas/protected areas	3.2*	3.8*	27.1%	38.2%
Site attractiveness/potential for other forms of tourism	3.0*	4.1*	22.0%	33.3%
Environmental sanitation/waste management	3.2**	3.7**	28.3%	38.2%
Conducting environmental assessments	3.2*	3.8*	28.1%	23.3%
Staffing for conservation areas/protected areas	3.0*	3.9*	24.1%	39.4%
Assisting captured/injured wildlife	2.8*	3.7*	20.0%*	50.0%*
Averages:	**3.4***	**4.0***	**29.9%**	**41.4%**

* = significant difference (p ≤. 05 on t-test or Fisher's exact test)
** = significant difference (p ≤ .10 on t-test or Fisher's exact test)

In this category, fewer statistically significant differences were found when organizations were divided by size. Regarding indicator usefulness, no differences were found. Regarding assessment/impact, small organizations assessed two indicators more frequently than large organizations: infrastructure for conservation areas/protected areas (39.6% vs. 23.8%) and site attractiveness/potential for other forms of tourism (36.2% vs. 16.7%). No statistically significant results were found when organizations were divided by trip length.

Social indicators

Table 2.4 illustrates that engagement of the community in community improvement projects was the most useful indicator, while the rate of migration to/from the community was the least useful. The two samples differed significantly on community tourism planning, with sample 2 finding this indicator more useful than sample 1. Otherwise, the two samples differed very little on almost all indicators, with nearly identical overall means. Regarding the

assessment/measurement of the indicators, there were no statistically significant differences between samples on individual indicators, or overall percentages of indicator assessment/measurement.

Table 2.4. Indicators of potential local social impacts of volunteer tourism

	How useful would it be for you to know this? *(scale of 1→5: least useful to most useful)*		Do you assess or measure this? *(% of respondents answering "yes")*	
Indicator	**Sample 1 *(U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, New Zealand); n=73***	**Sample 2 *(Latin America); n=35***	**Sample 1**	**Sample 2**
Engagement of the community in community improvement projects	3.9	4.1	50.8%	38.2%
Continuance of traditional cultural activities	3.7	3.7	29.0%	20.6%
Engagement of the community in community-level decision-making	3.7	3.6	38.1%	23.5%
Community visioning/goal-setting	3.6	3.7	30.5%	20.6%
Community infrastructure	3.6	3.6	41.0%	25.0%
Social cohesion	3.6	3.4	24.2%	25.8%
Community tourism planning	3.0*	3.8*	16.4%	23.5%
Dependency of the community on foreign assistance	3.5	3.1	25.0%	15.6%
Rate/type of criminal activity	3.1	3.1	20.0%	15.2%
The rate of migration to/from the community	3.0	3.0	15.0%	18.2%
Averages:	**3.4**	**3.5**	**29.0%**	**22.6%**

* = significant difference ($p \leq .05$ on t-test or Fisher's exact test)
** = significant difference ($p \leq .10$ on t-test or Fisher's exact test)

Secondary analyses performed between large and small organizations produced only one statistically significant result: large organizations found social cohesion to be more useful than small organizations, with mean values of 3.7 and 3.2, respectively. When organizations were divided by trip length, one statistically significant result was found: organizations offering longer trips assessed the engagement of the community in community improvement projects more so than organizations offering shorter trips: 61.5% vs. 40.6%, respectively.

Personal well-being/enrichment indicators

Table 2.5 illustrates that educational programs for schoolchildren and satisfaction of community members with the volunteer tourism program were the most useful indicators, while physical health of community members and access to internet/information were the least useful. The two samples differed significantly on several indicators: sample 1 found satisfaction of community members with the volunteer tourism program, standard of living for community members, access to health care services, and physical health of community members more useful than sample 2; in contrast, sample 2 found environmental education for the community and local people's ability to share their ecological knowledge more useful than sample 1. There was no significant difference in overall mean usefulness of the indicators. Regarding the assessment/measurement of the indicators, sample 1 more commonly assessed satisfaction of community members with the volunteer tourism program. No other significant differences were found.

Table 2.5. Indicators of potential local personal well-being impacts of volunteer tourism

	How useful would it be for you to know this? *(scale of 1→5: least useful to most useful)*		Do you assess or measure this? *(% of respondents answering "yes")*	
Indicator	**Sample 1** ***(U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, New Zealand); n=73***	**Sample 2** ***(Latin America); n=35***	**Sample 1**	**Sample 2**
Educational programs for schoolchildren	4.0	4.3	49.2%	57.6%
Satisfaction of community members with volunteer tourism program	4.2**	3.8**	55.7%**	31.3%**
Environmental education for the community	3.7*	4.2*	33.3%	48.5%
Local people's ability to share their cultural knowledge	3.6	3.9	29.5%	30.3%
Capacity-building/training programs	3.6	3.9	31.7%	48.4%
Satisfaction of community members with community life	3.7	3.5	27.1%	24.2%
Standard of living for community members	3.8**	3.4**	40.0%	28.1%
Local people's ability to share their ecological knowledge	3.3*	3.8*	24.6%	36.4%
Access to health care services	3.6**	3.2**	39.0%	24.2%
Physical health of community	3.6**	3.1**	26.7%	21.2%

members				
Access to internet/information	3.4	3.2	30.5%	21.9%
Averages:	**3.7**	**3.7**	**35.2%**	**33.8%**

* = significant difference (p ≤. 05 on t-test or Fisher's exact test)
** = significant difference (p ≤ .10 on t-test or Fisher's exact test)

Secondary analyses performed between large and small organizations produced several statistically significant results: large organizations found three indicators to be more useful than small organizations: standard of living for community members (mean values of 3.9 and 3.4), access to health care services (mean values of 3.8 and 3.2) and physical health of community members (mean values of 3.6 and 3.2). Regarding assessment, small organizations assess satisfaction of community members with community life more than large organizations (30.4% vs. 16.7%).

Organizations offering longer trips assessed several indicators to a greater degree than organizations offering shorter trips. These included: local people's ability to share their ecological knowledge, local people's ability to share their cultural knowledge, environmental education for the community, educational programs for schoolchildren, access to internet/information and satisfaction of community with volunteer tourism program.

Discussion

The results obtained in this questionnaire generate several key conclusions. In consideration of the environmental activities offered by organizations, unskilled forms of labor predominate, such as planting trees, caring for wildlife and trail maintenance. Also notable is an emphasis on biological research on the part of Latin American organizations, indicating that they may have a stronger focus on scientific research activities and may be geared to an audience of researchers, students or apprentices. A consideration of the community development activities offered by both samples indicates a strong emphasis on education for both children and adults, which is a popular activity for international volunteers (mostly unskilled) and concurs with the literature on volunteer tourism. The fact that sample 1 organizations offered projects related to empowering women's groups, health care and water quality more frequently than Latin American organizations might suggest two propositions: 1) empowering women is a concept that

predominates in more developed nations and less so in Latin America, therefore representing a concept that may take a lesser priority for local organizations; and 2) international organizations may have greater resources and technical capacity to provide health care and highly trained specialists to carry out programs that provide health care and water purification systems for host communities.

A glance at the economic and environmental indicators in tables 2.2 and 2.3 leads to several potential conclusions. Latin American organizations generally found the economic and environmental indicators more useful. This may be due to in-country organizations placing a higher focus on economic development and environmental conservation, while sending organizations may focus more on volunteer satisfaction. It could therefore be suggested that local organizations more frequently strive for positive economic and environmental impacts in host communities. Moreover, Latin American organizations valued environmental education for the community and local people's ability to share their ecological knowledge over sample 1; this could be representative of their more intimate knowledge of local ecological principles.

There is, however, a caveat to making this comparison: the two samples differed very little in how they rated the usefulness of social indicators, as they were all ranked highly. Regarding the indicators of personal well-being, there is no difference in overall mean usefulness, but numerous statistically significant differences can be found at the individual indicator level. Sample 1 organizations rated satisfaction of community members with the volunteer tourism program, the standard of living for community members, access to health care services, and the physical health of community members as more useful than sample 2. This could be explained as a stronger focus of international organizations on improving the overall quality of life of community members, as well as possessing the resources or knowledge to provide health care services.

The fact that smaller organizations found some economic indicators to be more useful and assessed some environmental indicators more so than large organizations leads to the potential conclusion that small organizations may take a unique approach and value certain economic and environmental impacts more than large organizations that may have a stronger focus on volunteer satisfaction and other motives. However, large organizations expressed higher priority among some social and personal well-being indicators, centering on health, standard of living and social cohesion. Similarly, organizations offering longer trips prioritized community

engagement, local environmental and cultural knowledge, education, access to information and community satisfaction. Overall, the data suggests that large organizations and organizations focusing on longer trips have a stronger emphasis on social and community impacts, while emphases places on economic and environmental impacts are more strongly dictated by the geographic nature of the organization (local vs. international).

The discrepancies that exist between indicator usefulness and the assessment of such indicators merit further discussion. Numerous indicators rank as highly useful, but are rarely assessed by volunteer tourism organizations. For example, local community attitudes towards the environment is the highest ranked of all environmental indicators, but only 28.3% of sample 1 organizations assess this (versus 48.6% of sample 2 organizations). Similarly, tourism expenditures that stay within the community is the second most useful economic indicator, but just 29.7% of sample 1 organizations and 26.5% of sample 2 organizations assess this. Overall, just approximately 25% of all economic indicators are assessed by organizations, even though they are consistently ranked as "useful" or "very useful." A number of indicators are more commonly assessed: engagement of the community in community improvement projects is assessed by over 50% of sample 1 organizations and satisfaction of community members with volunteer tourism program is assessed by over 55% of sample 1 organizations. Similarly, protecting biodiversity and protecting natural areas/forests are assessed by 54.3% and 60.6% of sample 2 organizations, respectively. This suggests that methodologies for assessing such impacts may be present, although they may be organization-specific and not publicly available. Other indicators are very subjective and difficult to define, yet are assessed by several organizations, such as social cohesion (assessed by about 25% of organizations) or attitudes towards the environment (assessed by 28% of sample 1 and 48% of sample 2 organizations). A potential new direction for future research is to identify and validate any existing methodologies that organizations are employing to assess such indicators, as well as explore potential measures of the indicators that are practical and efficient to be carried out in host communities with minimal resources and training.

Discrepancies exist between the two samples in terms of indicator measurement. For example, protecting natural areas/forests is assessed by 60.6% of sample 2 organizations but just 35.6% of sample 1 organizations, while local community attitudes towards the environment is assessed by 48.6% of sample 2 organizations but just 28.3% of sample 1 organizations. Some

such discrepancies can be explained by the fact that the two samples may differ in their foci and the types of projects they offer. This contrast could also be due to differing levels of ability to measure local impacts, which in turn could be related to the degree of access that an organization has to a host community (for example, in-country organizations are much closer to host communities). While it cannot be concluded that sample 2 organizations have a stronger focus on the environment than sample 1 organizations, it can be concluded that sample 1 organizations have a lesser tendency to evaluate the environmental impacts of their volunteer programs. This may be due to the close relationship that exists between local organizations and host communities, which may be difficult to replicate for large international organizations.

As another comparison, satisfaction of community members with the volunteer tourism program is assessed by 55.7% of sample 1 organizations but just 31.3% of sample 2 organizations. An indicator such as community satisfaction is very general and applicable to nearly all organizations, so it is not likely that this discrepancy is due to differing organizational objectives as suggested in the previous paragraph. We suggest two plausible explanations for this: 1) international organizations may express higher interest in achieving community satisfaction because their business is more dependent upon promoting a successful interaction between volunteers and local community members; or 2) international organizations may be more cognizant of their role as foreigners and therefore may place higher importance on the satisfaction of community members.

The secondary analyses which compared organizations by size and trip length were first conducted with all organizations (both samples) in the dataset, and were then re-conducted without Latin American organizations. In most cases, statistically significant differences maintained their significance after Latin American organizations were removed from the analysis. This indicates that the statistical differences observed are attributable to organization size or trip length, rather than the presence or absence of local organizations in the sample. Dividing the organizations by trip length produced fewer statistically significant differences than did dividing the organizations by size. This may be partially due to the fact that most organizations offer a mix of short and long trips, and there was no better way to divide the organizations into two comparable groups. However, the fact that some significant differences in perceived indicator usefulness and assessment were observed between organizations divided by size or trip length indicate two considerations: 1) a future assessment tool must have the

flexibility to adapt to differing priorities and approaches of different types of volunteer tourism organizations; and 2) a universal assessment tool with established priority indicators may not be practical for all types of organizations.

Conclusions

This paper demonstrates a novel approach to indicator development. Most previous approaches in the literature on tourism and sustainability include expert-driven approaches (Beckley et al., 2002; Bell & Morse, 2001; Bossel, 2001; Miller, 2000; Mitchell, 1996; Schianetz & Kavanagh, 2008), locally-generated and community-specific approaches (AtKisson, 1996; Njuki et al., 2008; Parkins et al., 2001), or draw upon published indicator frameworks or case studies (Fraser et al., 2005; Reed et al., 2005; Roberts & Tribe, 2008). In comparison, this study began with a consideration of numerous existing frameworks and potential indicators in current literature and then tested these sets of indicators for their usefulness and applicability. It is neither expert-driven nor community-specific, as questionnaire respondents (who were generally not experts in indicator development) assessed the indicators based on their usefulness and applicability across numerous communities and geographic realms. While the initial indicators were drawn from literature on sustainability, sustainable tourism, community well-being and ecotourism, the respondents prioritized them according to their relevance to volunteer tourism. In addition, the use of the compass framework and a systems perspective ensured that indicators covered diverse social, personal, economic and environmental aspects, which are all interrelated and must be considered as a comprehensive system.

One of the common pitfalls of indicator development is the generation of too many indicators that are too difficult to evaluate, or that may not be useful across a broad audience of stakeholders. A key contribution of this study is that it helps to prioritize a small number of indicators from a longer list of indicators. It permits us to see how indicators can be prioritized based upon their perceived usefulness, or the degree to which they are assessed in real life, which may be an indication of the practicality or ease of assessing them.

This study contributes to the literature because it separates the usefulness of each indicator (which is often hypothetical) and the assessment of each indicator (what is actually happening). This serves as a baseline for future studies to investigate why certain indicators are

perceived to be useful but are less commonly assessed in the field, as well as the development and dissemination of strategies to better assess indicators that are considered important but often difficult to assess.

This study is also unique because we attempted to find patterns in the data based on dividing characteristics of volunteer tourism organizations. Differing priorities regarding desired and commonly assessed local impacts were found among organizations which recruit volunteers for international placements (sample 1) versus in-country and local organizations that receive volunteer tourists (sample 2). Other key differences in desired and assessed local impacts were also found by comparing organizations by size and length of volunteer trips. Any forthcoming impact assessment tool must consider these nuances among volunteer tourism organizations, particularly the different impacts that diverse types of organizations may have in host communities, depending on their differing desires, priorities and capacities. This reveals the need for more in-depth studies on the perceived or real impacts of volunteer tourism, differentiating among different types organizations and programs. This can be expanded to include other forms of volunteer tourism not included in this study, such as programs in urban areas, medical missions, long-term service programs, etc.

This research study provides a solid foundation for the development of a tool or methodology to effectively assess the impacts of volunteer programs in host communities. In addition, the results of this research complement current and evolving literature on the development of indicators using multi-stakeholder involvement and participatory methodologies; while much of this literature focuses on assessing community well-being and sustainability, it also has the potential to become pointed in the direction of assessing the local impacts of volunteer tourism. The compass framework provides a starting point that ensures a comprehensive and systems-thinking approach to indicator development; this framework can become a fundamental baseline for a greater process that includes tools for participatory indicator development and implementation. The contributions and framework of this paper are an essential step that will enable volunteer tourism organizations and host communities to develop, implement and monitor impact indicators that address the needs, priorities, strengths and capacities of the many stakeholders that make volunteer tourism projects possible and successful.

References

AtKisson, A. (1996). Developing indicators of sustainable community: Lessons from sustainable Seattle. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review, 16,* 337-350.

AtKisson, A., Hatcher, R.L., & Green, S. (2004). Introducing Pyramid: A versatile process and planning tool for accelerating sustainable development. Draft paper for publication. Retrieved from http://www.rrcap.unep.org/uneptg06/course/Robert/PyramidArticle-v4b.pdf

AtKisson, A. (2011). *The Sustainability Transformation: How to Accelerate Positive Change in Challenging Times*. UK: CPI Antony Rowe.

AtKisson, Inc. (2011). Pyramid Lite: A simplified version of the Pyramid workshop process – PYRAMID 2012 special edition. Retrieved from http://www.atkisson.com/resources/wp-content/uploads/PyramidLite_v8_2012Edition.pdf

Ausenda, F. (2011). *Green Volunteers: The World Guide to Voluntary Work in Nature Conservation*. Milan, Italy: Green Volunteers di Fabio Ausenda.

Bakker, M., & Lamoureux, K.M. (2008). Volunteer tourism – international. *Travel & Tourism Analyst 16,* 1-47.

Beckley, T., Parkins, J., & Stedman, R. (2002). Indicators of forest-dependent community sustainability: The evolution of research. *The Forestry Chronicle, 78*(5), 626-635.

Bell, S., & Morse, S. (2001). Breaking through the glass ceiling: Who really cares about sustainability indicators? *Local Environment, 6*(3), 291-309.

Benson, A., & Wearing, S. (2012). Volunteer tourism: Commodified trend or new phenomenon? In O. Moufakkir & P. Burns (Eds.), *Controversies in Tourism* (pp. 242-254). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Blackstock, K.L., White, V., McCrum, G., Scott, A. & Hunter, C. (2008). Measuring responsibility: An appraisal of a Scottish national park's sustainable tourism indicators. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(3), 276-297.

Broad, S., & Jenkins, J. (2008). Gibbons in their midst? Conservation volunteers motivations at the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project, Phuket, Thailand. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 72-85). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Bossel, H. (1999). Indicators for sustainable development: Theory, method, applications. A report to the Balaton Group. Winnipeg, Canada: International Institute for Sustainable Development.

Bossel, H. (2001). Assessing viability and sustainability: A systems-based approach for deriving comprehensive indicator sets. *Conservation Ecology, 5*(2), 12. Retrieved from http://www.consecol.org/vol5/iss2/art12/

Brodowsky, P. (2010). *Ecotourists Save the World: The Environmental Volunteer's Guide to more than 300 International Adventures to Conserve, Preserve, and Rehabilitate Wildlife and Habitats*. New York, NY: The Penguin Group Inc.

Brown, S., & Morrison, A.M. (2003). Expanding volunteer vacation participation: An exploratory study on the mini-mission concept. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28,* 73-82.

Brumbaugh, A. (2010). The impact of diversity seeking and volunteer orientation on desire for alternative spring break programs. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 27*, 474-490.

Budruk, M., & Phillips, R. (2011). *Quality-of-life Community Indicators for Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management*. London: Springer Science+Business Media.

Butcher, J., & Smith, P. (2010). 'Making a difference': Volunteer tourism and development. *Tourism Recreation Research, 35*(1), 27-36.

Callanan, M., & Thomas, S. (2005). Volunteer tourism: deconstructing volunteer activities within a dynamic environment. In M. Novelli (Ed.), *Niche Tourism: Contemporary Issues and Trends* (pp. 183-200). New York: Elsevier.

Coghlan, A. (2007). Towards an integrated image-based typology of volunteer tourism organisations. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(3), 267-287.

Cox, D., Frere, M., West, S., & Wiseman, J. (2010). Developing and using local community wellbeing indicators: Learning from the experience of Community Indicators Victoria. *Australian Journal of Social Issues, 45*(1), 71-88.

Dillman, D., Smyth, J., & Christian, L. (2009). *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-mode Surveys – The Tailored Design Method*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Fee, L., & Mdee, A. (2011). How does it make a difference? Towards 'accreditation' of the development impact of volunteer tourism. In A.M. Benson (Ed.), *Volunteer tourism: Theory framework to practical applications* (pp. 223-251). New York, NY: Routledge.

Farrell, B., Twining-Ward, L. (2004). Reconceptualizing Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research, 31*(2), 274-295.

Farrell, B., Twining-Ward, L. (2005). Seven steps towards sustainability: Tourism in the context of new knowledge. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 13*(2), 109-122.

Fraser, E., Dougill, A., Mabee, W., Reed, M., McAlpine, P. (2006). Bottom up and top down: Analysis of participatory processes for sustainability indicator identification as a pathway to

community empowerment and sustainable environmental management. *Journal of Environmental Management, 78,* 114-127.

Gallopin, G. (2006). Linkages between vulnerability, resilience, and adaptive capacity. *Global Environmental Change, 16,* 293-303.

Gray, N., & Campbell, L. (2007). A decommodified experience? Exploring aesthetic, economic and ethical values for volunteer ecotourism in Costa Rica. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(5), 463-482.

Guttentag, D. (2011). Volunteer tourism: As good as it seems? *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 69-74.

Halpenny, E.A., & Caissie, L.T. (2003). Volunteering on nature conservation projects: volunteer experience, attitudes and values. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28* (3), 25-33.

Hall, C.M. (2000). *Tourism Planning*. Prentice Hall, Harlow, UK.

Hindle, C., Cavalieri, N., Collinson, R., Miller, K., Richard, M., & Wintle, S. (2010). *Lonely Planet Volunteer: A Traveller's Guide to Making a Difference around the World*. Footscray, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd.

Hughes, G. (2002). Environmental indicators. *Annals of Tourism Research, 29(2),* 457-477.

Innes, J., & Booher, D. (2000). Indicators for sustainable communities: A strategy building on complexity theory and distributed intelligence. *Planning Theory & Practice, 1*(2), 173-186.

Jamal, T., & Stronza, A. (2009). Collaboration theory and tourism practice in protected areas: stakeholders, structuring and sustainability. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 17*(2), 169-189.

Keese, J. (2011). The geography of volunteer tourism: Place matters. *Tourism Geographies, 13*(2), 257-279.

Ledoux, L., Mertens, R. & Wolff, P. (2005). EU sustainable development indicators: An overview. *Natural Resources Forum, 29,* 392-403.

Liu, Z. (2003). Sustainable tourism development: a critique. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 11*(6), 459-475.

Lynch, P. (2009). *Wildlife & Conservation Volunteering: The Complete Guide*. Guilford, CN: The Globe Pequot Press, Inc.

Lyons, K.D. (2003). Ambiguities in volunteer tourism: A case study of Australians participating in a J-1 visitor exchange programme. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 5-13.

Lyons, K., Hanley, J., Wearing, S., & Neil, J. (2012). Gap year volunteer tourism: Myths of global citizenship? *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(1), 361-378.

Lyytimäki, J. (2012). Evaluation of sustainable development strategies and policies: The need for more timely indicators. *Natural Resources Forum, 36*, 101-108.

McGehee, N., & Andereck, K. (2009). Volunteer tourism and the "voluntoured": the case of Tijuana, Mexico. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 17*(1), 39-51.

McGehee, N. (2012). Oppression, emancipation, and volunteer tourism: Research propositions. *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(1), 84-107.

McIntosh, A., & Zahra, A. (2007). A cultural encounter through volunteer tourism: Towards the ideals of sustainable tourism? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(5), 541-556.

Mdee, A., & Emmott, R. (2008). Social enterprise with international impact: the case for Fair Trade certification of volunteer tourism. *Education, Knowledge & Economy, 2*(3), 191-201.

Meadows, D. (2008). Indicators and information systems for sustainable development. A report to the Balaton Group. Hartland Four Corners, USA: The Sustainability Institute.

Mersmann, A., Havranek, C., & Ferguson, K. (2010). *Frommer's 500 Places Where You Can make a Difference*. Mississauga, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd.

Miller, G. (2001). The development of indicators for sustainable tourism: Results from a Delphi survey of tourism researchers. *Tourism Management, 22*, 351-362.

Miller, G., & Twining-Ward, L. (2005). *Monitoring for a sustainable tourism transition.* Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Mitchell, G. (1996). Problems and fundamentals of sustainable development indicators. *Sustainable Development*, 4, 1-11.

Njuki, J., Mapila, M., Kaaria, S., & Magombo, T. (2008). Using community indicators for evaluating research and development programmes: experiences from Malawi. *Development in Practice, 18*(4-5), 633-642.

Palacios, C. (2010). Volunteer tourism, development and education in a postcolonial world: conceiving global connections beyond aid. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19*(7), 861-878.

Parkins, J., Stedman, R., & Varghese, J. (2001). Moving towards local-level indicators of sustainability in forest-based communities: A mixed-method approach. *Social Indicators Research,* 56, 43-72.

Raymond, E. (2011). Volunteer tourism: Looking forward. *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 77-79.

Reed, M., Fraser, E., & Dougill, A. (2005). An adaptive learning process for developing and applying sustainability indicators with local communities. *Ecological Economics,* 59, 406-418.

Roberts, S., & Tribe, J. (2008). Sustainability indicators for small tourism enterprises – An exploratory perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(5), 575-594.

Schianetz, K., & Kavanagh, L. (2008). Sustainability indicators for tourism destinations: A complex adaptive systems approach using systemic indicator systems. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(6), 601-628.

Simpson, K. (2004). 'Doing Development': The gap year, volunteer-tourists and a popular practice of development. *Journal of International Development, 16*, 681-692.

Sin, H.L. (2009). Volunteer tourism – "Involve me and I will learn?" *Annals of Tourism Research, 36*(3), 480-501.

Sin, H. (2010). Who are we responsible to? Locals' tales of volunteer tourism. *Geoforum 41*, 983-992.

Sirakaya, E., Jamal, T.B., & Choi, H.S. (2001). Developing indicators for destination sustainability. In D. Weaver (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism* (pp. 411-429). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Stoddart, H., & Rogerson, C.M. (2004). Volunteer tourism: the case of Habitat for Humanity South Africa. *GeoJournal, 60*, 311-318.

Tomazos, K., & Butler, R. (2009). Volunteer tourism: The new ecotourism? *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research, 20*(1), 196-211.

Tourism Research and Marketing. (2008). *Volunteer Tourism: A Global Analysis*. Barcelona: Atlas.

United Nations (2007). Indicators of sustainable development: Guidelines and methodologies. Third Edition. New York. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/indicators/guidelines.pdf

Uriely, N., Reichel, A., & Ron, A. (2003). Volunteering in tourism: Additional thinking. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 57-62.

Wallace, G., & Pierce, S. (1996). An evaluation of ecotourism in Amazonas, Brazil. *Annals of Tourism Research, 23*(4), 843-873.

Wearing, S. (2001). *Volunteer Tourism: Experiences that make a Difference*. New York: CABI.

Wearing, S. (2004). Examining best practice in volunteer tourism. In R. Stebbins & M. Graham (Eds.), *Volunteering as Leisure/leisure as Volunteering: An International Assessment* (pp. 209-224). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Wood, M.E. (2004). A triple bottom line for sustainable tourism development for international donors: Defining indicators for conservation, community and local enterprise development. Eplerwood International.

World Tourism Organization. (2004). *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook*. Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organization.

Chapter 3. An examination of the linkages between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities: understanding how volunteer tourism promotes citizen engagement and empowerment

Abstract
Volunteer tourism is a rapidly growing form of alternative tourism with potential to benefit communities and facilitate development in resource poor and developing country contexts. This paper explores the complex relationships that exist between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities to understand the potential of volunteer tourism to promote community development and empower host communities to take control of their development process. An online questionnaire and telephone interviews acquired the perspectives of many organizations within the volunteer tourism industry, including organizations that recruit volunteers for service abroad and in-country organizations that receive international volunteer tourists. Themes within the data consist of how volunteer tourism organizations select host communities and volunteer projects, how they collaborate with host communities, how they evaluate the impacts of their programs, and how they view their role in the development process. Nuances of the interface between the volunteer tourism organization and host community are identified and discussed. Their implications for host community engagement, empowerment and development are structured using a spectrum of public participation that frames this paper. Recommendations for additional action and research are designed to enable volunteer tourism organizations to better understand how their programs engage, empower and benefit host communities.

Introduction

It is becoming increasingly popular for travelers to engage in volunteer activities as an integral part or the primary purpose of their travel. This combination of travel and volunteer work is commonly referred to as "volunteer tourism" and defined as "a type of alternative tourism in which tourists volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment" (Wearing, 2001). It is one of the fastest growing trends in the tourism industry as evidenced by the recent proliferation in the number of travel organizations offering volunteer opportunities (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008; Brown & Morrison, 2003; Butcher & Smith, 2010; Tomazos & Butler, 2009; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008).

Volunteer tourism is part of a trend of ethical consumerism that aims to make positive differences in the communities of less developed countries and is intended to foster a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship between volunteers and host community members (Butcher & Smith, 2010; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Sin, 2009; Sin, 2010). Consequently there is an increasing recognition of the need to better understand the long-term impacts and unintended consequences of volunteer tourism in host communities (Guttentag, 2011) and the power relations between host communities, funding organizations and local partners (Sin, 2009). Other scholars also suggest that research should focus on gauging the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities and understanding the perspectives of aid-recipients (Halpenny & Cassie, 2003; Lyons, 2003; Raymond, 2011; Sin, 2009; Wearing, 2004). Despite this, numerous sources argue that little research has been conducted on the benefits of volunteer tourism for host communities, how volunteer tourists work interactively with local communities, and the perceptions and attitudes of community members exposed to volunteer tourists (Benson & Wearing, 2012; Ingram, 2011; McGehee, 2012; McGehee & Andereck, 2009; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Raymond, 2008; Sin, 2010).

The research presented in this paper addresses this gap in the literature on volunteer tourism. We specifically assess the degree to which volunteer tourism organizations collaborate with host communities and engage host community members in decision-making and impact evaluation processes. We explore these phenomena with three research questions: 1) How do volunteer tourism organizations select host communities and volunteer work projects? 2) What is the nature of the communication and decision-making processes between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities? and 3) What is the role of host communities and volunteer tourism organizations in the assessment of the local impacts of volunteer tourism?

We first discuss the role that volunteer tourism can play in the process of community development and diverse perspectives regarding the effectiveness of volunteer tourism as a development tool. We then discuss the potential for volunteer tourism to empower host communities and engage host community members in the development process, along with critiques of this approach. We introduce the “ladder of public participation” as a framework for understanding the differing degrees to which host community members are engaged in the development process that volunteer tourism promotes. Data was obtained via an online questionnaire and interviews to identify various aspects of how host communities are engaged in

the volunteer tourism process. Key themes consist of: 1) how host communities and volunteer work projects are selected/designed; 2) the communication process between host communities and volunteer tourism organizations; 3) the process of evaluating the local impacts of volunteer tourism; and 4) the role of volunteer tourism as a development tool. We explore the diverse approaches to working with host communities of volunteer tourism and use the ladder of public participation as a framework for understanding how these approaches impact citizen engagement and empowerment. We identify distinctions among "sending organizations" (those that recruit and send volunteers abroad) and "receiving organizations" (those based in-country that receive international volunteers) in their approaches to working with host communities. We conclude with recommendations for further action and research that will enable volunteer tourism organizations to influence the degree to which their programs engage and empower host communities.

Volunteer tourism as a development tool

Contradictory views have emerged regarding the role played by volunteer tourism in international and community development initiatives. Some argue that volunteer tourism can be used as a tool to facilitate international development. For example, Wearing (2001) asserts that volunteer tourism exists for the fundamental purpose of international development in various forms, including community development, conservation and scientific research. Eddins (2013) distinguishes volunteer tourism from ecotourism and sustainable tourism because volunteer tourists directly engage in development work, and considers volunteer tourism to be an "increasingly important, multifaceted, and useful development tool connecting developing and developed economies from global to local scales" (p. 252).

Others agree that volunteer tourism can contribute to development, but that it may have other ulterior motives. For example, Devereux (2008) argues that volunteer tourism can be a form of providing technical assistance for sustainable international development, but that it can also be imperialist and paternalistic charity and exist as a self-serving quest for career and personal development. Lewis (2006) similarly states that while international volunteering can promote development, its most important contribution is in promoting international understanding and solidarity.

Some more directly contest this view of volunteer tourism as a development tool. Simpson (2004) argues that volunteer tourism as a development tool externalizes the development process under the assumption that the impetus for change and development originates outside of host communities and in the hands of foreign organizations and mostly unskilled volunteer laborers. There is a perception that volunteers can play a savior role with their Western knowledge and education, leading to an attitude of superiority (Fee and Mdee, 2011). Eddins (2013) and Palacios (2010) assert that the concepts of development and international volunteering are constructs of the developed world and therefore volunteer tourism pertains to a line of Western domination and is a product of developed countries' approaches to development.

Despite these differing views, much of current discourse on volunteer tourism focuses on promoting or critiquing its role in stimulating international development. This justifies a closer examination of volunteer tourism as a development tool and paradigms of international development as they are applicable to volunteer tourism. International development theory has changed over time, from an earlier top-down approach focusing on macroeconomic growth and infrastructure development (Crabtree, 2008) to a diversity of approaches that emphasize partnership and participation at a micro level (Ingram, 2011). In this paradigm of development the beneficiaries have a greater participatory role in project design, implementation, and assessment (Crabtree, 2008). This paradigm focuses strongly on participatory development, the role of small NGOs (non-governmental organizations), and the incorporation of indigenous knowledge and organizational structures.

Simpson (2004) argues that the current volunteer tourism model is still top-down and contrasts with the bottom-up participatory approaches often advocated by current development practitioners. Guttentag (2011) follows this argument by claiming that inherent inequalities in the global power structure have the potential to allow volunteer tourists to dictate development processes in a top-down fashion. Vodopivek and Jaffe (2011) similarly portray volunteer tourism as a neoliberal form of development practice which has become privatized and commodified and undermines the capacity of local states to stimulate community development. In this fashion development is "done" by mostly unskilled international volunteer travelers for others who are in a relatively passive position, implying an outside and top-down approach to the development process.

In response to criticisms of the top-down approach, it is frequently argued that host communities of volunteer tourism and other forms of community-based tourism should play a more active role in planning and managing the tourism process. Cole (2006) stresses the importance of empowering host communities by making them a more integral part of the tourism planning process and promoting active citizen participation, also arguing that community participation is an essential step in the development process. Sin (2009) similarly recognizes that a neoliberal and top-down approach to volunteer tourism fosters dependency and that the community must be the central participatory structure in project management to reduce such dependency. Hitchcock (1993) asserts that involving communities in the planning process will most likely result in more appropriate decisions and higher motivation on the part of local people while Cole (2006) argues that community participation is a necessary element to obtain community support of tourism projects and to ensure that the benefits are linked to community needs. Despite this, the most common participation levels among tourism development projects are still low with host communities playing a passive role (Ingram, 2011), while literature on tourism planning and development is still dominated by the top-down approach (Sofield, 2003).

Citizen participation and collaboration are increasingly stressed as ideal goals of the tourism planning process, representative of a more profound shift in emphasis towards citizen empowerment in tourist destinations. Benson & Henderson (2011) argue that communities that host volunteer tourism often have relatively little power and do not exercise control over volunteer recruitment. Achieving such empowerment, however, is a task with formidable challenges. Sofield (2003) points out that current practices in community consultation are often a hollow form of manipulation or tokenism that do not delegate power to host communities of tourism, suggesting that more direct citizen participation is necessary to promote empowerment. Sofield also suggests that empowerment be incorporated into the definition of development, increasing its focus on sustainability and social justice. Reed (1997) asserts that community empowerment is a complex phenomenon and that existing power relations among diverse community stakeholders can inhibit collaboration in the tourism planning process, contrary to the common assumption that collaboration can overcome power imbalances.

Sofield (2003:344) defines empowerment as “a multi-dimensional process which provides communities with a consultative process often characterized by the input of outside expertise; the opportunity to learn and to choose; the ability to make decisions; the capacity to

implement and apply those decisions; acceptance of responsibility for those decisions and actions and their consequences; and outcomes directly benefiting the community and its members, not diverted or channeled to others." Crucial in this definition is the ability of communities to make and implement decisions and accept responsibility for the consequences, in the presence of outside expertise that assists in decision-making but does not control the decision-making process.

One of the challenges in achieving empowerment of this nature for host communities of volunteer tourism consists of inherent power imbalances at a larger scale. Mowforth and Munt (2003) frame this power struggle with a global perspective, arguing that the powerlessness that plays out in tourism destinations is a reflection of larger unequal power relationships between the First World and Third World. Mowforth and Munt also suggest that the mere presence of wealthy tourists in developing destinations is a new form of colonialism and exploitation of Third World resources. Cheong and Miller (2000) similarly assert that power imbalances between volunteers and host communities often exist when host communities are passive recipients of aid, perpetuating colonial attitudes of "them" and "us."

It is not likely that volunteer tourism will generate substantial changes in unequal global or local power structures. However, small-scale efforts can be made to form relationships between international volunteer-recruiting organizations and host communities that engage and empower host community citizens whose voices may otherwise go unheard. Promoting citizen engagement and empowerment through volunteer tourism in this way can set an example that contributes to the increasingly popular bottom-up paradigm of development. Moreover, successful examples of citizen engagement and community empowerment may provide an avenue for larger-scale and wider-reaching development initiatives to incorporate local decision-making processes. To set such an example, however, requires a structured framework to identify and understand the differing degrees to which volunteer tourism initiatives promote citizen engagement and empowerment.

Ladder of public participation

The "ladder of public participation," developed by Arnstein (1969), serves as a guiding framework to organize the research presented in this paper. The ladder is designed to differentiate among levels of public participation or citizen involvement to determine the

effectiveness of a community-based organization (CBO) in promoting community development. In the context of this paper, any volunteer tourism project in a host community or a local host organization that coordinates volunteer work is considered a CBO. Differing degrees of citizen participation are divided into eight "rungs". The two lower rungs (manipulation and therapy) are considered "non-participatory participation" and are exemplified by citizen committees that have no authority in controlling projects. The next three rungs (informing, consultation and placation) are considered "degrees of tokenism" and consist of communication tools, surveys, meetings, public hearings and placing citizens on boards, largely to create a false appearance of including the input of diverse stakeholders. The final three rungs (partnership, delegated power and citizen control) are "degrees of citizen power" in which planning and decision-making can have three degrees of power: 1) shared power between citizens and public authority; 2) authorized power to implement a plan or program; or 3) empowerment to act as a decentralized local government with full control over programs.

The ladder of public participation helps to measure or compare citizen participation across multiple scenarios. It does not imply that the top rungs are always an ideal goal for all situations. It has been found that the top rungs of the ladder may be inappropriate or unachievable due to issues of complexity, inefficiency, time, capacities of the citizenry, need for expert skills, external forces, and numerous other factors (Cogan et al., 1986; Conley & Moote, 2003; Gray, 1989; Green & Haines, 2008). In this paper the ladder identifies and distinguishes among varying degrees to which host communities participate in decision-making processes and how this affects the degree to which volunteer tourism empowers them.

Methods

Two approaches were taken to address our research questions: 1) an online questionnaire was administered to a diverse sample of volunteer tourism organizations; and 2) follow-up telephone interviews were conducted with a sub-sample of questionnaire respondents to allow them to elaborate on key questionnaire topics.

Online questionnaire

We designed an online questionnaire based on an extensive literature review of volunteer tourism and our underlying research questions. The questionnaire including close-ended questions on strategies for project selection, host community selection, communication with host communities, and impact assessment. The questionnaire was administered to two distinct sampling frames. The first sampling frame (hereafter referred to as *sample 1*) consisted of 134 volunteer tourism organizations based in the U.S.A., Canada, the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand that send volunteers to international destinations to work on environmental conservation or community development projects. The second sampling frame (hereafter referred to as *sample 2*) consisted of 49 volunteer tourism organizations based in Latin America that offer or coordinate environmental conservation or community development programs for international volunteer tourists. The second sampling frame was limited to Latin America for three reasons: 1) the authors of this paper have considerable experience working with tourism initiatives in Latin America; 2) the authors have the Spanish language abilities to produce a Spanish version of the questionnaire necessary for sample 2 respondents; and 3) a future phase of this research project will consist of case studies to be conducted in volunteer tourism host communities in Latin America.

Questionnaires were sent to 183 organizations and 108 were completed: 73 responses from sample 1 and 35 from sample 2, giving us response rates of 54.5% and 71.4%, respectively. Questionnaire data was analyzed using SPSS software.

Telephone interviews

Twenty one respondents from sample 1 who volunteered to be interviewed after completing the questionnaire were contacted and interviewed over the telephone. The telephone interviews examined in-depth the nature of the relationship between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and coded using NVIVO software. Some a priori coding themes were first created based on initial research questions, additional a priori coding themes were derived from the interview questions, and other codes were identified as they emerged in the coding process.

Table 3.1. Questionnaire/interview questions used for analysis in this paper

Theme	Question	Format
Selection of host communities and volunteer projects	1. *Which strategies are used by your organization to select host communities for volunteer tourism projects?* [multiple-choice]	online questionnaire
	2. *Which strategies are used by your organization to select projects within host communities where you operate?* [multiple-choice]	online questionnaire
	3. *How do you select the host communities in which your organization carries out volunteer tourism projects?*	telephone interviews
	4. *How do you select projects for volunteers in host communities?*	telephone interviews
Communication between organization and host community	5. *Which strategies are used by your organization to communicate with host communities where volunteer projects are carried out?* [multiple-choice]	online questionnaire
	6. *How do you maintain communication between your office and host communities?*	telephone interviews
Local impact assessment	7. *Does your organization conduct evaluations to determine if your projects meet the goals/expectations of host communities?* [yes/no]	online questionnaire
	8. *When your organization conducts such evaluations, from which of the following stakeholder groups do you acquire input?* [multiple-choice]	online questionnaire
	9. *How do you evaluate the local impacts of your volunteer tourism programs?*	telephone interviews
Philosophical approach to volunteer tourism	10. *How do you define success in working with a host community?*	telephone interviews

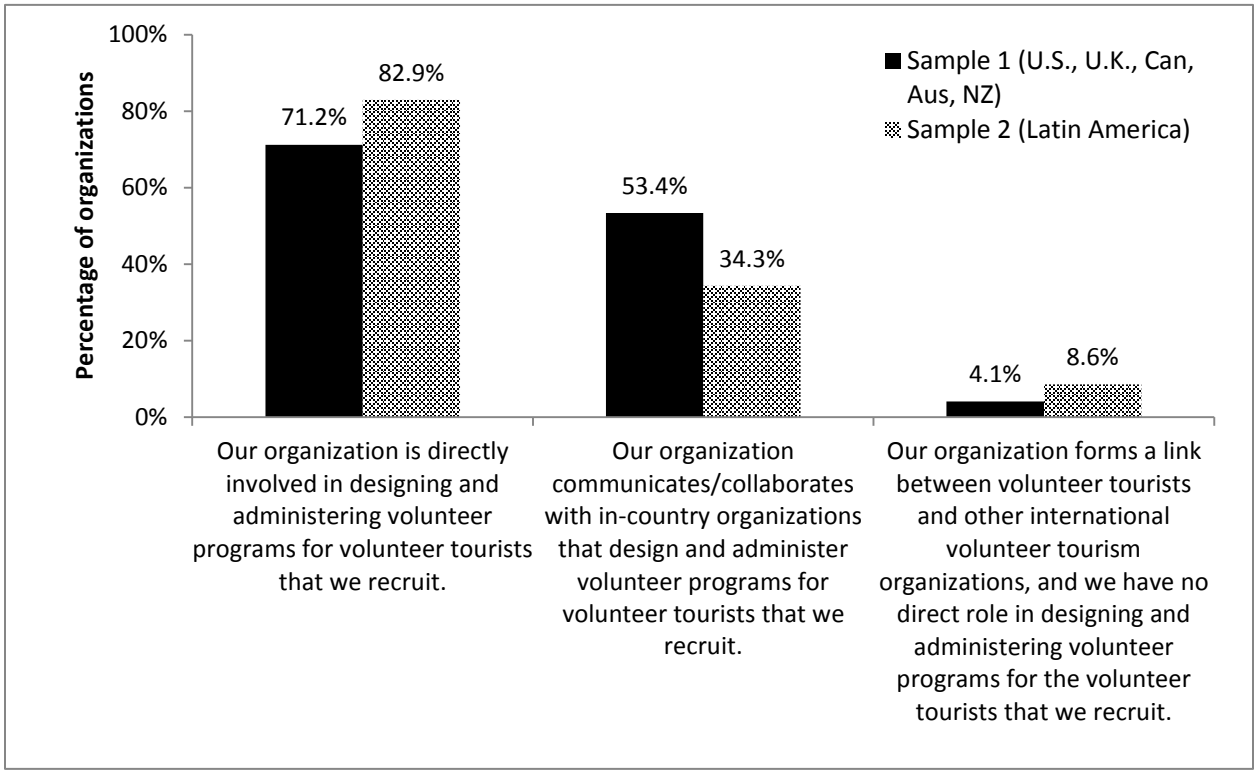
Respondents began the questionnaire by selecting among three distinct approaches to volunteer project design and administration that most accurately represents their organizations. Table 3.1 displays numerous other questions from the questionnaire and telephone interviews designed to solicit information from volunteer tourism organizations regarding their collaboration with host communities, citizen participation, impact assessments and approaches to volunteer tourism. Multiple-choice questions in the questionnaire included approximately 8-10 answer choices, derived by the authors and based on current literature. Questionnaire respondents were able to select all applicable answers as well as provide text responses in an "other" category. All interview questions were open-ended.

Results and Discussion

Questionnaire results: approaches to selecting host communities & projects

Figure 3.1 demonstrates that the majority of organizations sampled are directly involved in designing and administering programs for volunteer tourists, particularly so for sample 2. In addition, over half of sample 1 and just over a third of sample 2 organizations also collaborate with in-country organizations that design and administer projects. Very few respondents function simply as links between volunteers and other volunteer organizations. Many such organizations were initially excluded from the sample frames.

Figure 3.1. Approaches to designing and administering volunteer tourist programs



The questionnaire also provided more nuanced insights into how volunteer tourism organizations select host communities and projects for their volunteers. Figure 3.2 illustrates common strategies for host community selection (question 1 in Table 3.1). Sample 1 organizations rely most on recommendations from internal organizational contacts and local in-the-field contacts. They also often select host communities by traveling in-country and by relying

on local NGOs to identify communities. Sample 2 organizations follow a similar pattern, except that they rarely make use of in-country NGOs. This may be so because some sample 2 organizations function as NGOs themselves.

Figure 3.2. Strategies for host community selection

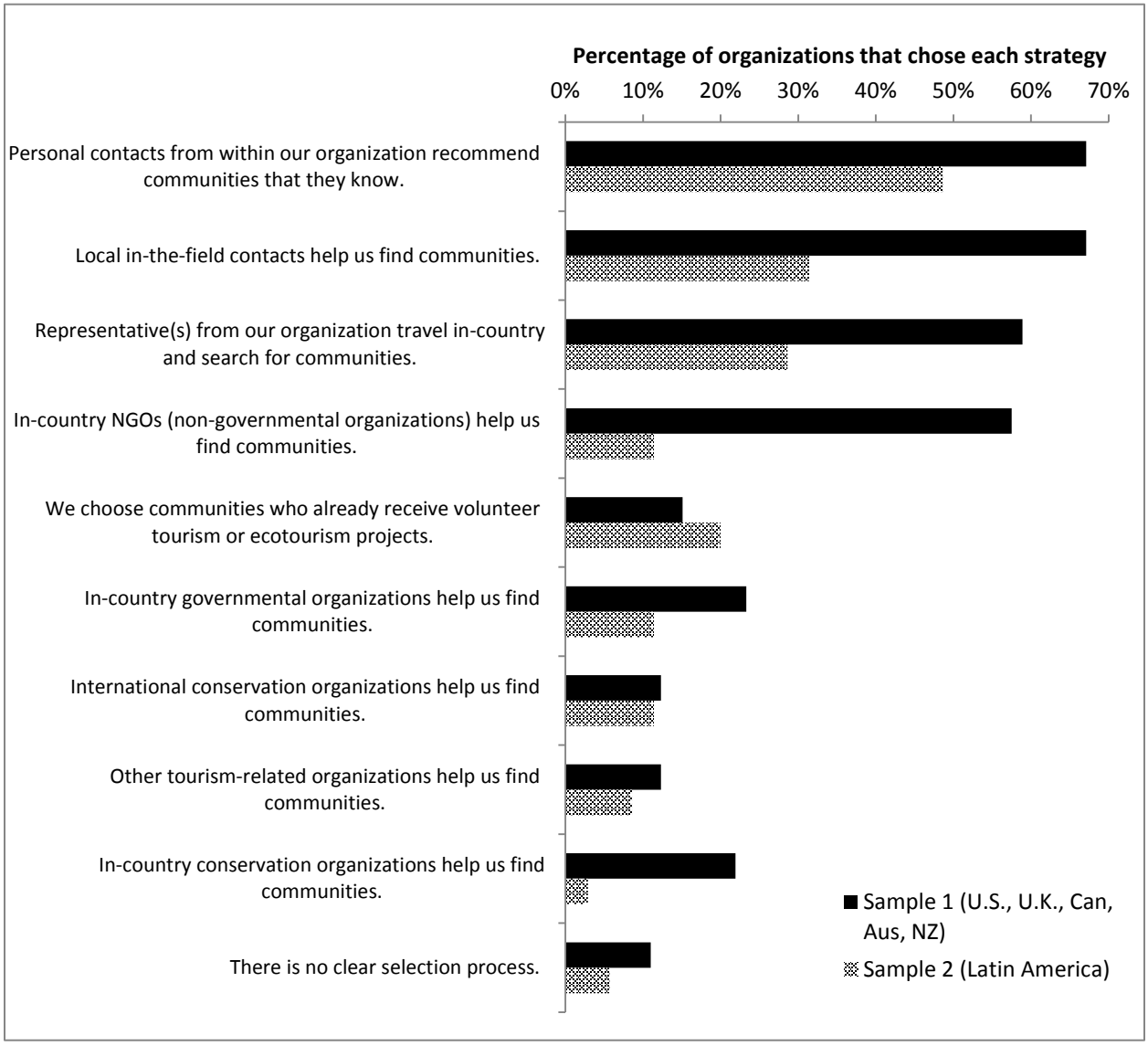
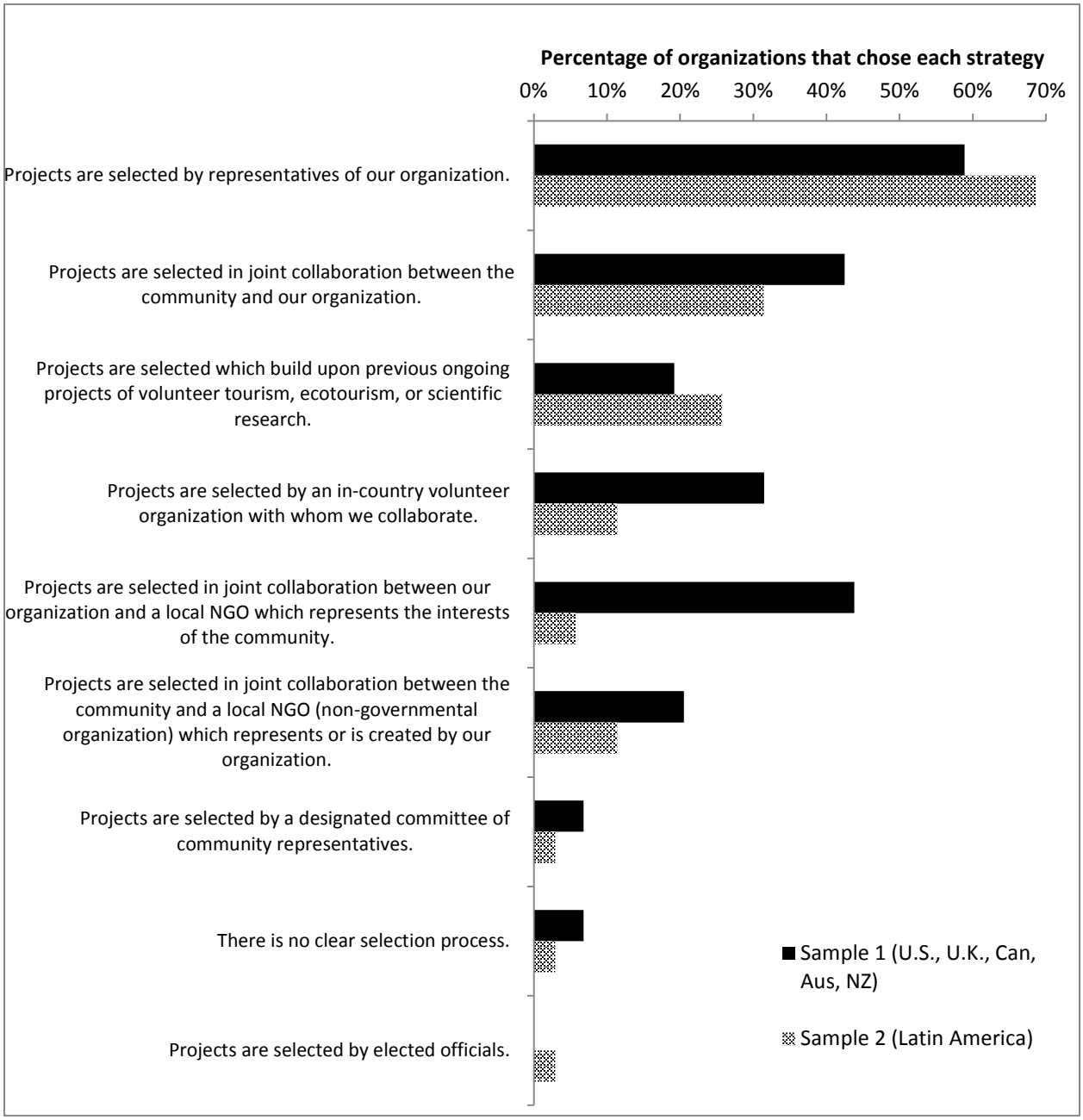


Figure 3.3 illustrates strategies for project selection (question 2 in Table 3.1). The most common response regarding project selection was "projects are selected by representatives of our organization." In particular, nearly 70% of sample 2 organizations relied on this strategy. Sample 1 organizations also collaborate significantly with host communities and local NGOs to select

projects. In contrast, sample 2 organizations collaborate with host communities but rarely collaborate with local NGOs to select projects. Rarely are projects selected by community committees or elected officials. Sample 1 organizations often collaborate with in-country volunteer organizations to select projects as well.

Figure 3.3. Strategies for project selection



Interview results: approaches to selecting host communities & projects

Interviewee responses to questions on community and project selection (questions 3-4 in Table 3.1) enriched data acquired from the questionnaire as they revealed characteristics of the volunteer tourism industry beyond what the survey captured. The criteria most commonly mentioned for host community/project selection related to local community need. Some interviewees mentioned that local needs are identified by an in-the-field contact or organization, often a link between the sending organization and the host community. For example: "we kind of feel that the [host] organizations are more suited to tell us what they need and we fill it the best that we can" and "it is entirely the responsibility of the NGOs that we work with; in part because we feel that they're in the best position to ask people in their community what their real needs are without influencing." Others take a very bottom-up approach and identify needs by working directly with communities: "we subscribe to what we would consider a more modern model of international development and that is assisting where the local communities have already identified what they see are their challenges," while another interviewee stated "we are always differential to the needs of the community, so they are really the ones who are determining what volunteers can do..."

Another emergent theme from interviews that relates to community and project selection characterizes a predominant need of the volunteer tourism industry: respondents often spoke of projects as having to meet the needs, abilities and preferences of volunteers. Some comments focus on volunteer interests: "we kind of look at some market research and figure out where volunteers are interested in going...because if no one is interested in going to those sites then we will pretty quickly have to close them, due to a lack of interest." Other comments were more in tune with the capacity of volunteers: "sometimes the projects are a little out of step with what our students can do while they are there." Similarly, another closely related theme consists of logistics and safety: many organizations choose host communities and work sites based on what they consider to be safe places for volunteers and places that do not involve complicated travel logistics.

Another requisite of the volunteer tourism industry expressed by some interviewees consists of the capacity of the community to host and utilize volunteers, as one respondent expressed: "we select communities now that understand the ramification or know the

complications, they understand what it means to have outsiders in their community...” and another responded: “sometimes an organization will really want our help but won’t ever know how to have an intern or a volunteer.”

The interviews enhanced questionnaire results regarding the types of stakeholders involved in selecting projects and communities. Numerous and distinct types of stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process. Some organizations work with established NGOs, as one interviewee expressed: “it is entirely the responsibility of the NGOs that we work with.” Others are open to newly formed local organizations: “in some communities, the entire community is not interested in doing something but there may be a group that...if they organize themselves into an association then they come to us and we meet with all of them.”

Other organizations focus more on a local contact person who is often an employee of the sending organization. For example: “we move forward with hiring a director, and the director is always local...and so they then help us cull where we are actually going to send our volunteers.” The local contact is often a person with local connections and knowledge: “a lot of times they will have a background working with one or multiple of those NGOs in the community.” Sometimes project selection is based more on personal connections: “we work just with the projects of the families of our coordinator and the ones in the local area.”

The sending organization itself also sometimes has a high degree of influence in community and project selection. This sometimes involves personal visits by staff members of the sending organization: “we do on the ground research...in the country to find organizations at the grassroots level.” At other times the selection process is through personal contacts and priorities of the sending organization: “we started with a place where we actually knew people and had contacts” and “it is the interest of our board members and their expertise and what they want to pursue.”

Numerous interviewees mention the involvement of host communities in the process of selecting volunteer projects. Sometimes this involves a local contact or staff person coordinating with communities: “In Ecuador we work with someone who has his own non-profit and is very connected to all the communities, he goes to a community, presents the idea of a group coming...and then he requires that 80 percent of the community members are there to decide on the project.” In other cases collaboration is directly between the sending organization and the community: “we go straight to the community and we find out. So we will talk to members

among the community, we'll walk around the community and talk to people..." In other cases host communities directly solicit support: "Communities mostly often will send requests, usually on the basis of work which has gone on in their area."

Discussion: approaches to selecting host communities & projects

Forms of collaboration with in-country organizations and direct involvement of sending organizations in program design involve diverse strategies to identify host communities and projects. This is also expected given the diversity of projects and organizations represented in the samples. The most modal answer regarding project selection presents a degree of uncertainty as "representatives" can be in-country representatives or employees of a sending organization who are based out of country. The use of in-country contacts and NGOs is common but it is difficult to deduce from the questionnaire the degree to which these local contacts and organizations involve host community members in decision-making processes. Sample 1 organizations depended on local NGOs much more so than sample 2 organizations, which may be due to the fact that in-country organizations function as NGOs themselves or have sufficient local knowledge and therefore do not rely on other in-country organizations to identify communities and projects.

While community need was the most commonly expressed criterion used by sending organizations to select projects and host communities, determining and assessing host community needs is a complex process and different sending organizations approach it differently. Some organizations depend on local contacts and NGOs to determine community needs, others recognize needs expressed directly by host communities, and some organizations use third party sources to determine needs, such as social media or trained professionals. In addition, some projects focus on fitting into already-existing development projects rather than on creating new projects to meet community needs. Understanding the degree of citizen participation in needs assessments largely depends on the approaches taken by local NGOs, project coordinators, host community organizations, and sending organization representatives who link sending organizations to host communities. It is crucial to examine these approaches in more detail to understand how organizations may be characterized according to Arnstein's ladder framework. The process of conducting needs assessments can be empowering if conducted in a

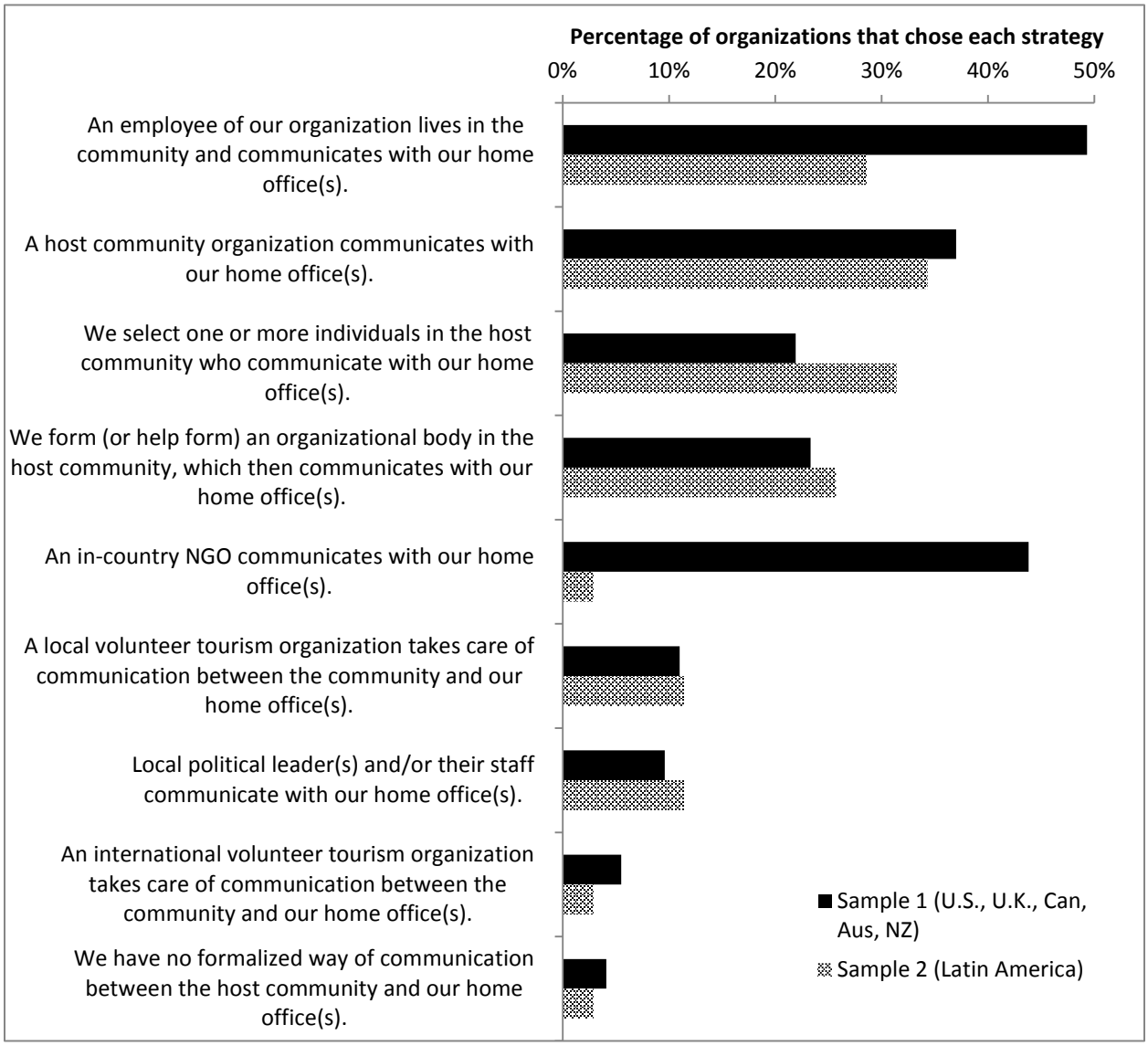
participatory and bottom-up process, or disempowering if conducted in a top-down and expert-driven process.

The second key reality of the volunteer tourism market (meeting the needs, abilities and preferences of volunteers) also has implications for the participation ladder. In order to recruit volunteers, organizations must offer appealing projects appropriate to volunteer interests and skills, as well as ensure volunteer safety and consider travel logistics. Regardless of community need, community involvement, and many other factors, projects will always cater to needs of volunteers to some degree. This reality of the volunteer tourism market makes it unlikely that host communities will reach the highest rungs of the participation ladder. This facet of the industry precludes many communities from being considered as potential host communities for volunteer tourism projects; it is important to note however that it does not preclude empowerment or high levels of public participation for communities that are chosen to host volunteer projects. This reality of the volunteer tourism market also presents an obstacle in seeing volunteer tourism as a development tool: the poorest or neediest communities are often ruled out as destinations, thus making empowerment and bottom-up development (through volunteer tourism) a futile goal for some communities.

Questionnaire results: communication with host communities

Figure 3.4 illustrates strategies that volunteer tourism organizations use to communicate with host communities (question 5 in Table 3.1). The two top strategies employed by sample 1 organizations include hiring an organizational representative to live in the host community and communicate with the organization's home office, as well as identifying an in-country NGO to communicate with the organization's home office. Sample 1 organizations less frequently depend on a host community organization, select community representatives, or are involved in the creation of a local organization. Responses from sample 2 organizations differ slightly. They more often rely on a host community organization or select individuals, and to a slightly lesser degree, hire an employee in the host community or help form a community organization. Very rarely do they rely on a local in-country NGO for communication.

Figure 3.4. Strategies for communication with host communities



Interview results: communication with host communities

The telephone interviews complemented questionnaire data insofar as they identified some of the nuances present in the processes of communication and collaboration that occur between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities (question 6 in Table 3.1). The majority of interviewees indicate that they communicate and collaborate with host communities via one or more on-the-ground contacts or coordinators. These local contacts are diverse in nature and their relationships with sending organizations. Some are employed as full-time or

part-time staff members of the sending organization or contracted employees; others represent local NGOs or projects and receive no salary from the sending organization. Some work as volunteers for the betterment of their community and are self-appointed or appointed by the community. Some local coordinators are chosen by the sending organization through prior or personal connections or word of mouth, while others are chosen by local NGOs or projects to be the person responsible for communication with the volunteer sending organization.

Some sending organizations do not communicate directly with host communities or projects. Many interviewees expressed that this is considered to be the responsibility of a local NGO or contact person. Language and cultural barriers are commonly cited as a reason for sending organizations not to communicate directly with communities. In many cases it is easier for field staff to communicate with local host organizations, rather than the sending organization. While the local coordinator or contact is usually a host country national, he/she sometimes is a host community member, and in other cases is not from any host community but coordinates with one or more host communities and manages volunteer placements. Some organizations strongly believe in hiring local staff members to represent their organization and manage volunteer projects in host communities, while other organizations do not maintain any paid staff in the host country and rely instead on locally-appointed contacts that represent the volunteer work projects.

Discussion: linking sending organizations and host communities

It is important to consider the diverse types of local contacts, representatives, and organizations that form links between volunteer tourism organizations and host communities because each unique arrangement can impact the degree of citizen participation and empowerment for host communities differently. Community-appointed representatives and those volunteering their time may be more inclined to engage local community members in project selection, or political factions could also prevent this. In contrast, local representatives employed by the sending organization may place a greater emphasis on volunteer well-being and logistics coordination than on community empowerment and engagement. Differences may also exist among local contacts that are host community members versus regional coordinators that do not have a permanent presence in host communities. While a locally-based coordinator may be able to achieve higher host community involvement and empowerment, a regional coordinator may

also be able to recognize regional patterns, transfer knowledge from one community to another, or see development issues more broadly. In conclusion, the nuances present among these distinct types of individuals and local organizations dictate to a large degree where host communities would fall on Arnstein's ladder of public participation.

Interviews also revealed distinctions in the degree of contact between sending organizations and host communities. Most sending organizations employ some type of coordinator but the amount of direct contact between the sending organization (located out of country) and the host communities/host organizations varies significantly. Some sending organizations send staff members regularly to host communities to aid in project selection and administration, as well as to discuss project impacts and success with host community members or project directors. In contrast, other organizations depend much more heavily on local contacts or representatives to dialogue with host communities, citing distance, language and cultural barriers as obstacles to direct communication. Some interviewees also admit to having little knowledge of how local contacts collaborate with host communities.

The individual or organization that forms a link between a volunteer tourism organization (particularly those from sample 1) and a host community fulfills a vital role in communication between host communities and sending organizations and in being accountable to both parties to set and achieve goals. Such individuals/organizations may function as "boundary" or "bridging" organizations. Franks (2010, p. 283) defines boundary organizations as "governance arrangements which establish bridges between actors on different sides of the science/decision-making/implementation boundary." Boundary organizations often mediate between different social worlds, work to increase mutual understandings, work towards long-term trust building, and have distinct lines of accountability to each side of the boundary (Franks, 2010; Guston, 2001). Frame and Brown (2008) suggest that boundary organizations are necessary to focus on the management of sustainability issues and to deal with the linkages between numerous stakeholders. Brown (1991) similarly used the term "bridging organizations" to describe those organizations that span gaps among diverse constituencies to work on development problems. Brown emphasized the focus of bridging organizations on dealing with issues of sustainable development, poverty alleviation and bridging social cleavages that separate the poor.

The data presented in this paper suggest that if an out-of-country volunteer sending organization aims to directly engage host community members in the development, planning and

evaluation processes, it is likely that most of this will occur via such boundary organizations. As Figure 3.1 confirmed, a large percentage of volunteer tourism organizations depend on collaboration with in-country organizations that may function as boundary organizations. In contrast, many sample 2 organizations may function as boundary organizations themselves, negotiating between host communities and other out-of-country sending organizations that recruit volunteers. Figure 3.1 confirmed that an extremely high percentage of sample 2 organizations are directly involved in project design and administration, supporting this conclusion. These findings suggest that in order to properly assess the degree of citizen engagement that a particular volunteer tourism organization promotes, it is essential to look closely at the nature of the in-country boundary organization(s) with whom it collaborates.

A boundary organization may fit into different rungs of Arnstein's ladder depending on the nature of its interactions with host communities. As this study suggests that many organizations have little or no direct contact with host communities, this brings into question the degree to which communities are involved in guiding the volunteer tourism process. In addition, the individuals and organizations that function as boundary organizations are often not members of host communities. This questions the degree to which host community members are empowered and directly engaged in decision-making processes via boundary organizations.

Questionnaire results: impact evaluation

Results from question 7 (in Table 3.1) reveal that 76.1% of sample 1 organizations conduct evaluations to determine if volunteer projects meet the goals/expectations of host communities. In contrast, 62.9% of respondents from sample 2 organizations report conducting such evaluations. While this indicates that local impact assessments are frequent, a closer look at the stakeholders involved in this process suggests a diversity of approaches that range from direct citizen engagement to a process of impact evaluation guided by individuals or organizations outside of host communities.

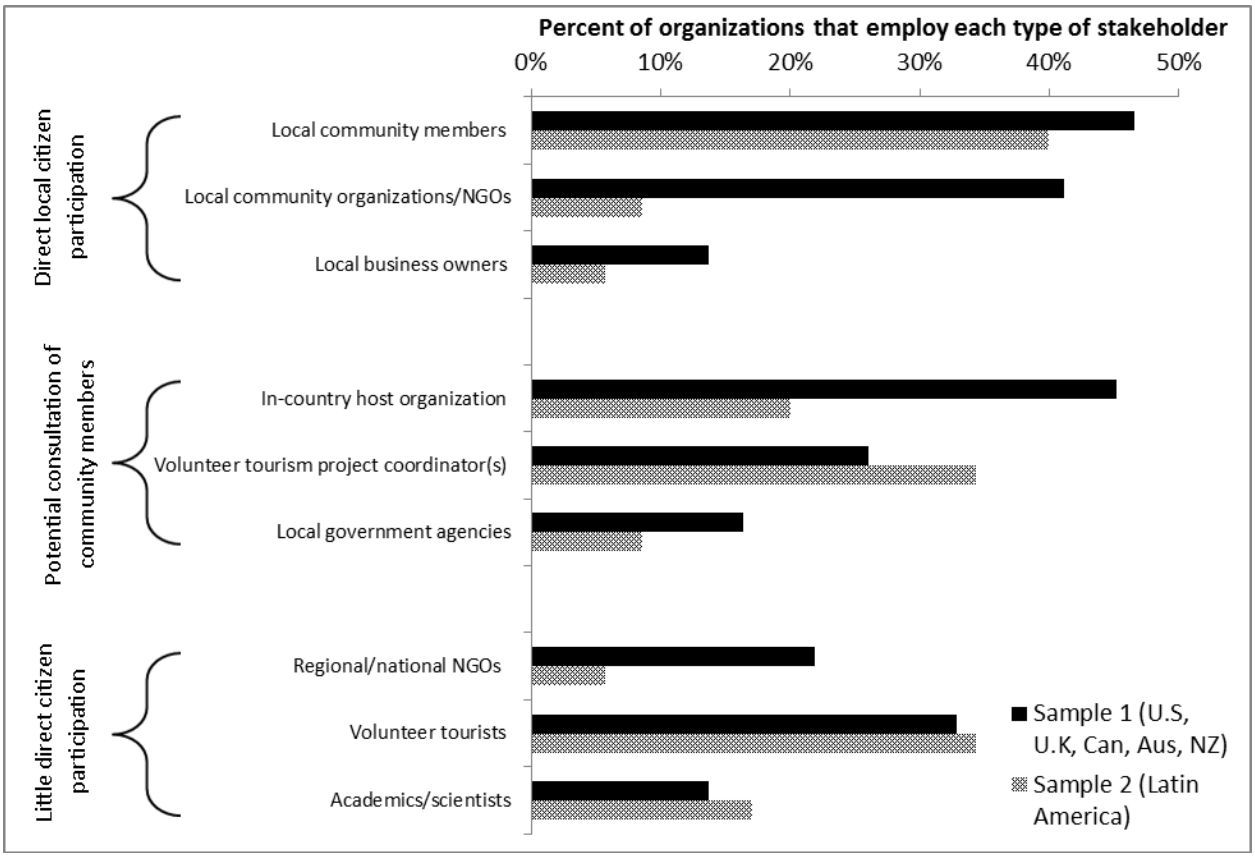
Figure 3.5 illustrates the different types of stakeholders that provide input in the process of assessing the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities (question 8 in Table 3.1). All potential answers were arranged as they would approximately appear on Arnstein's ladder framework. Direct participation of host community members (at the top) is represented by the involvement of local community members, local organizations and local business owners in

providing input. When the impact evaluation process is guided by individuals or organizations that may have a strong presence in the community but also may represent outside interests, community members may be consulted in the evaluation process but with less direct participatory roles. Examples of these middle rungs of the ladder include in-country host organizations, project coordinators (often non-local) and local government agencies. When the impact evaluation process is guided by external agents that likely have much less permanent presence in the community, then the amount of direct citizen participation in impact assessments may be minimal (at the bottom). Examples include regional or national NGOs, ex-volunteers and academics or scientists.

At the top of the ladder, data suggests that a large number of organizations among both samples involve local community members. Sample 1 organizations also employ local community organizations while sample 2 organizations rarely do so. In the middle rungs of the ladder, sample 1 organizations again employ in-country host organizations more so than sample 2 organizations. In contrast, sample 2 organizations employ project coordinators more so than sample 1 organizations. At the lower rungs of the ladder, previous volunteer tourists provide a large amount of input to both samples. Regional/national NGOs are used primarily by sample 1 organizations while both samples use academics or scientists to a lesser degree to conduct impact evaluations.

Figure 3.5 also suggests that organizations may fall at all ranges of the ladder in terms of citizen participation in impact assessments. However, the overly high dependence on local community members, local/regional organizations and project coordinators merits further investigation. A greater understanding of the nuances among these stakeholders and their roles in impact assessment may provide insight as to how they engage host community members in impact evaluation.

Figure 3.5. Stakeholders providing input in local impact assessments.



Interview results: impact evaluation

Interviews exposed several aspects and challenges of impact evaluation (question 9 in Table 3.1) not captured in the questionnaire. The most prominent theme, mentioned by the majority of interviewees, was that current impact evaluation procedures are anecdotal and informal. Many sending organizations understand their impacts through informal conversations with local contacts, project partners or community members. This may occur in a non-structured way, for example as two respondents expressed: “It is very informal...we are a very small organization. We will just meet with the local people and we will get feedback from the local people” and “the information that we get from the host organizations is basically anecdotal.” The feedback process sometimes has a slightly more structured format: “having program leaders stay after the program three or four days and visit previous host communities and sitting down with

them in a meeting and just listening to their stories, and hearing about what their experience was like with our group and with the project."

A number of interviewees also reported that their organizations conduct little or no impact evaluations in host communities. Example responses include: "We really don't [evaluate]. We send volunteers where we feel that they are needed," "we don't have formal evaluations of the impact locally," "we have never said to the NGO, you need to report back," "I am not sure how one measures the impact," and "there exists...no possible way for us to have a standardized across the board in every country type of measurement."

Most interviewees expressed future plans or interest in evaluating impacts, though most are still in early planning stages. One respondent stated "It is definitely something that we are looking into and it is a major priority for us, but we have not articulated that strategy yet" and another stated "It is part of our five year situation plan...we definitely have plans to try to figure this out." Other organizations lack the time and resources, for example: "we are a very small office...it is something that we could expand on if we were growing." Some organizations have no future plans for impact assessment, for example: "We don't. It is really more filling a need...we kind of feel that the [host] organizations are better suited to tell us."

Discussion: impact evaluation and community engagement

While the questionnaire suggested that the majority of organizations conduct impact evaluations, this conclusion can be misleading. A large percentage of such evaluations are completed by former volunteers and non-local stakeholders that may function as boundary organizations. This is not necessarily indicative of host community participation or empowerment. A large number of organizations seek input from host community members, but this does not specify how many or what range of community members are engaged in the feedback process. Interviews confirmed that evaluations are generally informal and often it is only a project director or community representative that provides such feedback. If the majority of host community members are informed of volunteer projects but play no direct role in evaluating them and planning for improvements, this would leave them at the lowest rungs of the ladder. This contrasts with current literature that emphasizes the importance of community involvement in volunteer tourism planning and management in order to promote sustainable development, minimize dependency, and avoid other criticisms of the colonial approach.

Nevertheless there is a growing interest in impact evaluation and potential to involve host community members at high rungs of the ladder in more systematic and participatory evaluations.

Interview results: approaches to volunteer tourism

The close-ended nature of the questionnaire did not facilitate a question aimed at understanding organizations' philosophical approaches to volunteer tourism. However, the open-ended nature of the telephone interviews allowed a question of this nature (question 10 in Table 3.1). Interviewees' responses to other questions sometimes also revealed their organizations' approaches to volunteer tourism. Seeing volunteer tourism as a development tool predominated, as numerous interviewees often expressed a focus on promoting community and economic development. One interviewee stated "we are an international development agency...we don't send volunteers unless they are going to add value to our development impact." Similarly, another respondent stated that his organization "encourage[s] the concepts of volunteering...as a genuine form of development, which does take the project as the driving force of the volunteer experience." Some refer to using volunteer tourism as a way of supporting local development initiatives: "it is community development for their communities...the communities that we are working with, and even the established non-profits that we are working with all have the desire to continue to develop their programs, the communities that they are in and basically spread their reach...we are just a way to help them do that, and so I think that is what their motivation is." Some organizations placed importance on encouraging local volunteering to involve local community members in their own development process. Other respondents focused on their aim of helping marginalized communities, sending volunteers on a one-by-one basis based on local requests, and sending multiple groups of volunteers to the same NGO due to the high learning curve of a first-time service program.

In contrast, fewer organizations took a markedly different, non-development approach, focusing on the cross-cultural and educational benefits of volunteer tourism. For example, one respondent stated: "We go to new villages every year...we don't want to get too involved in the long term development of any one particular community, so we like to spread out the resources...the focus for us is on the educational piece...that cross-cultural immersion...we are not a development organization that has major follow-up capacity." Similarly, another respondent

de-emphasized professional skills and the development impact of their volunteers: “whether you are a teacher or a doctor, or we have had dentists or social workers...you still have the same limitations of lack of knowledge of the culture, language, and only being able to be there for a very short time.”

Discussion: volunteer tourism and development

Direct links can be drawn between the degree to which a volunteer tourism organization sees itself as a “development organization” and the degree to which it promotes citizen engagement in host communities. Many interviewees expressed a focus on long-term community development and on supporting local initiatives, which may lend itself to a high level of public participation and promote local empowerment high on Arnstein’s ladder. As a corollary, an organization which claims to focus on development but does not engage host community members in the decision-making process may find itself on lower rungs of the ladder. The development activities supported by such organizations may follow a top-down framework and disempower host communities, therefore leading to dependence and a pattern of passive aid giving. Other organizations that focus on promoting cross-cultural interaction and education rather than on development issues would lend themselves to a different set of expectations: citizen engagement and empowerment may not be on their agenda, particularly if their focus is on promoting a positive and very short-term interaction between volunteers and community members.

Conclusions

This paper suggests that many volunteer tourism organizations have intentions to directly collaborate with host communities, empower host community residents and involve them in decision-making and impact evaluation processes. Despite these intentions, obstacles such as distance and communication limit the degree to which they can do so. In-country individuals and organizations function as boundary organizations to fill this need for communication and collaboration with host communities. There is a need for a deeper understanding of how these organizations interact with and empower host communities. This paper also suggests that volunteer tourism organizations have very few tools or methodologies at their disposal to more systematically involve community members in planning volunteer tourism and evaluating its

local impacts. The informal and anecdotal nature of current impact evaluation procedures and the interest that many interviewees expressed in improving impact evaluations and empowering communities reveal the potential for the development of a more participatory and systematic tool for impact evaluation. Data also suggest that some organizations see themselves as promoting volunteer tourism as a tool of international development, while others focus more on the cross-cultural and educational benefits of volunteer tourism and less so on its role in development.

Volunteer tourism organizations have a diversity of strategies and approaches to working with host communities and evaluating their impacts. There are some clear differences in approaches between in-country organizations (based in Latin America) and international organizations. The approaches of any given organization also vary from community to community or country to country. Arnstein's ladder of public participation is a helpful framework to understand this diversity of approaches and its implications for development and community empowerment. This paper used the ladder framework to distinguish among approaches to impact evaluation that represent low, medium and high levels of citizen engagement and empowerment. The ladder could similarly be used, given additional and sufficient data, to distinguish among approaches taken by boundary organizations in their interactions with host communities and procedures for selecting host communities and volunteer projects. More attention must be placed on these boundary organizations and how they can simultaneously meet the needs of volunteer organizations and needs identified by host communities.

The roles played by host communities in the decision-making processes of volunteer tourism range from informing and consultation (degrees of tokenism on Arnstein's ladder) to delegating more power to host community members and citizen control. It is evident that while many organizations' philosophies focus on community need, community development, and involve some discussion with community members, much of this is done informally and by way of local contacts that vary in their approaches to community engagement. In other words, good intentions are present and there is potential for host community involvement and empowerment. However, the significant challenges and barriers present in working with distant communities, dependence on local coordinators or boundary organizations to interact with communities, and the lack of systematic evaluation processes leave much work to be done. A completely bottom-up process is not feasible due to the nature of the volunteer tourism industry, which is partially

dictated by having to meet the needs and expectations of volunteers. Top-down, disempowering and neo-colonialist approaches in volunteer tourism have also been heavily critiqued. While most organizations may not intentionally take this approach, the inherent imbalance in global power structures and the traditional top-down approach often taken by development initiatives may lead many volunteer tourism organizations to inadvertently embrace this approach.

This paper suggests numerous potential directions for practitioners and researchers in volunteer tourism, particularly regarding steps that can be taken for volunteer tourism organizations and programs to move along the spectrum of Arnstein's ladder of public participation. This includes a closer examination of several factors that influence the degree to which volunteer tourism organizations encourage citizen participation and/or empower host communities: 1) differing developmental approaches taken by in-country contacts employed by sending organizations versus in-country contacts that represent local NGOs and/or host communities; 2) the use of local coordinators that are host community members versus the use of regional coordinators with no permanent presence in host communities; and 3) volunteer projects that receive frequent direct visits from sending organization representatives versus projects where most or all dialogue between the host community and sending organization occurs via boundary organizations. This paper also reveals an urgent need to identify and examine projects that have developed systematic processes to engage host communities in decision-making processes, acquire host community feedback, identify community needs and evaluate the local impacts of volunteer tourism. Through a process of information sharing, such tools can be made applicable and useful to organizations and other stakeholders in volunteer tourism.

The ladder was overall a useful framework for organizing this analysis of the levels of citizen participation in volunteer tourism. The ladder provides a spectrum upon which we can understand the degree of citizen participation and empowerment within the diversity of approaches to volunteer tourism. Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation has been previously used as a framework to understand the degree of active community participation in sustainable tourism management (Cole, 2006). This research endeavor represents a novel extension of Arnstein's ladder by applying it to understand citizen participation in the field of volunteer tourism.

This paper assessed the volunteer tourism industry with an eye toward host community participation and empowerment, within a framework of citizen engagement. It cannot be

concluded that there is a best way to approach or work with host communities that receive volunteer tourism. We have nevertheless provided the grounds and justification for a future agenda of action and research, including more directed studies on the stakeholders that can contribute to citizen empowerment in volunteer tourism and an inclusion of organizations based in other geographic realms, such as Asia and Africa. Additional research may focus on generating practical tools for volunteer tourism organizations that aim to empower host communities, encourage greater citizen participation, and support development initiatives in the developing world.

References

Arnstein, S. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35*(1), 216-224.

Bakker, M., & Lamoureux, K.M. (2008). Volunteer tourism – international. *Travel & Tourism Analyst 16*, 1-47.

Benson, A., & Henderson, S. (2011). A strategic analysis of volunteer tourism organizations. *The Service Industries Journal, 31*(3), 405-424.

Benson, A., & Wearing, S. (2012). Volunteer tourism: Commodified trend or new phenomenon? In O. Moufakkir & P. Burns (Eds.), *Controversies in Tourism* (pp. 242-254). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Brown, L.D. (1991). Bridging organizations and sustainable development. Report for Institute for Development Research, 8(4).

Brown, S., & Morrison, A.M. (2003). Expanding volunteer vacation participation: An exploratory study on the mini-mission concept. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*, 73-82.

Butcher, J., & Smith, P. (2010). 'Making a difference': Volunteer tourism and development. *Tourism Recreation Research, 35*(1), 27-36.

Cheong, S. & Miller, M. (2000) Power and tourism: A foucauldian observation. *Annals of Tourism Research, 27*(2), 371-390.

Cogan, A., Sharpe, S. & Hertzberg, J. (1986). Citizen participation. Chapter 12 in F.S. So, I. Hand & B.D. McDowell (Eds.), *The Practice of State and Regional Planning.* Chicago, IL: American Planning Association.

Cole, S. (2006). Information and empowerment: The keys to achieving sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 14*(6), 629-644.

Conley, A. and M. Moote. (2003). Evaluating collaborative natural resource management. *Society and Natural Resources,* 16, 371-386.

Crabtree, R. (2008). Theoretical foundations of international service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, Fall, 18-36.

Devereux, P. (2008). International volunteering for development and sustainability: outdated paternalism or a radical response to globalization? *Development in Practice, 18*(3), 357-370.

Eddins, E. (2013). Bridging the gap: Volunteer tourism's role in global partnership development. In K. Bricker, R. Black & S. Cottrell (Eds.), *Sustainable tourism & the millennium development goals* (pp. 251-264). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Fee, L., & Mdee, A. (2011). How does it make a difference? Towards 'accreditation' of the development impact of volunteer tourism. In A.M. Benson (Ed.), *Volunteer tourism: Theory framework to practical applications* (pp. 223-251). New York, NY: Routledge.

Frame, B., & Brown, J. (2008). Developing post-normal technologies for sustainability. *Ecological Economics,* 65, 225-245.

Franks, J. (2010). Boundary organizations for sustainable land management: The example of Dutch environmental co-operatives. *Ecological Economics,* 70, 283-295.

Gray, B. (1989). *Collaborating: Finding Common Ground for Multiparty Problems*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Green, G. & Haines, A. (2008). *Asset Building & Community Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Guston, D. (2001). Boundary organizations in environmental policy and science: An introduction. *Science, Technology, & Human Values, 26*(4), 399-408.

Guttentag, D. (2011). Volunteer tourism: As good as it seems? *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 69-74.

Halpenny, E.A., & Caissie, L.T. (2003). Volunteering on nature conservation projects: volunteer experience, attitudes and values. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28* (3), 25-33.

Hitchcock, M. (1993). Tourism in South East Asia: Introduction. In M. Hitchcock, V. King and M. Parnwell (Eds.), *Tourism in South East Asia*. London: Routledge.

Ingram, J. (2011). Volunteer Tourism: how do we know it is 'making a difference'? In A.M. Benson (Ed.), *Volunteer tourism: Theory framework to practical applications* (pp. 211-222). New York, NY: Routledge.

Lewis, D. (2006). Globalisation and international service: A development perspective. *Voluntary Action, 7*(2), 13-25.

Lyons, K.D. (2003). Ambiguities in volunteer tourism: A case study of Australians participating in a J-1 visitor exchange programme. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 5-13.

McGehee, N. (2012). Oppression, emancipation, and volunteer tourism: Research propositions. *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(1), 84-107.

McGehee, N., & Andereck, K. (2009). Volunteer tourism and the "voluntoured": the case of Tijuana, Mexico. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 17*(1), 39-51.

McIntosh, A., & Zahra, A. (2007). A cultural encounter through volunteer tourism: Towards the ideals of sustainable tourism? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(5), 541-556.

Mowforth, M., & Munt, I. (2003). *Tourism and Sustainability: New Tourism in the Third World*. London: Routledge.

Palacios, C. (2010). Volunteer tourism, development and education in a postcolonial world: conceiving global connections beyond aid. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 18*(7), 861-878.

Raymond, E. (2008). 'Make a difference!': the role of sending organizations in volunteer tourism In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 48-60). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Raymond, E. (2011). Volunteer tourism: Looking forward. *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 77-79.

Reed, M. (1997). Power relations and community based tourism planning. *Annals of Tourism Research, 24*, 566-591.

Simpson, K. (2004). 'Doing development': The gap year, volunteer-tourists and a popular practice of development. *Journal of International Development, 16*, 681-692.

Sin, H.L. (2009). Volunteer tourism – "Involve me and I will learn?" *Annals of Tourism Research, 36*(3), 480-501.

Sin, H. (2010). Who are we responsible to? Locals' tales of volunteer tourism. *Geoforum,* 41, 983-992.

Sofield, T. (2003). *Empowerment for Sustainable Tourism Development*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Tomazos, K., & Butler, R. (2009). Volunteer tourism: The new ecotourism? *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research, 20*(1), 196-211.

Tourism Research and Marketing. (2008). *Volunteer Tourism: A Global Analysis*. Barcelona: Atlas.

Vodopivek, B., & R. Jaffe (2011). Save the world in a week: Volunteer tourism, development and difference. *European Journal of Development Research, 23*, 111-128.

Wearing, S. (2001). *Volunteer Tourism: Experiences that make a Difference*. New York: CABI.

Wearing, S. (2004). Examining best practice in volunteer tourism. In R. Stebbins & M. Graham (Eds.), *Volunteering as leisure/leisure as volunteering: An international assessment* (pp. 209-224). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Chapter 4. An examination of an indicator development methodology to identify and prioritize the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities

Abstract
Two prominent critiques of volunteer tourism are that it is a top-down imposed form of development that treats host communities as passive recipients of international aid, and that the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities are not systematically evaluated. To address this we identified a pre-existing participatory methodology for assessing community sustainability (the compass of sustainability) and adapted it to volunteer tourism as a tool for impact evaluation. The methodology was tested in five host communities of volunteer tourism in Ecuador and Costa Rica. In each workshop numerous indicators of community welfare were generated and organized into four categories: nature, economy, society and personal well-being. Interrelations were identified among the indicators to promote a systemic understanding of community well-being. Indicators were prioritized and strategies for measuring impacts were discussed to encourage the establishment of accomplishable goals. The compass methodology proved an effective participatory tool that engages host communities in systematically identifying and evaluating the local impacts of volunteer tourism. Some challenges were encountered in adapting the methodology to rural communities in developing nations and suggestions are made as to how the methodology can be adjusted to increase its future effectiveness.

Introduction

It is becoming increasing popular for travelers to combine travel with volunteer work in humanitarian aid, community development or environmental conservation projects. This type of volunteer travel is often referred to as "volunteer tourism" and is a fast growing trend in the tourism industry (Bakker & Lamoureux, 2008; Butcher & Smith, 2010; Tomazos & Butler, 2009; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008). Volunteer tourism is defined by Wearing (2001) as "a type of alternative tourism in which tourists volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment."

One of the foundations of volunteer tourism is that it generates positive impacts in host communities of less developed countries and fosters a mutually beneficial relationship between hosts and guests (Butcher & Smith, 2010; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Sin, 2009; Sin, 2010). Wearing (2001) similarly asserts that the fundamental purpose of volunteer tourism is to promote

international community development, environmental conservation and scientific research. However, the local impacts of volunteer tourism are generally not studied through a rigorous research process and often do not include host community voices (Fee & Mdee, 2011; Lyons, Hanley, Wearing, & Neil, 2012; Mdee & Emmott, 2008; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008). Little research has been conducted on how to achieve mutual benefit between volunteer tourists and host communities and the perceptions and attitudes of community members exposed to volunteer tourists (Benson & Wearing, 2012; Gray & Campbell, 2007; McGehee, 2012; McGehee & Andereck, 2009; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Raymond, 2008; Sin, 2010). Numerous scholars suggest that additional research must be conducted to assess the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities and the perspectives of host community members (Halpenny & Cassie, 2003; Lyons, 2003; Raymond, 2011; Sin, 2009; Wearing, 2004). Benson & Wearing (2012) recently concluded that mechanisms have not been developed to assess the impacts that volunteer tourists have in host communities and current evaluations are still often anecdotal.

This paucity of research on the local impacts of volunteer tourism justifies a new research agenda to address it. There are many ways to approach evaluating the local impacts of volunteer tourism and a diversity of stakeholders to consider including: volunteer tourism organizations, academic researchers, NGOs, local governments, host communities and local project coordinators.

An initiative to evaluate the local impacts of volunteer tourism must be cognizant of a strong critique of volunteer tourism and its local impacts: volunteer tourism has been criticized as being a disempowering and top-down form of Western-imposed colonialism and development processes that portrays host communities are passive recipients of aid (Benson & Henderson, 2011; Cheong and Miller, 2000; Guttentag 2011; Palacios, 2010; Simpson, 2004; Vodopivek and Jaffe, 2011). Simpson (2004) argues that volunteer tourism follows a top-down process which externalizes the course of development and places it in the hands of foreign organizations and mostly unskilled volunteer laborers, Eddins (2013) and Palacios (2010) assert that volunteer tourism pertains to a line of Western domination in the development process, and Devereux (2008) argues that volunteer tourism can be a form of imperialism and paternalistic charity while serving as an individual's quest for career and personal development.

Such severe critiques of volunteer tourism are not generalizable to all organizations and programs, but nevertheless provide insights for a future agenda of impact evaluation. They

suggest the importance of incorporating an element of bottom-up development and empowering host communities through their direct participation in planning and evaluating volunteer tourism. Many development practitioners now promote a bottom-up and participatory approach to development (Simpson, 2004). Within the realm of tourism many argue for making host communities an integral part of the planning process and promoting active citizen participation to reduce dependency, obtain community support, generate appropriate decisions, increase motivation and acceptance of tourism projects, and link local benefits to community needs (Cole, 2006; Hitchcock, 1993; Sin, 2009).

There is a need for a methodology that acquires host community input in identifying and evaluating the local impacts of volunteer tourism that follows a participatory process to facilitate citizen engagement. Such a methodology must also involve the participation of volunteer tourism organizations and other stakeholders that make volunteer tourism projects possible. It must be practical and address the limited time, money and resources that volunteer tourism organizations and host communities have available for conducting such an evaluation.

Research Purpose

This research study is a response to the recognized need for a participatory methodology to identify and assess the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. It aims to identify and test a methodology that directly engages host community members as collaborators in the evaluation process.

An existing participatory methodology for evaluating community well-being and sustainability was adapted as a framework for this research: the compass of sustainability by AtKisson (2011). This methodology is designed to solicit the input of diverse stakeholders to develop indicators of community well-being that can be monitored to assess community sustainability. The methodology was tested in five community workshops in Ecuador and Costa Rica. Analyses of the indicators derived in the workshops and the results of workshop activities are used: 1) to assess the appropriateness of the methodology in the context of volunteer tourism in small rural communities; 2) to generate and categorize an extensive list of potential indicators for monitoring the community impacts of volunteer tourism; 3) to examine the effectiveness of the selected methodology as an organizational scheme for indicators; and 4) to refine the

methodology as an instrument that can be useful in guiding future impact evaluations. Strengths and weaknesses of the methodology and the potential for future improvement and implementation are discussed. This research study is presented as a contribution to the emerging field of participatory indicator development and local impact assessment for volunteer tourism.

Selecting a framework and methodology for indicator development

Scholars increasingly suggest the use of indirect measures, or indicators, as a strategy for assessing the varied community impacts of tourism and promoting sustainable development through tourism (Budruk & Phillips, 2011; Hughes, 2002; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005; Roberts & Tribe, 2008; WTO, 2004). The World Tourism Organization (WTO) (2004, p.8) defines indicators as "measures of the existence or severity of current issues, signals of upcoming situations or problems, measures of risk and potential need for action, and means to identify and measure the results of our actions." According to Miller & Twining-Ward (2005), indicators provide an integrated view of tourism's relationship with the economy, environment, and society; they also serve to assess trends and indicate if a situation is moving in a sustainable direction.

Numerous indicator development frameworks exist to assess phenomena such as community well-being, community sustainability, sustainable development, and sustainable tourism. All such frameworks are applicable to this research due to existing parallels between these phenomena and volunteer tourism, such as poverty alleviation, economic opportunity, increasing standard of living, and natural resource conservation. Examples include the triple bottom line framework of sustainability that incorporates economy, environment and socio-cultural aspects (Roberts & Tribe, 2008; Wood, 2004); the three systems of sustainable development (human, support, and natural systems) by Bossel (2001); the human and social capital and livelihoods approach of Njuki et al. (2008); the compass of sustainability by AtKisson (2011) that frames community sustainability as a system of nature, society, well-being and economy; and a framework by Meadows (2008) that focuses on a hierarchical triangle of natural capital, built and human capital, human and social capital, and well-being.

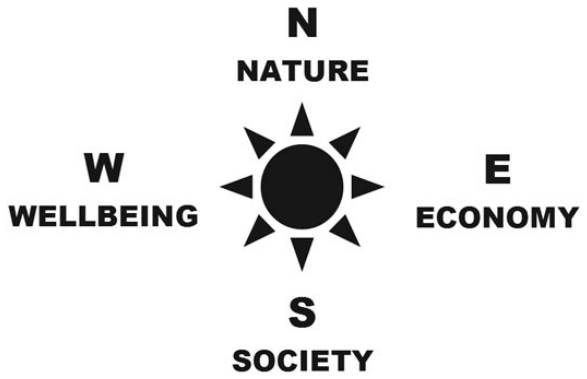
Having a clear and logical organizational framework can avoid long lists of unrelated indicators and reduce arbitrariness in the indicator development process (Miller & Twining-

Ward, 2005; Reed et al., 2005). However, categorizing indicators thematically can disregard interrelations and causal chains between different systems (Meadows, 2008; Schianetz & Kavanagh, 2008). Meadows (2008) adds that thematic methodologies of indicator development are easily used in a bottom-up approach but that this approach must be accompanied by a systems approach to recognize such interrelations between systems. Many scholars therefore suggest that a framework for indicator development must be holistic and recognize the interconnectivity in the tourist system, including the environmental, economic and socio-cultural attributes of the destination (Bossell, 1999; Miller and Twining-Ward, 2005; Roberts & Tribe, 2008).

A myriad of frameworks for developing and organizing indicators of community well-being were considered for application in this research. Given the increasing importance placed on citizen participation and bottom-up development processes, the incorporation of diverse stakeholders, and the interrelations of the environmental, economic and socio-cultural factors of the tourist destination, the "compass of sustainability" framework was chosen. It was created by AtKisson (2011) for the purpose of guiding the development of indicators to assess sustainable community development.

The "compass of sustainability" (hereafter referred to as "compass") framework incorporates the diverse impacts that development may have on a community, divided into four categories: nature (N), which refers to the "underlying health and sustainable management of key ecosystems, bio-geo-physical cycles and natural resources;" economy (E), which "refers to all the ways human beings work with nature, with knowledge and with each other to produce the things and services that they need or want;" society (S), which refers to "the social systems, structures and institutions that are driven by people acting collectively;" and well-being (W), which "focuses on the individual, as well as on the smaller webs of intimate relationships that are crucial to health and happiness" (AtKisson, 2011, pp. 145-146). These represent the four compass points and are intended to all be of equal value and equally considered. Figure 4.1 visually illustrates the four compass points in this framework.

Figure 4.1. *The Compass of Sustainability* (source: AtKisson Inc.)



The compass framework was chosen to frame this study and the community workshops for several reasons. It represents a holistic and systems perspective of the environmental, economic, social and personal well-being aspects of a community. It is also a highly participatory methodology that focuses on soliciting information from diverse stakeholders and community members, as well as directly involving community members in developing and monitoring indicators. In this way, the compass provides an organizational scheme for indicators and promotes bottom-up process but maintains a systems perspective on indicator development.

The compass framework is also highly versatile and has been applied and adapted across a diversity of environments and circumstances. For this research study, the compass framework was modified to fit a volunteer tourism model and the context of volunteer tourism in rural Latin America. Literature on the compass framework (AtKisson, 2011) includes a method for conducting community workshops based on the four directions of the compass. It organizes discussion and an indicator development process around the four elements of community sustainability, represented as the four compass points. It also focuses on incorporating diverse individuals into group discussions to promote information-sharing and the expression of diverse viewpoints, while also reaching common ground and identifying potential opportunities for change. This process was adapted to the context of the rural communities in Ecuador and Costa Rica where workshops were held.

Methods

A multiple case study design was employed. According to Yin (2009), this follows a replication design in which the same procedure (in this case, the compass methodology) is tested

in several unique host communities. Due to the high degree of variability among communities and diverse cultural, social, environmental, economic and political factors, it would be difficult to control for certain community characteristics to predict similar or contrasting results. It is also unlikely that the results or conclusions from the five communities in this multiple case study can be extrapolated to other volunteer tourism host communities. For this reason, the multiple case study approach focuses on refining and testing a methodology (the compass) to identify and assess the diverse impacts that volunteer tourism may have in a host community. This sets the foundation for a community or sending organization to form a plan of action and have effective tools to assess and monitor the community impacts of their volunteer tourism program(s). Once tested and refined in five unique host communities, this methodology can then be employed in many other communities that host volunteer tourism projects.

Two case studies were conducted in Ecuador and three in Costa Rica. Each case study was conducted in a community that hosts a volunteer tourism program and consisted of a one-day community workshop to acquire input from numerous stakeholders within the community and other stakeholders involved in the volunteer tourism program.

Effort was made to identify a diversity of communities and approaches to volunteer tourism to test the compass methodology in five unique case studies. Some specific considerations were the inclusion of the following elements: 1) indigenous and mestizo (non-indigenous) communities; 2) programs that represent diverse types of volunteer tourism activities; 3) communities that work with volunteer tourism organizations located out of the host country; 4) communities that work with volunteer tourism organizations located within the host country; 5) communities that work independently of other volunteer tourist recruiting organizations; and 6) volunteer tourism organizations of various sizes (<100 volunteers per year, 100-250 volunteers per year, and >250 volunteers per year).

The communities were selected based on contacts formed during the application of an internet questionnaire and telephone interviews conducted from 2011 to 2012, all of which comprise an earlier phase of this research study. The questionnaire dealt with many aspects of volunteer tourism and was sent to representatives of volunteer tourism organizations based in the U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, New Zealand and numerous Latin American countries (see Lupoli, 2013). A subset of questionnaire respondents was later interviewed over the telephone.

Several of the questionnaire respondents and interviewees expressed interest in being selected as case studies for this research project.

Only countries in Latin America were considered for the case studies because this study has an international focus and the authors of this paper have extensive experience working in Latin America. The questionnaire revealed that Costa Rica, Peru and Ecuador are the most popular volunteer tourism destinations in Latin America. Numerous communities and projects in these countries were considered and then narrowed down to Costa Rica and Ecuador. Travel logistics and costs made Costa Rica and Ecuador ideal destinations for this case study research.

Case study profiles

Community #1 is an indigenous community located in the mountains of northern Ecuador. It receives a small number of volunteer tourists per year (<10) who generally stay for several months at a time. The volunteer tourists are recruited by an Ecuadorian organization that recruits between 100 and 250 volunteers per year for placement in one of several host communities. The volunteer tourists in community #1 work primarily in education, natural resource conservation and agriculture projects alongside community members.

Community #2 is an indigenous community located in the Amazonian region of southern Ecuador. It receives 50-100 volunteer tourists per year and the volunteers generally stay for short periods of time (1-2 weeks). The community recruits its own volunteer tourists through its website and is not dependent on any national or international organization for volunteer recruitment. Volunteers engage in daily community activities such as agriculture, gathering forest products and household duties, and also collaborate with the local school.

Community #3 is a non-indigenous community on Costa Rica's Atlantic coast. It receives a large number of volunteer tourists seasonally (during turtle nesting season), many of which are recruited by a Costa Rican organization that recruits under 250 international volunteers per year for placement in one of several host communities. Some volunteer tourists in this community stay for a short amount of time (1-2 weeks) and others stay several months as research assistants. Volunteer activities are almost exclusively oriented towards sea turtle conservation, monitoring and research.

Community #4 is a non-indigenous community located near Costa Rica's Pacific coast. Many of the volunteers in this community are initially recruited by a large volunteer tourism

company based in the U.K. that recruits 250-500 volunteers per year for projects in numerous countries. This company collaborates with a Spanish language school in Costa Rica to provide its volunteer recruits with an experience in Costa Rica that incorporates language study and volunteer service. Volunteer stays are generally short in community #4, lasting one to several weeks. Volunteer activities are diverse and include work with an animal rescue center, agriculture, and education.

Community #5 is a non-indigenous community located in Costa Rica's mountainous interior. It receives volunteer tourists who are recruited by a very large international volunteer tourism organization based in the U.S.A. that recruits over 2000 volunteers per year for projects in numerous countries. Activities and trip logistics for volunteer tourists in community #5 are coordinated by a domestic tour company. Volunteer stays are short, lasting one to several weeks. Volunteer activities are diverse and focus on recycling, natural resource conservation, infrastructure improvement and education.

Workshop procedure

The primary author of this paper served as facilitator in all community workshops. The workshops were held during August and September 2012. Before arrival in each community, one or more local contacts were established (generally local coordinators) and they were made aware of the purpose and details of the workshop. Each local contact was responsible for recruiting approximately 12 stakeholders to participate in the workshop and for arranging other necessary logistics.

Workshops ranged in size from 8-21 participants; most participants were host community members who were involved in volunteer tourism in various ways, while some participants represented external volunteer tourism organizations or other entities that collaborate with volunteer tourism in the community, such as nearby schools, health clinics and government offices. The workshops lasted an average of 4-5 hours each.

The workshop began with an icebreaker activity in which each participant presented him/herself and his/her involvement with volunteer tourism. The workshop facilitator then presented the main points and purpose of the workshop: 1) to establish the desires and priorities of the community; 2) to discuss the diverse local impacts of volunteer tourism in the community; 3) to develop a list of impacts that are of high priority to the community; 4) to identify strategies

for evaluating or measuring the high-priority impacts in order to establish future goals; and 5) to establish a path for the future of volunteer tourism in the community.

The creation of a long-term vision for the destination was included in the workshop procedure (point #1 in above paragraph) as a recommendation by the World Tourism Organization (2004) for indicator development. This participatory activity is designed to define what the stakeholders wish to accomplish with respect to tourism, and helps determine what is important for the destination. To accomplish this first goal of the workshop, the group was presented with a large paper entitled *Community Vision*. The facilitator clarified the meaning of this term and presented to the participants the incomplete statement: *Through volunteer tourism, we hope to* _____ (translated from Spanish). Participants then brainstormed numerous ideas to fill in the blank. All participants were encouraged to present ideas. The purpose of this activity was to establish a set of community goals which could later serve as a point of reference to understand if and how volunteer tourism can help accomplish such goals, as well as to see if the workshop revealed new or underlying community priorities not present in the initial visioning exercise.

To organize the diverse impacts of volunteer tourism in the community, the compass framework was used. While the English version of the compass methodology uses the cardinal points (N,E,S,W) for differentiating indicators into four unique categories (nature, economy, society, well-being), this presented an obstacle when translated into Spanish. *Well-being* is translated as *bienestar* in Spanish, while the cardinal point *west* is translated as *oeste*. As the "O" of *oeste* does not match the "B" of *bienestar*, this element of the compass was modified. The term *oportunidades* (opportunities) was used because it matches the "O" of *oeste*. The facilitator briefly explained the connection between the concepts of "opportunity" and "well-being." The other compass points did not present difficulty in the Spanish translation.

The compass framework was visually presented and explained to the participants. The participants brainstormed one or two examples of local volunteer tourism impacts for each compass point to ensure their comprehension of the compass framework. The participants then randomly divided into four small groups (approximately three participants per group) and the facilitator assigned one compass point to each group. Each group then worked together to brainstorm a list of the impacts that have been observed (or that they wish to achieve) as a result of volunteer tourism, focusing only on those that correspond to their compass point (see Figure

4.2). Once finished, the groups placed their papers on the wall to form a visual compass and took turns presenting their ideas to the audience. The term “impacts” was used instead of “indicators” in the workshops because “impacts” is a more easily understandable term and can be understood as positive or negative in nature. These two terms are used interchangeably in this paper although literature on the compass methodology uses the term “indicator.”

Figure 4.2. A group brainstorms impacts of volunteer tourism specific to their compass point.

The compass methodology emphasizes the linkages between nature, economy, society and personal well-being, in particular how one impact in one of these categories can also have secondary impacts in the community that may correspond to other compass categories. To demonstrate this, two volunteer participants used pieces of string and tape to physically connect indicators on different points on the compass that are causally linked. Participants in the audience provided ideas on potential linkages between different indicators while the two volunteers connected them. This resulted in the beginning stages of a “systems map” (see Figure 4.3). This exercise allowed participants to see some of the leverage points in the system, which indicate areas that are causally linked to many other points and represent places to induce future

changes.

Figure 4.3. Participants use strings to connect indicators on the compass and form a systems map.

To prioritize the numerous indicators that participants had identified and placed onto the compass, each participant received three stickers in four different colors (12 stickers per person). Each person then placed stickers on the three most important or desired indicators (according to his/her perspective) in each compass category. The string linkages may have helped participants to visually identify key leverage points and thus prioritize certain indicators in the voting process. The number of stickers placed onto each indicator was summed and participants were able to visualize identify the highest-priority (most voted) indicators in each compass point.

The facilitator spoke about the importance of establishing community goals that can be achieved through volunteer tourism, and about the importance of being able to evaluate or measure the desired impacts of volunteer tourism. In this way, the community will be able to assess in the future whether or not such goals are being accomplished. The facilitator presented

on a paper the most important impact from each compass category (as identified from the sticker count) and the participants brainstormed ideas on how each impact could be measured or evaluated in the future. This activity helped participants to think about how desired impacts could be assessed in the future, and also to think about the challenges present in assessing some impacts that cannot be easily quantified. The facilitator clarified that the results of the workshop would be used to produce a useful tool for developing indicators of the environmental, economic, social, and personal well-being impacts of volunteer tourism, with the hope that organizations and host communities collaborate in measuring and monitoring the impacts.

To conclude the workshop, the facilitator solicited feedback from participants regarding the success of the workshop and suggestions for future improvement. Two distinct strategies were tested by the facilitator to accomplish this. In initial workshops the evaluations were conducted orally as a group. In later workshops the facilitator experimented with a new technique: providing participants with a large piece of paper on the wall and markers to write individual comments in a more confidential manner.

Data Analysis

All workshop data in written form (posters, indicators on the compass) were transcribed immediately after the workshop. Indicators derived in the five workshops were summed (166 total indicators) and then coded into emergent thematic categories. Eighteen unique indicator themes were developed. A diversity of indicators is represented within each indicator theme and each theme is not mutually exclusive as some indicators could have been placed into more than one theme. In most cases the most relevant theme was chosen. A few indicators contained multiple ideas that corresponded to different themes. For this reason, five indicators were coded into two different themes.

For each community compass, several calculations were made: 1) the number of indicators on the compass that corresponded to each indicator theme; 2) the number of stickers (votes) received by each indicator theme (which represents a summation of sticker counts for all indicators of each theme on the compass); 3) the number of times that each indicator was connected to another indicator on the compass by the concept map; and 4) the average number of stickers that each indicator theme received per participant (achieved by dividing the total sticker

count of each indicator theme by the number of workshop participants that participated in the sticker exercise). This final calculation allowed the data on sticker counts to be summed among all five workshops without being biased by the number of participants in each workshop.

The community vision statements from all five workshops were joined and coded to identify frequently occurring themes. The same themes used from the indicator list were applied to code the vision statements. One additional code (growth in tourism) was added.

Results

Community visions

Figure 4.4 represents the themes present in the community vision statements derived from the five workshops. Community development/organization and natural resource management were the most prevalent themes among vision statements in terms of the number of occurrences (seven occurrences each). However, community development/organization was only present in three community vision statements while natural resource management was only present in two community vision statements (indicated by the shaded bars). Education was almost as prevalent among all communities (six occurrences) but this theme was also present in all five community vision statements. Table 4.1 provides some examples of the coding process for community vision statements (translated from Spanish).

Figure 4.4. Themes present in community vision statements

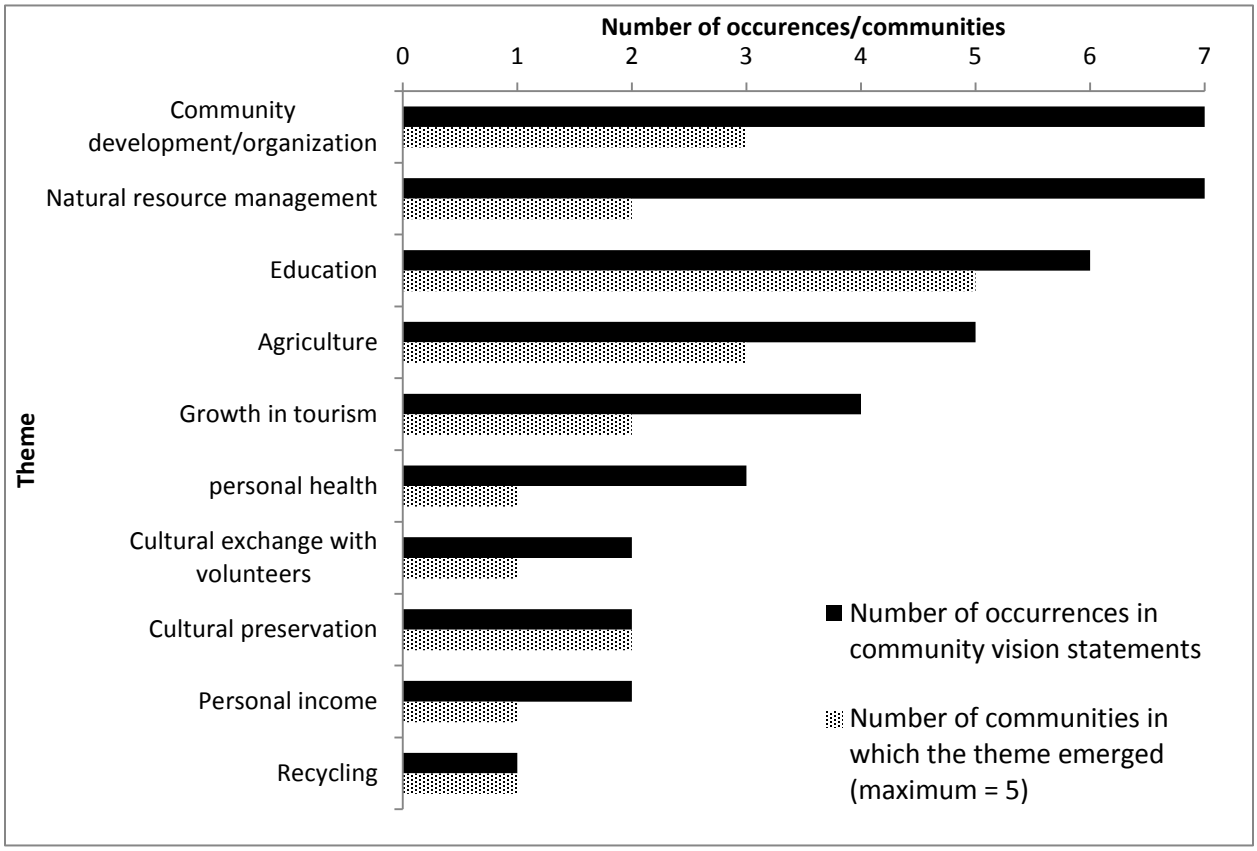


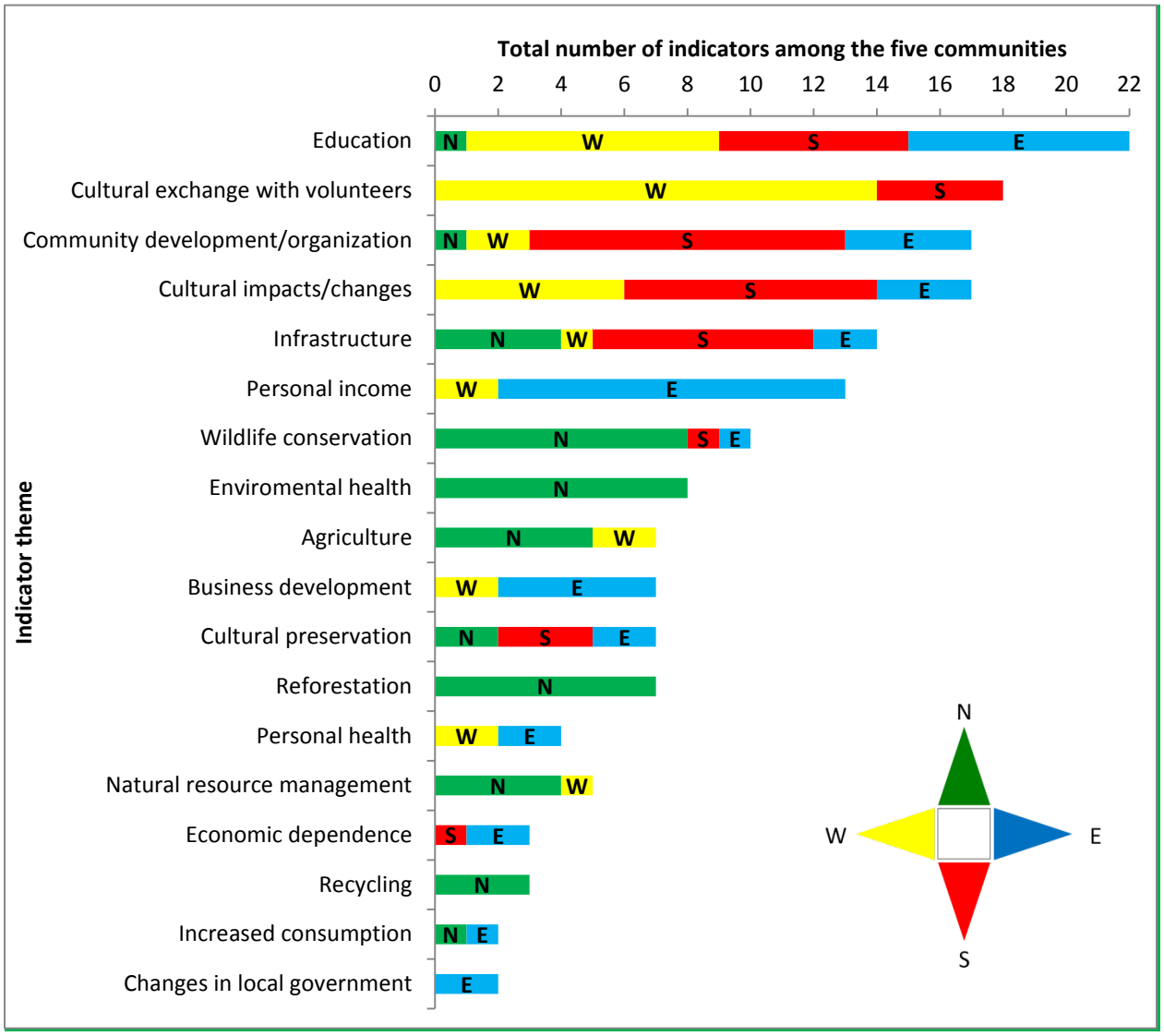
Table 4.1. Examples of categorization of community vision statements into themes

Theme	***Through volunteer tourism, we hope to...***
Community development/organization	...involve the community.
	...beautify the community.
	...improve infrastructure in the community.
	...produce more interpretive signs in the community.
Natural resource management	...maintain biodiversity.
	...protect the beach.
	...improve the turtle population.
	...motivate communities to conserve the environment.
Education	...create a center for language instruction.
	...change the mentality of community members.
	...fortify the educational system.
	...provide training for community members.

Indicator development

Figure 4.5 represents a summation of all indicators derived in the five workshops, coded into 18 themes. Themes are organized in order of total indicator count, from top to bottom. Within each theme (horizontal bar), the number of its indicators that correspond to each compass point is represented to visually gauge how each indicator theme was distributed among the compass points.

Figure 4.5. Summation of workshop-derived indicators by theme/compass point



The most prevalent theme was education, comprising 22 indicators. All four compass points are represented in this theme, though mostly E (economy), S (society), and W (well-being). Cultural exchange with volunteers is the second most predominant them, comprising 18 indicators. It is much less evenly distributed along the compass, with most of the indicators in the W (well-being) compass point and a small number in S (society). Other prevalent themes such as community development/organization, cultural impacts/changes and infrastructure are slightly more evenly distributed along the compass. Some indicators such as environmental health and reforestation were exclusively categorized into the N (nature) compass point.

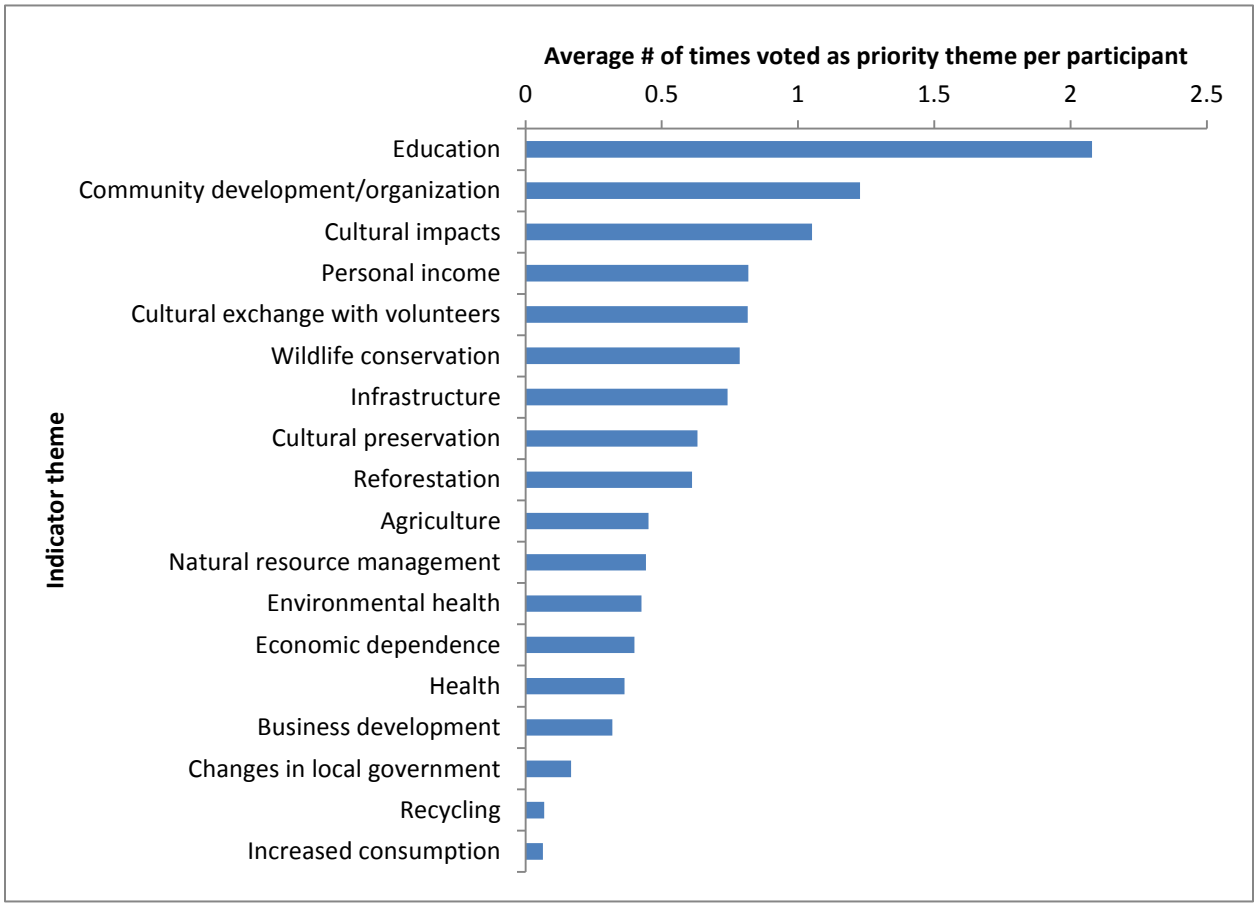
Table 4.2 illustrates some examples of the indicator coding process. The diversity among indicators within each theme can be appreciated, as well as the unifying elements among the indicators in each theme. A complete list of all indicators (translated from Spanish) and their corresponding thematic categories can be found in Appendix 5.

Table 4.2. Examples of indicator thematic categories

Theme	**Example indicators**
Education	supplying instructional materials
	training for people who have not had the opportunity to go to school
	educational exchanges and scholarships
	learning English
Cultural exchange with volunteers	appreciation of cultures; cultural exchange
	teaching of dance
	learning about the culture of the volunteers
	training/socialization among volunteers and locals (sports, soccer)
Community development/organization	improving the community (infrastructure, sanitation, education)
	need to create a committee to plan volunteer tourism
	community unity (more community wide events)
	creating a social fund for the community

Figure 4.6 shows the average number of times that each indicator theme received a sticker vote by a workshop participant. To calculate this, the total number of sticker votes for each indicator theme was divided by the number of workshop participants. These five values (for the five communities) were then averaged together, representing a summation of all five case studies.

Figure 4.6. Indicator theme prioritization by participant



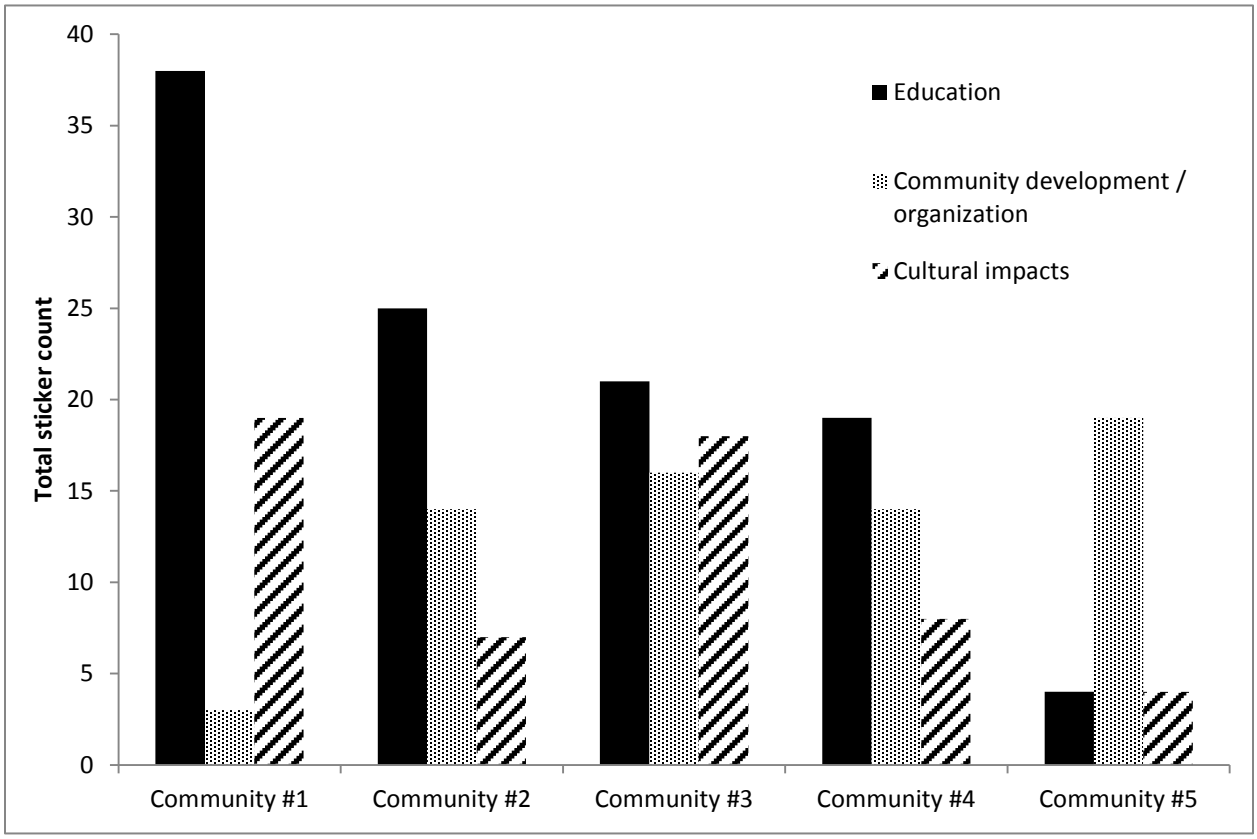
The indicator data attained in each workshop presents three unique but correlated potential calculations to illustrate how each group of participants prioritized certain indicator themes. This consists of: 1) the number of times a theme appeared on the compass; 2) the number of votes (stickers) received for each indicator theme; and 3) the number of times that an indicator of a particular theme is connected to another indicator on the concept map. Table 4.3 provides an example of how this was done for one of the five case study communities. The most highly prioritized theme (education) received the highest number of mentions, highest number of votes, and had the highest number of connections on the concept map. Moving towards indicators of lower priority (from top to bottom in the table), the values in all three columns show a general pattern of decrease.

Table 4.3. Three forms of calculating the importance of indicator themes

Community #1			
Indicator theme	**Number of mentions**	**Number of votes (stickers)**	**Number of connections**
Education	7	38	7
Cultural impacts	4	19	4
Agriculture	4	15	5
Health	1	10	2
Environmental health	2	8	1
Cultural preservation	1	8	1
Reforestation	1	9	0
Personal income	2	5	1
Wildlife conservation	1	4	1
Business development	2	1	2
Community development/organization	2	3	0
Cultural exchange with volunteers	3	1	1
Natural resource management	1	0	0
Recycling	1	0	0

Although the aforementioned Figures (4.4-4.6) suggest general patterns among communities, there is a substantial amount of variation in indicator prioritization among communities. For example, Figure 4.7 illustrates the number of stickers (votes) achieved by the top three overall indicator themes from Figure 4.6 (education, community development/organization and cultural impacts) on a per community basis. Education is overall the most popular theme but varies greatly in importance among the communities. Community development/organization and cultural impacts also vary substantially in the degree to which they are prioritized among the five communities.

Figure 4.7. A comparison of top indicator themes among the five communities



Discussion

Lessons learned from the data

The compass methodology functioned as a framework to develop and organize indicators of the impacts of volunteer tourism in the five host communities that comprise this multiple case study. The compass methodology also facilitated prioritization of the indicators from the perspective of diverse host community stakeholders.

Education was a prevalent indicator theme in the data: more indicators relate to education than any other theme and education was present in all five community vision statements. This suggests that the theme of education is a priority for all five host communities. Vision statements also suggest that some communities are heavily oriented towards the themes of community development/organization and natural resource management

Personal income was also expected to be a prevalent theme due to the significant economic impacts of volunteer tourism. However, only one community vision statement had two

mentions of personal income, while this theme was not present in the other four community vision statements. It was also not among the most frequently mentioned indicator themes and rated lower than social/cultural indicator themes. This may be due to the personal nature of this theme, while the community vision exercise is a discussion on community-level impacts which may de-emphasize personal impacts. Similarly, participants may also have been reluctant to admit that personal income was a priority. As personal income ranks higher in Figure 4.6 (sticker votes) than Figure 4.5 (number of mentions), it is possible that participants place a high value on this theme but are less reluctant to express it publicly.

Three other popular indicator themes (cultural exchange with volunteers, community development/organization and cultural impacts/changes) indicate a high priority placed on the socio-cultural and communal impacts of volunteer tourism. This suggests that host communities may value these indirect impacts of volunteer tourism more so than the direct impacts of some popular volunteer activities, such as infrastructure development and environmental conservation. Such activities are still important though, as a large amount of indicators related to categories such as “infrastructure” and “wildlife conservation.”

These results propose a broader conclusion: the responses of many workshop participants suggest that they may value less tangible impacts (such as education and cultural exchange) more so than impacts that are more visible, measurable and tangible, such as infrastructure development and personal monetary income. Likewise, the differing results between Figures 4.4 and 4.5 are indicative of one of the advantages of the compass methodology: it forces participants to see impacts in four unique categories. The community vision exercise was conducted before the presentation of the compass and did not require that participants consider the personal and economic impacts of volunteer tourism. This may explain the existence of some economic indicators (such as income) and personal well-being indicators (such as teaching English) that were nearly or completely absent from community vision statements.

One of the strengths of the compass methodology is that it reinforces the concept of an integrated system and the interconnectedness of all indicators. Figure 4.5 demonstrates that several of the indicator themes represent three or four compass points. It is therefore evident that workshop participants saw the ramifications of such impacts on several or all points of the compass. For example, indicators related to education and community development/organization represent all four compass categories, particularly economy, society and well-being. Other

themes such as personal income, wildlife conservation, environmental health and reforestation were strongly linked to one compass point, such as economy or nature. This suggests that future workshops may focus on stressing the ways in which such indicators can also have unforeseen impacts in other compass categories. The second most popular theme (cultural exchange with volunteers) is primarily represented on the compass point of "personal well-being." This suggests that many workshop participants highly value the cultural exchange they have with volunteers and that this is a positive contribution to their lives.

This paper presents two approaches to identifying prevalent indicator themes: an overall count of the number of times that each theme was represented on a community compass (shown in Figure 4.5), and the average number of times than each indicator theme received a sticker from a workshop participant (shown in Figure 4.6). In many cases the latter strategy reinforces the findings of the first strategy. Education is a top priority in both cases: it was the most commonly mentioned indicator and the average participant selected over two education-related indicators in the voting process, substantially more than the majority of other indicator themes. Education, cultural exchange, community development/organization and cultural impacts are among the top five themes in both figures. Figure 4.6 also helps to confirm the validity of the compass methodology in establishing and prioritizing indicators. The most prevalent indicator themes also generally received the most stickers, suggesting that most frequently mentioned themes were viewed as high-priority from the perspective of workshop participants. Another advantage of the sticker voting process was that it allowed participants to identify indicators of high personal priority in a less public manner, as the voting process was semi-confidential.

Table 4.3 revealed three distinct and useful measures for assessing the results of the indicator development and prioritization process. The theme of education is clearly predominant as it had the highest number of mentions, highest number of sticker votes, and the highest number of connections on the compass map. The pattern of decrease from top to bottom in each column indicates that any of these three variables is useful in prioritizing indicators. Future implementations of the compass methodology may also consider combining all three variables into an index. One caveat in using the number of connections as a variable is the need to produce a complete concept map. In the workshops conducted for this research, the concept map exercise was conducted more as a demonstration in systems thinking and the concept maps produced were not exhaustive. More time could have been spent identifying additional linkages among

indicators on the compass. Doing so would have more clearly identified indicators of high priority due to their influence on other elements of the system.

Despite the patterns evident in the data, extreme caution must be taken before generalizing the findings of this study (regarding the rankings of specific indicator themes) to other host communities in the volunteer tourism industry. As demonstrated in Figure 4.7, there is a large degree of variation among the communities in how they prioritize the top three indicators. For example, while community #1 clearly values education over other indicator themes, community #5 places a very low degree of priority on education and has other priorities (some of which are in other indicator themes not shown in this figure). Each community is unique in the types of indicators that it prioritizes and while some patterns are present, they are not generalizable to all communities. Another important point here is that many indicators are community-specific. While some indicators appeared several times across several communities (such as providing scholarships or creating international friendships – see Appendix 5), most indicators were unique. It is for this reason that an indicator theme approach was taken in this paper, rather than comparing individual indicators. These findings stress the importance of identifying locally-specific indicators on a community-by-community basis to capture this heterogeneity among host communities.

Lessons learned in adapting the compass

The adaptation of the compass framework and method for indicator development to the context of rural communities in Ecuador and Costa Rica involved some challenges and some key lessons were also learned. The workshops focused on verbal expression and interactive activities because many of the participants had a low level of formal education and minimal reading/writing skills. The use of strings to produce the concept map and stickers to prioritize impacts are some examples of this. Visual aids were used when possible, such as the use of a ruler to introduce the concept of "impact measurement" and the visual illustration of an eye to discuss the concept of "vision." The facilitator also experimented with additional interactive activities to reinforce workshop concepts. For example, to introduce the compass concept, a successful activity consisted of asking a participant to stand up and take three steps in each compass direction, therefore returning to his/her original starting point. This activity reinforced the concept of a balance that the host communities can aspire to achieve (balancing the

environmental, economic, social and personal benefits of volunteer tourism). While such a balance may be constantly shifting due to changing circumstances, values and stakeholders, it was still very useful for workshop participants to recognize that volunteer tourism can carry their community in four unique directions that all merit equal consideration.

Some lessons were learned as a result of several challenges encountered in the implementation of the compass workshop. These are particularly relevant to future implementation of the compass methodology in rural communities in lesser-developed regions. For example, changing the "W" compass point from "well-being" to "opportunity" to make the Spanish version understandable presented some difficulty. The concept of "opportunities" was not easily understood by all workshop participants and numerous examples were sometimes required to make this concept operational. Some work will need to be done to make this element of the compass framework function more smoothly in future workshops in Spanish-speaking environments. The facilitator had difficulty communicating abstract concepts such as "community vision" and "systems." Similarly, the term "impact" resonated well with participants while the term "indicator" was avoided due to potential confusions in understanding this term. Future workshops may require more clarification and/or interactive activities to communicate certain abstract or complex concepts.

A significant challenge for this participatory methodology in the context of volunteer tourism in small rural communities is the divide between local community members who often have a low level of formal education and non-local stakeholders who have a higher level of formal education and knowledge of the volunteer tourism industry. In many occasions, these latter individuals dominated conversations and brainstorming exercises while some local community members were silent or much less vocal. This highlights the need for a skilled facilitator who can ensure that all workshop participants have the opportunity to provide input. If this does not occur, it can be unclear if the workshop data include input from both local and non-local workshop participants or if the data primarily reflect the ideas of non-local participants. As the workshop is designed to acquire the perspectives of local community members and promote a bottom-up development process, this is an issue that needs to be considered for further development of this methodology in the context of volunteer tourism.

The interactive elements of the workshop including the creation of the systems map with strings, the use of stickers to prioritize impacts, and the interactive compass demonstration (with

a volunteer taking steps in all four directions) were successful in communicating key concepts and steps of the methodology that would otherwise have been challenging. As such, future implementers of the compass methodology may consider these as potential additions to the methodology.

One issue that merits further consideration is the development of an effective way to acquire feedback and constructive criticism from workshop participants. The first strategy of soliciting feedback as a group produced comments that were unanimously positive but shallow in nature and not highly useful for improving the workshop methodology. The second strategy (allowing participants to write comments individually on a large paper) encouraged more participation in the feedback process, but most comments were still shallow and did not lead to significant workshop improvement. Future workshop implementers may consider conducting personal interviews or private written evaluations with all participants. Some disadvantages to this process are the time required to conduct and analyze personal interviews, as well as the limited writing ability of some workshop participants that may cause them to feel uncomfortable completing a written evaluation.

Conclusion

This research study contributes to the emerging field of participatory indicator development and local impact assessment for volunteer tourism in several ways.

First, a participatory methodology was tested, refined and proved effective in identifying, organizing and prioritizing indicators that are locally appropriate and represent diverse local impacts of volunteer tourism. Some caveats presented themselves as the methodology was implemented and must be addressed for the future. By testing the compass methodology in five communities, an extensive indicator list was developed. This list serves several purposes: 1) it can be used in future workshops for communities to learn about how other communities are impacted by volunteer tourism to draw comparisons and contrasts and potentially plan for new desired impacts; 2) it serves to assess the effectiveness of the compass methodology in organizing indicators as well as promoting systems-thinking among indicators; and 3) it can help to draw conclusions regarding the overall desired impacts of volunteer tourism in the communities under study and then serve as a reference to the volunteer tourism industry in

planning for desired impacts. These data obtained in the workshops are not generalizable beyond the five communities in this multiple case study. However, the data indicate some trends that can help to guide the volunteer tourism industry and inspire further exploration of the compass methodology as a tool for impact assessment.

It is important to point out that the literature on indicator development offers many "master lists" of potential indicators (see, for example, the extensive indicator lists in WTO, 2004). Each is unique but none are all-encompassing due to the location-specific indicators likely to be generated in a participatory workshop conducted in situ. One contribution of this paper is that it began with the development of a list of locally-produced indicators, identified themes in the indicator data, and ranked these indicator themes in several ways. These themes and the ways in which they were prioritized can serve as a reference for future implementation of the compass methodology to ensure that the indicator development process does not overlook key indicator themes that may be of high importance for communities.

This paper also contributes to the development and dissemination of a tool for host communities and volunteer tourism organizations to identify and evaluate the local impacts of volunteer projects. The host communities and organizations that supported this multiple case study have already received informational booklets with a summary of individual workshop results and the compass methodology. They will also receive more detailed information with complete results, lessons learned, a summation of all data obtained from all workshops, and a detailed explanation of the compass methodology and other steps suggested by AtKisson (2004; 2011) and AtKisson Inc. (2011) as a follow-up to the compass methodology. By sharing information in this way, the volunteer tourism industry and host communities will have a new tool in their reach for conducting impact evaluations.

Some linguistic and cultural obstacles to implementing the compass framework and methodology were expected, given that it was originally developed in an industrial nation setting. Despite these obstacles, the compass approach was successful in identifying community priorities and developing and prioritizing indicators to evaluate the local impacts of volunteer tourism. Each community case study was very culturally distinct and each corresponding volunteer tourism program was also unique. One of the fundamental lessons drawn from this research is that this tool (the compass) may be useful and adaptable to many other cultures and contexts in Latin America and in other areas of the developing world. Further adaptions would

have to be made to accommodate for linguistic barriers and other issues of cultural adaptation. Possible challenges may include illiteracy, uneasiness with an activity based on writing and reading, cultural opposition to outside ideas, unfamiliarity with a compass and little conceptual understanding of the four compass points, and power differentials among participants.

This paper does not propose that the compass methodology is the only or the most effective methodology for identifying and evaluating the community impacts of volunteer tourism. A myriad of frameworks and methodologies exist in the literature on community well-being, community development, sustainability, sustainable tourism, and other related fields. Although very few or none of these have been applied to volunteer tourism (with the exception of this research study), there is potential for other useful methodologies to be applied to conduct impact evaluations for volunteer tourism. Our selection of the compass methodology implies an emphasis on the use of indicators, participatory process and community-level and bottom-up development, in response to current literature on volunteer tourism that stresses these aspects.

Overall, the compass methodology was effective in developing and organizing indicators, promoting systems-thinking on the interrelations among indicators, prioritizing indicators, goal-setting for the future, and stressing the importance of measuring or evaluating impacts. The compass required workshop participants to think of four unique ways that volunteer tourism impacted them and their communities, while simultaneously emphasizing the importance of maintaining this balance in future planning processes. The compass also promotes a participatory process that empowers community members, seeks their input, and regards all stakeholders as equally important in the process. The use of the compass methodology may be a step forward in promoting bottom-up participatory development processes in volunteer tourism, while encouraging meaningful collaboration with international volunteer tourism organizations.

Some challenges that were encountered must be addressed for future improvement of the compass methodology. It is hoped that this research will lead to further refinement of the compass methodology as well as the possible inclusion of other effective methodologies, so that the many stakeholders present in the field of international volunteer tourism can acquire the tools they need to effectively evaluate the local impacts of volunteer tourism projects.

References

AtKisson, A., Hatcher, R.L., & Green, S. (2004). Introducing Pyramid: A versatile process and planning tool for accelerating sustainable development. Draft paper for publication. Retrieved from http://www.rrcap.unep.org/uneptg06/course/Robert/PyramidArticle-v4b.pdf

AtKisson, A. (2011). *The Sustainability Transformation: How to Accelerate Positive Change in Challenging Times*. UK: CPI Antony Rowe.

AtKisson, Inc. (2011). Pyramid Lite: A simplified version of the Pyramid workshop process – PYRAMID 2012 special edition. Retrieved from http://www.atkisson.com/resources/wp-content/uploads/PyramidLite_v8_2012Edition.pdf

Bakker, M., & Lamoureux, K.M. (2008). Volunteer tourism – international. *Travel & Tourism Analyst*, 16, 1-47.

Benson, A., & Henderson, S. (2011). A strategic analysis of volunteer tourism organizations. *The Service Industries Journal*, *31*(3), 405-424.

Benson, A., & Wearing, S. (2012). Volunteer tourism: Commodified trend or new phenomenon? In O. Moufakkir & P. Burns (Eds.), *Controversies in Tourism* (pp. 242-254). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Bossel, H. (1999). Indicators for sustainable development: Theory, method, applications. A report to the Balaton Group. Winnipeg, Canada: International Institute for Sustainable Development.

Bossel, H. (2001). Assessing viability and sustainability: A systems-based approach for deriving comprehensive indicator sets. *Conservation Ecology, 5*(2), 12. Retrieved from http://www.consecol.org/vol5/iss2/art12/

Budruk, M., & Phillips, R. (2011). *Quality-of-life Community Indicators for Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management*. London: Springer Science+Business Media.

Butcher, J., & Smith, P. (2010). 'Making a difference': Volunteer tourism and development. *Tourism Recreation Research, 35*(1), 27-36.

Butler, R. and Hinch, T. (eds) (1996). *Tourism and Indigenous Peoples*. London: International Thomason Business Press.

Cheong, S. & Miller, M. Power and tourism: A foucauldian observation. *Annals of Tourism* Research, 27(2), 371-390.

Cole, S. (2006). Information and empowerment: The keys to achieving sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 14*(6), 629-644.

Devereux, P. (2008). International volunteering for development and sustainability: outdated paternalism or a radical response to globalization? *Development in Practice, 18*(3), 357-370.

Eddins, E. (2013). Bridging the gap: Volunteer tourism's role in global partnership development. In K. Bricker, R. Black & S. Cottrell (Eds.), *Sustainable Tourism & the Millennium Development Goals* (pp. 251-264). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Fee, L., & Mdee, A. (2011). How does it make a difference? Towards 'accreditation' of the development impact of volunteer tourism. In A.M. Benson (Ed.), *Volunteer Tourism: Theory Framework to Practical Applications* (pp. 223-251). New York, NY: Routledge.

Gray, N., & Campbell, L. (2007). A decommodified experience? Exploring aesthetic, economic and ethical values for volunteer ecotourism in Costa Rica. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(5), 463-482.

Guttentag, D. (2011). Volunteer tourism: As good as it seems? *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 69-74.

Halpenny, E.A., & Caissie, L.T. (2003). Volunteering on nature conservation projects: volunteer experience, attitudes and values. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28* (3), 25-33.

Hitchcock, M. (1993). Tourism in South East Asia: Introduction. In M. Hitchcock, V. King and M. Parnwell (Eds.), *Tourism in South East Asia*. London: Routledge.

Hughes, G. (2002). Environmental indicators. *Annals of Tourism Research, 29*(2), 457-477.

Lupoli, C. (2013). An examination of volunteer tourism as a catalyst for promoting community development and conservation. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Auburn University, AL.

Lyons, K.D. (2003). Ambiguities in volunteer tourism: A case study of Australians participating in a J-1 visitor exchange programme. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 5-13.

Lyons, K., Hanley, J., Wearing, S., & Neil, J. (2012). Gap year volunteer tourism: Myths of global citizenship? *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(1), 361-378.

McGehee, N., & Andereck, K. (2009). Volunteer tourism and the "voluntoured": the case of Tijuana, Mexico. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 17*(1), 39-51.

McGehee, N. (2012). Oppression, emancipation, and volunteer tourism: Research propositions. *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(1), 84-107.

McIntosh, A., & Zahra, A. (2007). A cultural encounter through volunteer tourism: Towards the ideals of sustainable tourism? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(5), 541-556.

Mdee, A., & Emmott, R. (2008). Social enterprise with international impact: the case for Fair Trade certification of volunteer tourism. *Education, Knowledge & Economy, 2*(3), 191-201.

Meadows, D. (2008). Indicators and information systems for sustainable development. A report to the Balaton Group. Hartland Four Corners, USA: The Sustainability Institute.

Miller, G., & Twining-Ward, L. (2005). *Monitoring for a Sustainable Tourism Transition.* Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Njuki, J., Mapila, M., Kaaria, S., & Magombo, T. (2008). Using community indicators for evaluating research and development programmes: experiences from Malawi. *Development in Practice, 18*(4-5), 633-642.

Palacios, C. (2010). Volunteer tourism, development and education in a postcolonial world: conceiving global connections beyond aid. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19*(7), 861-878.

Raymond, E. (2008). 'Make a Difference!': the Role of Sending Organizations in Volunteer Tourism. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 48-60). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Raymond, E. (2011). Volunteer tourism: Looking forward. *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 77-79.

Reed, M., Fraser, E., & Dougill, A. (2005). An adaptive learning process for developing and applying sustainability indicators with local communities. *Ecological Economics, 59,* 406-418.

Roberts, S., & Tribe, J. (2008). Sustainability indicators for small tourism enterprises – An exploratory perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism,16*(5), 575-594.

Schianetz, K., & Kavanagh, L. (2008). Sustainability indicators for tourism destinations: A complex adaptive systems approach using systemic indicator systems. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(6), 601-628.

Simpson, K. (2004). 'Doing Development': The gap year, volunteer-tourists and a popular practice of development. *Journal of International Developmen,t 16,* 681-692.

Sin, H.L. (2009). Volunteer tourism – "Involve me and I will learn?" *Annals of Tourism Research, 36*(3), 480-501.

Sin, H. (2010). Who are we responsible to? Locals' tales of volunteer tourism. *Geoforum,* 41, 983-992.

Tomazos, K., & Butler, R. (2009). Volunteer tourism: The new ecotourism? *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research, 20*(1), 196-211.

Tourism Research and Marketing. (2008). *Volunteer tourism: A global analysis*. Barcelona: Atlas.

Vodopivek, B., & R. Jaffe (2011). Save the World in a Week: Volunteer Tourism, Development and Difference. *European Journal of Development Research, 23*, 111-128.

Wearing, S. (2001). *Volunteer Tourism: Experiences that make a Difference*. New York: CABI.

Wearing, S. (2004). Examining best practice in volunteer tourism. In R. Stebbins & M. Graham (Eds.), *Volunteering as leisure/leisure as volunteering: An international assessment* (pp. 209-224). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Wood, M.E. (2004). A triple bottom line for sustainable tourism development for international donors: Defining indicators for conservation, community and local enterprise development. Eplerwood International.

World Tourism Organization (2004). *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook*. Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organization.

Yin, R. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Fourth Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Chapter 5. A framework for assessing the local impacts of volunteer tourism: Comparing two unique approaches to indicator development

Abstract
Volunteer tourism is a rapidly growing form of alternative travel and one of its central pillars consists of generating beneficial impacts in host destinations. However, few mechanisms have been proposed or developed to understand, identify or assess the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. One strategy to assess these impacts is by developing sociocultural, economic and environmental indicators. Literature on international development, social indicators and volunteer tourism suggests that an indicator approach should encompass top-down and bottom-up elements, by engaging both host communities and volunteer tourism organizations. This article presents an approach that engages both top-down and bottom-up indicator development processes. An online questionnaire solicited data from volunteer tourism organizations regarding indicators that are most useful to understand the community impacts of their programs. Workshops in five host communities of volunteer tourism in Ecuador and Costa Rica generated additional indicators that are locally-relevant and appropriate. Data from these distinct approaches to indicator development are compared and contrasted to understand how they can be fused into a hybrid framework that reflects the interests of both stakeholder groups. The compass of sustainability was used as a framework to guide indicator development and its potential to guide future initiatives is discussed. This research encourages collaboration among volunteer tourism organizations and host communities to ensure that volunteer tourism can address mutual goals and needs.

Introduction

Volunteer tourism is one of the fastest growing trends in the global tourism industry (Butcher & Smith, 2010; Tomazos & Butler, 2009; Tourism Research and Marketing, 2008). There are numerous variations of volunteer tourism but in its most basic sense it consists of traveling with the intent of engaging in volunteer work as all or part of the travel experience. It is commonly defined by Wearing (2001, p. 1) as "a type of alternative tourism in which tourists volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society or environment."

A central principle in volunteer tourism is that it generates positive impacts in host destinations and fosters a mutually beneficial relationship between host and guest (McIntosh &

Zahra, 2007; Sin, 2009; Sin, 2010). Despite this, the local impacts of volunteer tourism are rarely researched and often do not include the voices of host communities (Fee & Mdee, 2011; Lyons et al., 2012; Mdee & Emmott, 2008; Woosnam & Lee, 2011). There is increasing recognition of the importance of better understanding local impacts of volunteer tourism, including methods to gauge the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities and understand the perspectives of the aid-recipients (Guttentag, 2011; Raymond, 2011; Sin, 2009; Wearing, 2004). However, mechanisms and criteria have not been developed to assess the impacts of volunteer tourism programs in host communities and most current evaluations contain little empirical data and are highly anecdotal (Benson & Wearing, 2012; Kennedy & Dornan, 2009; Lyons et al., 2012). Recent research indicates there is a high level of interest among volunteer tourism organizations (VTOs) in conducting more systematic evaluations of the local impacts of volunteer tourism (Lupoli, Morse, Bailey & Schelhas, 2013b).

Numerous studies suggest the development and use of indicators as a systematic way to reveal the diverse ways that tourism impacts a host community (Budruk & Phillips, 2011; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005; Roberts & Tribe, 2008; WTO, 2004). The World Tourism Organization (2004, p. 8) defines indicators as "measures of the existence or severity of current issues, signals of upcoming situations or problems, measures of risk and potential need for action, and means to identify and measure the results of our actions." Indicators can simplify complex data, provide a base for decision-making processes, help to understand changes and trends, and provide meaning beyond what is portrayed in raw data (Budruk & Phillips, 2011; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005; Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi, 2001; WTO, 2004). Many frameworks and methods for indicator development are evident in fields that share common goals with volunteer tourism, such as sustainable tourism, ecotourism, community development, quality of life and sustainability (see, for example: AtKisson, 1996; AtKisson, 2011; Cox et al., 2010; Njuki et al., 2008; Prescott-Allen, 2001; Roberts & Tribe, 2008; Wallace & Pierce, 1996; Wood, 2004).

The use of indicators to assess the community impacts of volunteer tourism is under-researched, meriting further discussion on approaches of indicator development. The role played by volunteer tourism as a tool of community development and the nature of the volunteer tourism industry (in that it is largely financed by paying volunteers) suggest that an indicator development approach should consider two key factors: 1) the argument for a bottom-up and participatory approach that engages host communities in indicator development; and 2) a top-

down approach that integrates the needs and preferences of volunteer tourists and VTOs into the indicator development process. This article is an effort to merge these two approaches of indicator development into a hybrid method that recognizes the needs of multiple stakeholders, empowers host communities, and provides a practical and effective tool for VTOs and host communities to collaborate in the assessment of the local impacts and benefits of volunteer tourism.

Top-down versus bottom-up approaches

International development theory has transitioned from an earlier top-down approach focusing on macroeconomic growth and infrastructure development (Crabtree, 2008) to more bottom-up approaches that emphasize partnership and participation at a micro level (Ingram, 2011). Volunteer tourism is often seen as a tool of international development because volunteer tourists directly engage in community development activities (Eddins, 2013; Wearing, 2001). The direct engagement of volunteer tourists in such development initiatives can generate numerous local benefits, such as forming bonds between volunteers and community members, knowledge sharing and dissemination, breaking down stereotypes, promoting cross-cultural understanding, and generating tangible improvements to host communities and their environments (Elliot, 2008; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007; Ruhanen, Cooper & Fayos-Solá, 2008; Sin, 2010).

Despite increasing recognition of the merits of bottom-up development and its beneficial intentions, volunteer tourism is often suspect of operating in a top-down fashion. For example, Simpson (2004) argues that volunteer tourism is still implemented in a top-down fashion in contrast with the bottom-up participatory approaches often advocated in current development discourse. Numerous critiques of volunteer tourism have emerged, suggesting that it externalizes the development process, empowers paying volunteers as saviors with their Western knowledge and education, and functions more as a volunteer traveler's quest for career development than as a development tool (Devereux, 2008; Fee & Mdee, 2011; Simpson, 2004). In order to develop an approach that would overcome such critiques of volunteer tourism, this paper incorporates a bottom-up element: the engagement of host community members in a participatory indicator development process.

A second consideration in the indicator development process is the needs and preferences of VTOs and volunteers. Research reveals that the organizations which recruit volunteer tourists must be cognizant of such factors as volunteer safety, travel logistics, and the need to offer appealing destinations and projects to attract paying volunteers (Benson & Henderson, 2011; Lorimer, 2009; Lupoli et al., 2013b). In order to attract paying volunteers, projects must therefore appeal to them with promising benefits. Numerous studies on volunteer tourism have identified these benefits that attract volunteer tourists, including: personal growth, first-hand work experience, cultural capital, language acquisition, career advancement, long-term friendships, and opportunities for adventure and self-reflection (Broad, 2003; Broad & Jenkins, 2008; Dwyer, 2004; Heath, 2007; Lepp, 2008; McIntosh & Zahra, 2007). In order to continue to attract volunteer tourists and maintain a sustainable business, Lupoli et al. (2013b) suggest that volunteer tourism projects and organizations must therefore cater to the needs, preferences and aspirations of volunteers as necessary conditions when designing and evaluating projects with communities. As volunteer tourism projects are supported and financed by paying volunteers, this leaves a degree of power and decision-making in the hands of the organizations that recruit paying volunteers. Such organizations are subject to the needs and preferences of volunteers and therefore are limited in the types of projects they can market. Furthermore, many VTOs recruit volunteers for multiple destinations and would benefit from standardized tools of impact evaluation. For these reasons, an entirely bottom-up approach would exclude the input of VTOs and could result in the development of indicators that are not realistic or practical for the organizations that support the volunteer tourism industry and generate benefits for host communities. In consideration of this, this paper regards VTOs as an integral component of the indicator development process.

This paper builds upon existing research regarding the importance of, and challenges inherent in, blending bottom-up and top-down approaches to indicator development in the fields of community well-being and sustainability. Fraser et al. (2006) suggest that there is a need to develop mechanisms that bring together experts and community members in the indicator development process. Bell & Morse (2003) also argue that development projects are constrained by a need for indicators that are quantifiable and objectively verifiable, allowing for comparison across projects or by region; indicator development at this larger scale cannot be entirely grassroots and requires a top-down administrative element. Parkins, Stedman & Varghese (2001)

suggest that in order for indicators to be effective at any scale, they must be understandable, relevant to the target population, be based on accessible, affordable and credible data, promote long-term monitoring, respond to change, and reveal cause-effect relationships. In the context of volunteer tourism, VTOs that offer multiple volunteer projects and destinations may therefore need to employ clear, relevant and easily measurable indicators that can be applied to numerous communities or projects.

Research also suggests that top-down indicator development has merit but that certain precautions must be taken. Parkins et al. (2001) argue that expert-driven and top-down indicator development processes benefit from expert knowledge about what works in other locations and available existing data. However, Fraser et al. (2006) advise that in a top-down approach to indicator development (in which indicators are chosen by development experts to comply with agency requirements) local communities can be alienated and locally-important or relevant indicators are not captured. Bell & Morse (2003) suggest that an indicator approach to assessing sustainable development has the benefit of promoting easy interpretation by non-specialists, but that public engagement (especially in the context of developing nations) requires challenging larger and top-down power structures that prohibit marginalized communities from taking control of their development process.

A bottom-up process that engages communities in indicator development is also important. Parkins et al. (2001) and Fraser et al. (2006) identify the benefits of a bottom-up process of locally-defined indicators: it produces complex lists of social, environmental and economic indicators that are more directly associated with community objectives and local situations or locally-important factors. It may also build community capacity to address future problems, empower communities and promote the collaboration of distinct stakeholder groups (Bell & Morse, 1999; Fraser et al., 2006). Matarrita-Cascante (2010) suggests that developing indicators to assess the well-being of communities exposed to tourism involves objective and subjective indicators of quality-of-life. Understanding many subjective quality-of-life indicators demands direct engagement with communities, making a bottom-up approach necessary.

Bottom-up indicator development has many caveats as well: it is time and resource intensive; it can struggle to maintain public interest; it creates non-standardized data that cannot be compared among regions or projects; and it can disguise broader trends and inhibit harmonization across larger scales (Bell & Morse, 2003; Fraser et al., 2006). Locally-derived

indicators based on perceptions of quality-of-life also reflect living conditions, cultural characteristics, social arrangements and organizational conditions (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010). As such conditions vary among communities, indicators derived in a bottom-up manner can be locally-specific and not generalizable. Parkins et al. (2001) also argues that a local-level approach to indicator development can fall short when such indicators are not related to more fundamental and wide-ranging concerns, such as sustainability.

The aforementioned arguments suggest that an appropriate approach would be to blend top-down and bottom-up elements of indicator development. Fraser et al. (2006) suggest that in order to do so, locally-specific indicators must be aggregated using a transparent and collaborative process which must then feed into formal decision-making forms, producing indicators that reflect local values and permit management decisions; otherwise they may be overlooked or viewed as irrelevant by policy-makers. Fraser et al. (2006) also argue that such a process does not need to be initiated from the bottom-up but that local stakeholder input should drive the process, as policy changes are more likely when policy makers and local stakeholders are included in the same process. The indicator development procedure followed by Parkins et al. (2001) can serve as a model for this hybrid form of indicator development: community workshops were conducted in which community residents generated indicators of well-being; the indicators were subjected to an expert-driven framework of sustainability evaluation; indicators which received high scores for effectiveness and relevance to sustainability were then included in a questionnaire administered to community members in which they prioritized the importance of the indicators using Likert scale questions.

This paper integrates the aforementioned arguments for top-down and bottom-up approaches to indicator development to assess the community impacts of volunteer tourism in several ways: 1) it is based on workshops that included the collaboration of host community members and VTOs in participatory indicator development and permitted host community members to prioritize indicators based on local needs and priorities; 2) it incorporates the perspectives of VTOs across the world, via a recent questionnaire, regarding useful and practical indicators; 3) it employed an existing framework of indicator development and community well-being/sustainability to ensure that indicators are comparable and represent diverse types of impacts; and 4) it compares indicators identified in top-down and bottom-up processes to produce indicators that are relevant and practical for diverse stakeholders.

This paper is based on two unique phases of data collection by Lupoli, Morse, Bailey & Schelhas (2013a; 2013c). The first phase consisted of identifying indicators that were found useful by VTOs based in developed countries (see Lupoli et al., 2013a). To accomplish this, an online questionnaire was sent to VTOs across the world with the goal of understanding the indicators used by such organizations to assess the impacts of their programs in host communities. The second phase consisted of acquiring the perspectives of communities that host volunteer tourism programs in developing country contexts. Lupoli et al. (2013c) conducted workshops in five host communities in Ecuador and Costa Rica. The workshops gave host community members and other stakeholders the opportunity to develop and prioritize indicators of the impacts of volunteer tourism.

Research aim and questions

The results of two differing approaches to indicator development were compared and contrasted: a top-down approach that solicited indicator data from VTOs; and a bottom-up approach that solicited indicators from host communities via a participatory process. This approach is designed to determine the benefits gained from incorporating the perspectives and priorities of these two stakeholder groups to develop indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism. This approach also represents a unique strategy that blends top-down and bottom-up approaches of volunteer tourism. A second aim of this paper is to evaluate a potentially useful framework that can incorporate top-down and bottom-up approaches to organize and develop indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism. A framework called the "compass of sustainability" (AtKisson, 2011) was previously tested by Lupoli et al. as a framework to organize indicators (2013a) and to guide a process of participatory indicator development (2013c). The compass of sustainability is a tool used to evaluate community sustainability and divides indicators into four categories that correspond to the four compass points: nature (N), economy (E), society (S), and well-being (W). In the context of this paper, the compass of sustainability was used as a framework to organize the diverse impacts that a development project (such as volunteer tourism) may have on a host community.

This paper answers four critical questions: 1) Do the indicators prioritized in the five community workshops correspond to the indicators prioritized by the volunteer tourism organizations that recruit volunteers for the five host communities? 2) Where do commonalities

and gaps exist among indicators prioritized among all questionnaire respondents and indicators that emerged in community workshops? 3) What are the repercussions of these commonalities and gaps for the process of indicator development? and 4) Is the compass of sustainability an effective framework to produce indicator sets useful to both volunteer tourism organizations and host communities?

Methods

Online questionnaire

An online questionnaire was administered to organizations based in the U.S.A., Canada, the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand that recruit and send volunteers to international destinations (see Lupoli et al., 2013a). The organizations in this sample consisted of for-profit travel companies and non-profit organizations that offer international volunteer travel programs focused on community development and environmental conservation. Data from a second sample discussed in Lupoli et al. (2013a) (organizations based in Latin America) was not used because this analysis aims to consider the perspective of non-local volunteer tourist sending organizations, representing a top-down element of indicator development. See Figures 2.2-2.5 for additional details on these values.

The questionnaire was sent by e-mail to a representative of each organization. The questionnaire provided extensive lists of potential indicators of the impacts of volunteer tourism, derived from current literature on indicators and tourism. Respondents evaluated the usefulness of such indicators to assess impacts in host communities for which they recruit volunteer tourists. This usefulness value was quantified using Likert scale questions in the questionnaire in which the respondent selected the usefulness value of each indicator on a scale of one to five. Complete results of this ranking process are illustrated in Appendix 6. The compass of sustainability (AtKisson, 2011) was used as an organizational framework to divide indicators according to the nature of the impacts that they are designed to assess. Seventy three responses were received from 134 questionnaire recipients (response rate = 54.5%).

Community workshops

Five participatory workshops were conducted in host communities of volunteer tourism in Ecuador and Costa Rica (see Lupoli et al., 2013c). Two case studies were conducted in Ecuador and three in Costa Rica. The workshops employed a participatory process with diverse community stakeholders to develop and prioritize indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism. The compass of sustainability was again used as an organizational framework to guide and organize the indicator development process. In addition, a participatory method for indicator development and prioritization that accompanies the compass framework was followed (see AtKisson, 2011; Lupoli et al., 2013c). Each workshop was organized by a VTO that responded to the online questionnaire, and was held in a host community to which the VTO sends volunteer tourists.

Interviews

The facilitator interviewed two or three workshop participants after conducting each community workshop (see Lupoli et al., 2013c). At least one of the interviewees was in most cases a host community member heavily involved in coordinating or planning volunteer tourism activities in the community. In most cases it was a person designated as a local coordinator (often the only coordinator) or community leader. The second interviewee was in most cases a representative of an external volunteer tourism organization. In some cases this was an in-country organization while in other cases it was an international organization with an in-country representative. A total of eleven interviews were conducted. The interviews had several purposes: 1) to acquire in-depth perspectives regarding collaboration between VTOs and host communities; 2) to acquire additional and more extensive feedback and critiques on the workshop; 3) to assess the effectiveness and desirability of the compass method for future implementation of indicator development processes; and 4) to gauge interest among VTOs and host communities in conducting future evaluations of the local impacts of volunteer tourism. Interview questions can be found in Appendix 4.

Data analysis

Data on the indicators acquired via the online questionnaire and host community workshops were compared and contrasted at two scales. First, the indicators developed in each of the five host communities were compared with the indicators prioritized by the five corresponding VTOs that recruit volunteers for each host community. This addresses research question #1. On a larger scale, the indicators that emerged among all five host communities were compared with corresponding indicators from the questionnaire and their perceived degree of usefulness among all VTO representatives that provided responses to the questionnaire. This addresses research question #2.

Comparing workshop-derived indicators with corresponding organizations

The top four or five indicators generated in each workshop were selected based on the results of a voting process (see Lupoli et al., 2013c). All of these priority indicators were then placed onto one master compass, with each indicator at the compass point in which it emerged in the workshop. Complete results of this voting and indicator prioritization process are illustrated in Appendix 5. The top four to six questionnaire indicators for each compass point (from the five questionnaires respondents that correspond to the five host community workshops) were prioritized according to average usefulness values (see Lupoli et al., 2013a). These most "useful" indicators were placed alongside the high priority indicators identified in the workshops for a side-by-side comparison on one master compass.

Overall comparison of workshop-derived indicators and data from all organizations

Both methods of indicator development (questionnaire and host community workshops) were framed using the compass of sustainability, which organized indicators into the four compass points: nature, economy, society, and well-being (AtKisson, 2011). However, numerous indicator themes emerged in the workshops that spread across many or all compass points. In addition, many questionnaire and workshop indicators were found to match but on distinct compass points (see results section below for examples). For these reasons, it was necessary to first identify several cross-cutting indicator themes to then address commonalities and areas of divergence among the indictors prioritized by all questionnaire respondents and the indicators derived in host community workshops. This allowed for a side-by-side comparison of the top-

down and bottom-up indicator development processes. While the workshop-derived indicators were originally categorized into eighteen themes (see Figure 4.5 or Lupoli et al., 2013c), a more succinct categorization scheme was necessary for this large-scale comparison. Several of these eighteen themes were combined and reorganized to produce seven broader themes.

Seven unique indicator themes were used to compare the two sets of indicators. Five categories (education, environmental impacts, income/business, cultural impacts and community development) encompass the majority of all workshop-derived indicators. Two additional themes (personal health and agriculture) represent a small number of indicators that did not fit within the five prominent themes. These seven themes were used instead of the four compass points (nature, economy, society, personal well-being) to compare indicators for two reasons: 1) numerous indicator themes span several compass points, as shown in Figure 5.1 below; and 2) several prominent themes emerged from the workshop-derived indicators that function as natural categories. Ten workshop-derived indicators were omitted from this categorization process because they did not fit into the indicator themes or were too vague or irrelevant to community impacts to be useful. They are displayed in Appendix 7.

Interviews

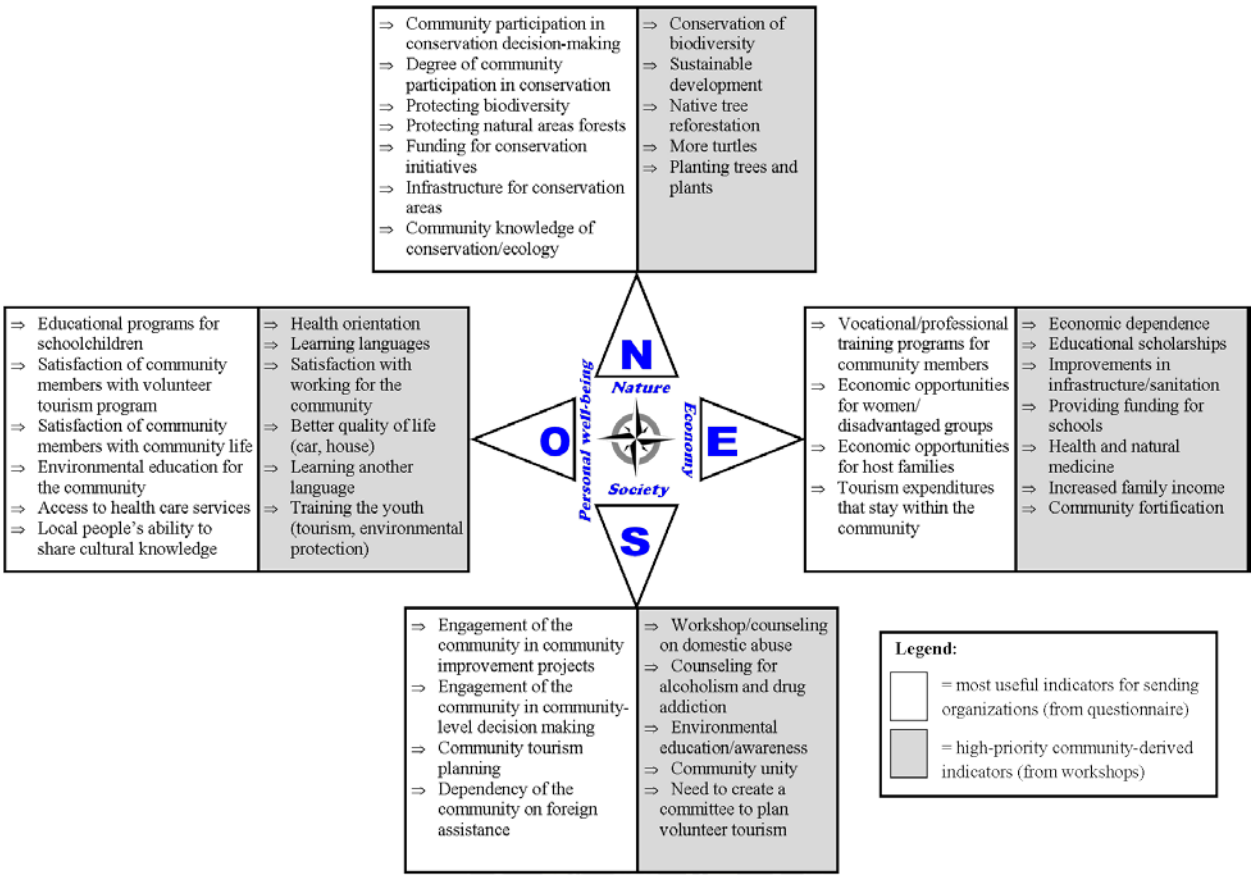
All interviews were transcribed in Spanish and then coded in English using NVIVO software. Pre-existing codes based on interview questions were complemented by several emergent codes that characterized predominant interview themes, according to coding guidelines of Miles & Huberman (1994).

Results

Comparison of workshop-derived indicators with corresponding organizations

Figure 5.1 illustrates a comparison of two data sources: 1) high priority indicators derived from the five community workshops; and 2) indicators rated most useful by the five VTOs that recruit volunteers for the five host communities where workshops were held. All indicators are depicted on the compass points where they: 1) were placed by workshop participants; or 2) appeared on the questionnaire.

Figure 5.1. Comparison of questionnaire and workshop indicators



On the "nature" compass point the themes of biodiversity and reforestation are present on both sides. However, the top two priorities of VTOs relate to community participation in conservation, while no indicators of this nature were derived in community workshops. Other high priority indicators for VTOs such as funding for conservation initiatives and infrastructure for conservation areas were also not among high priority community-derived indicators.

On the "economy" compass point there is little overlap between the two sides, other than a potential correlation between "increased family income" and "economic opportunities for host families." Many of the high-priority indicators derived in community workshops (economic dependence, educational scholarships, infrastructure, funding schools and health projects) were not included in the "economy" category of the questionnaire. Some of these indicators, such as economic dependence, infrastructure and health were present in the questionnaire but at other compass points. Likewise, some community-derived indicators match the high priority

"economic" indicators for VTOs but at other compass points: for example, "training programs" was suggested by communities at the "well-being" compass point. The concept of "economic opportunities for women/disadvantaged groups" was of high priority for VTOs but did not emerge in any of the workshops.

On the "society" compass point, there is concordance on the points of "community tourism planning" and "need to create a committee to plan volunteer tourism." VTOs saw economic dependency as a useful social indicator, which corresponds to the economic dependence identified by a host community on the "economy" compass point. The top indicators as prioritized by VTOs deal with community engagement, while high-priority indicators derived in workshops are more focused and site-specific, including social problems such as alcoholism and domestic abuse. Environmental education was prioritized by a host community and is also present in the questionnaire on both sides of the "well-being" compass point.

On the "well-being" compass point, education is a priority for VTOs. This same theme of education was prioritized by host communities but on the "economy" compass point. The theme of health appeared on the "well-being" compass point for VTOs and on both the "well-being" and "economy" compass points among host communities. The theme of "satisfaction with the community" emerged from both data sources on this "well-being" compass point. "Learning languages" was frequently mentioned by host communities and no indicator of this sort was present in the questionnaire.

Overall comparison of workshop-derived indicators and data from all organizations

Figure 5.2. A comparison of questionnaire and workshop-derived indicators

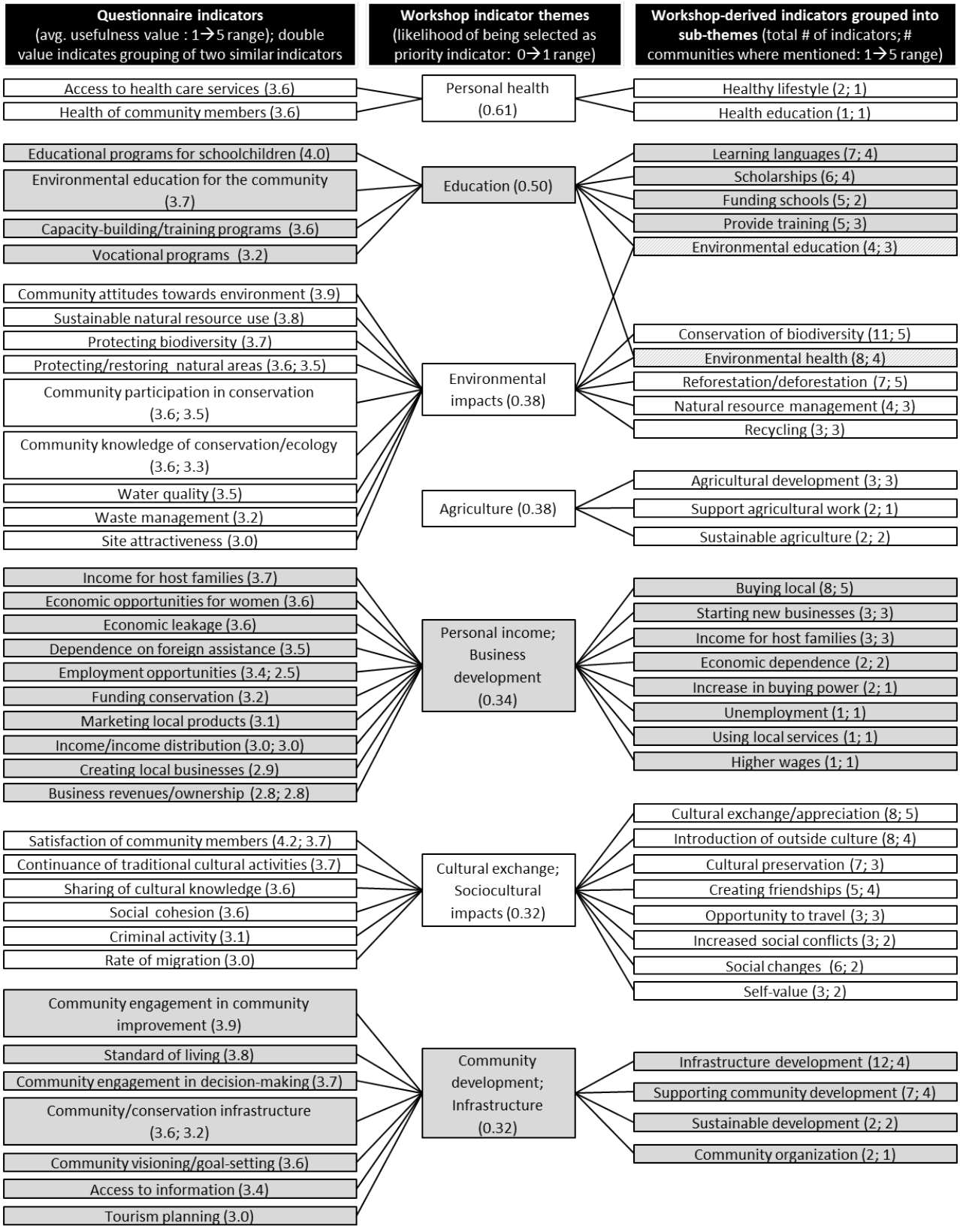


Figure 5.2 represents a side-by-side comparison of questionnaire and workshop-derived indicators organized around seven distinct indicator themes. This provides a comparison of top-down and bottom-up indicator processes without the overlap of indicators among multiple compass points that was revealed in Figure 5.1.

The left column of Figure 5.2 displays all indicators that appeared in the questionnaire (in some cases, two closely-related indicators were combined into one). Each indicator is accompanied by its mean usefulness value, according to the perceived usefulness of each indicator to the questionnaire respondents. This was calculated using a 1→5 Likert scale question in the questionnaire (see questions 31-34 in Appendix 2). On this scale, a value of "1" would correspond to low usefulness and a value of "5" would correspond to extremely high usefulness. Indicators with two usefulness values signify that two similar questionnaire indicators were combined into one to keep the figure as succinct as possible. Indicators are organized from top to bottom (within each thematic group) according to usefulness values.

Each indicator in the left column is connected to one of the seven aforementioned themes (middle column). An attempt was made to connect each questionnaire indicator to the theme to which it most logically pertained. Each indicator theme in the middle column is assigned a value from zero to one. This indicates the likelihood of each indicator within this theme to be voted as a priority indicator by the workshop participants (see Lupoli et al., 2013c for details on the voting process). To calculate this, the number of votes that each indicator received in each workshop was divided by the number of voting participants. The calculated value for each indicator fell between zero and one (each participant could not vote for an indicator more than once. The average of all these values was calculated for each thematic group of workshop-derived indicators. This approach was taken rather than a simple summation of votes because the number of participants in each workshop varied, and therefore the maximum number of votes an indicator could receive varied by community workshop.

The right column represents groupings of workshop-derived indicators into sub-themes. Each sub-theme is connected to the theme in the middle column to which it pertains. As the five workshops produced a very large number of indicators (too many to display them individually), they were grouped into these sub-themes in order to represent them all in one figure. A complete list of all workshop-derived indicators can be found in Appendix 5. Each indicator sub-theme is followed by two values. The first value represents the total number of indicators that fall within

the sub-theme, across all five workshops. The second value represents the number of community workshops in which indicators of each sub-theme emerged (ranging from one to five). Indicators are organized from top to bottom according to the number of indicators present (the first value).

It is important to observe in Figure 5.2 that although many of the specific measures do not match between the left and right columns, most can be matched via the seven unifying themes in the middle column. Many of the indicator sub-themes in the right column are locally-specific and only five communities contributed to generating such indicators. In contrast, the indicators in the left column are the result of responses from 73 organizations across the world, many of which operate in multiple host communities. The unifying themes in the middle column therefore represent a point of convergence and facilitate the comparison process.

Personal health

Personal health is at the top of the Figure 5.2 due to the high priority it received from workshop participants: indicators in this category had a 61% likelihood of being selected as a priority indicator. However, there were only three indicators of this nature, and they emerged in just two host communities. Despite the small number of mentions, this indicator theme was not combined with any other due to its uniqueness and the extremely high priority placed upon it in instances when it did emerge in workshops. Two questionnaire indicators covered this theme: access to health care services and health of community members; both ranked equally as useful.

Education

Education was of very high priority among community workshop participants, as each education-related indicator had a 50% likelihood of being selected as a priority indicator. Many such indicators related to learning languages (particularly English) and providing scholarships for schoolchildren; these two sub-themes were each mentioned in four of the five workshops. Funding schools (or educational materials) and providing training workshops were mentioned slightly less, in two and three workshops respectively. There was some overlap between the themes “education” and “environmental impacts” in terms of providing environmental education. In the questionnaire, “educational programs for schoolchildren” was the most useful in this theme and the second most useful of all questionnaire indicators. However, this indicator did not capture many of the nuances present among the workshop indicators, particularly regarding

teaching of languages, providing scholarships and providing educational materials. Environmental education and training programs were also perceived as fairly useful.

Environmental impacts

The theme of environmental impacts represents an amalgamation of several themes that were shown separately in Figure 4.5: wildlife conservation, reforestation, natural resource management, environmental health and recycling. These were combined due to some mutual overlap and similarities. This theme overall was less prioritized by workshop participants than education, as each indicator in this theme had a 38% likelihood of being selected as a priority indicator. More indicators related to conservation of biodiversity than any other sub-theme. Indicators relating to conservation of biodiversity and reforestation/deforestation were each mentioned in all five workshops, while indicators related to environmental health were generated in four of the five workshops. Many of the indicators relating to biodiversity were very location-specific and refer to local flora and fauna. There was also some overlap between the themes "education" and "environmental impacts" regarding environmental health.

Many of the questionnaire indicators related to the environment had a human dimension not present in the workshop-derived indicators. For example, the most useful indicator was "community attitudes towards the environment" while two other indicators related to community participation in conservation and another indicator focused on community knowledge of conservation. None of these questionnaire indicators had matching counterparts among workshop-derived indicators. Questionnaire indicators on sustainable natural resource use and biodiversity were among the most useful and corresponded to sub-themes in workshop-derived indicators. There were no questionnaire indicators specific to reforestation, which was the third most mentioned indicator sub-theme in workshops. However, the questionnaire had two indicators related to protecting and restoring natural areas that may relate to reforestation activities.

Agriculture

Agriculture was not included in the theme "environmental impacts" because it mostly dealt with providing support for community and family agricultural production and not on the environmental impacts of agriculture. Agriculture-related indicators only emerged in three of the

five workshops and the predominant sub-theme was the development of new agricultural projects. There were no questionnaire indicators that matched these workshop-generated indicators: this was overlooked during the process of questionnaire design and was largely absent in the literature that was consulted to produce indicator sets for the questionnaire.

Personal income and business development

The theme of personal income and business development represents an amalgamation of three themes that were shown separately in Figure 4.5: personal income, business development and economic dependence. This theme was less prioritized by workshop participants than education or environmental impacts, as each indicator in this theme had a 34% likelihood of being selected as a priority indicator. The predominant sub-theme that emerged from workshops was "buying local" which was mentioned eight times and in all five communities. Other sub-themes were mentioned but to a lesser degree, such as starting new businesses, income for host families and economic dependence. Several other sub-themes emerged in just one community each but were unique enough to stand alone as individual sub-themes.

The most useful questionnaire indicator related to this theme was "income for host families" which corresponds to an identical sub-theme from workshop indicators. The next two indicators in usefulness value (economic opportunities for women/disadvantaged groups and economic leakage) did not emerge in any workshop. Other questionnaire indicators related to economic dependency, employment, local products and local businesses corresponded to workshop-derived indicators. However, it is worthwhile to note that "marketing local products" was among the less useful questionnaire indicators but was the most predominant sub-theme of workshop-derived indicators.

Cultural exchange and sociocultural impacts

The theme of cultural exchange and sociocultural impacts represents an amalgamation of three themes that were shown separately in Figure 4.5: cultural exchange, cultural impacts and cultural preservation. Although each of these three is somewhat unique, they were combined due to the unifying theme of the ways that volunteer tourism impacts culture and human relations. This theme was slightly less prioritized by workshop participants than other themes in Figure 5.2, as each indicator in this theme had a 32% likelihood of being selected as a priority indicator.

However, far more workshop-derived indicators related to this theme than any other theme (43 total indicators). Indicators relating to cultural exchange or appreciation emerged in all five workshops, while indicators related to the introduction of outside culture emerged in four workshops. Indicators related to the introduction of outside culture and increased social conflicts were predominantly negative, suggesting that the cultural impacts of volunteer tourism are sometimes perceived as negative. The third most frequently mentioned indicator sub-theme consisted of cultural preservation, though only three communities mentioned impacts of this nature. The sub-theme "creating friendships" was mentioned in four communities and closely relates to "cultural exchange/appreciation."

While this theme of cultural exchange/sociocultural impacts predominated among workshops, few questionnaire indicators portrayed impacts of this nature. While two indicators related to "satisfaction of community members" (one of which was the most useful of all questionnaire indicators), these two indicators were very broad in scope and not necessarily specific to cultural exchange with volunteers or sociocultural impacts. Other questionnaire indicators such as "continuance of traditional cultural activities" and "sharing of cultural knowledge" relate to cultural preservation, although the workshop-derived indicators dealing with cultural preservation were more nuanced and/or location specific and therefore useful for assessing this phenomenon. Other questionnaire indicators related to social cohesion and criminal activity were rarely mentioned in workshops.

Community development and infrastructure

The theme of community development and infrastructure represents an amalgamation of two themes that were shown separately in Figure 4.5: community development/organization and infrastructure. They were combined because of the relationship among infrastructure development, the overall development process of communities, and the organization of communities necessary for the development process. Each indicator in this theme had a 32% likelihood of being selected as a priority indicator. Among workshop-derived indicators, infrastructure development clearly dominated, with 12 indicators related to this sub-theme, mentioned across four communities. Many indicators dealing with this sub-theme were highly location-specific and related to specific infrastructure projects. The only other sub-theme that was also frequently mentioned consisted of providing support for community development

projects; indicators in this sub-theme dealt with financial support for development projects or general community progress beyond specific infrastructure projects.

The most useful questionnaire indicator within this theme consisted of community engagement in community improvement, while the third most useful dealt with community engagement in decision-making. However, workshop-derived indicators did not have a component of citizen engagement. Infrastructure development (related to community or conservation) indicators were present in the questionnaire but not ranked among the most useful. The second most useful indicator, standard of living, was rarely mentioned in workshops; this may be due to the non-specific nature of this indicator and multiple forms of interpretation.

Results of interview analysis

Several comments among interviewees suggested that the compass method was successful in revealing community interests, needs and priorities that otherwise may not have been recognized had the compass framework not been used. One interviewee stated that the workshop allowed community members to "make more profound decisions on the real needs that they have;" another stated that the workshop revealed community desires of which "one was really not conscious;" and another stated: "[what we achieved is] revealing the human needs for the community, because sometimes we are always just seeing infrastructure needs. But on this occasion, we revealed human needs, particularly in the area of health."

Interview comments also suggest that workshops revealed diverse viewpoints present in the community and among local and non-local stakeholders in volunteer tourism. Responses included: "many people were exposing their ideas" and "it was an...innovative workshop that welcomes new perspectives." Along similar lines, some comments suggest that the workshop revealed new alternatives or paths for volunteer tourism to take in the community: "it was a possibility for us to see new alternatives to organize this system of working with volunteer tourism" and "in reality what we achieved is becoming conscious that there are alternatives, not just turtle conservation...and there are other ways of viewing economic impacts."

Another recurring theme among interviews was that the workshop represented the first time that a participatory method had been implemented in the community to understand the local impacts of volunteer tourism. Responses included: "it was an opportunity that I had not had in

reality, to have everybody together, to listen, to see different viewpoints of the community members" and "it is the first time that something like this has been done, it is the first time that they ask the [host] families or the educational centers about the influences that volunteers have." Another interviewee similarly expressed the novelty of the compass as an indicator framework: "for me this is very interesting, it is something new that you put the four compass points."

The interviews similarly revealed that few other participatory methodologies for impact assessment have been in use, while current impact evaluation processes are informal and often do not incorporate diverse host community voices. Several interviewees noted that formal evaluations have never been conducted, as one interviewee noted: "[the impacts] have never been evaluated, up until now...this is the first evaluation that has been done with the [host] families and the community."

Some interviewees expressed satisfaction that the workshop was successful in expanding the perspectives of community members: "it was good that the community was present, not so much to show the [volunteer tourism] organizations, but so that the participants open their eyes" and "what we achieved is opening the mentality of all those present in the workshop."

Numerous comments also suggest that among the VTOs and host communities represented in interviews, there is an interest in conducting more participatory impact assessments. For example, one interviewee stated: "I think that it is an area of necessity, after so many years without studying it [the local impacts], it is something that should have been done at the beginning." Another interviewee stated: "it seems very important, because there should always be follow-up and evaluations done by both internal and external people that allow us to minimize negative impacts."

Discussion

Insights from comparing top-down and bottom-up approaches to indicator development

The comparison of indicators derived in workshops and indicators prioritized by corresponding VTOs (Figure 5.1) suggests that host communities and VTOs agree on some priorities but that some discrepancies are also present. As Figure 5.1 represents a comparison of data from host community workshops with data from the five VTOs that recruit volunteers for such communities, some parallelism in the results was expected. An agreement among high

priority indicators according to VTOs and host communities may suggest that effective communication or collaboration is occurring between VTOs and host communities.

Thematic comparisons of indicators derived in workshops and corresponding questionnaire indicators (Figure 5.2) further revealed discrepancies among top-down and bottom-up approaches of identifying indicators. Numerous workshop-generated indicators did not correspond to questionnaire indicators. For example, the prominence of community-generated indicators related to cultural impacts and the lack of many such indicators in the questionnaire illustrate the importance of addressing this issue of cultural exchange and sociocultural impacts in future collaboration between host communities and organizations, to identify mutual priorities as well as to minimize any negative sociocultural impacts of volunteer tourism. Conversely, several questionnaire indicators prioritized by VTOs did not emerge in community workshops. For example, the second most useful indicator among VTOs in the theme "personal income" was "economic opportunities for women/disadvantaged groups." No indicator related to women or disadvantaged groups was generated from any of the five community workshops. Likewise, two of the three most useful indicators within the theme "community development and organization" consisted of community engagement, but no corresponding indicators were derived in workshops.

It is also important to note that the questionnaire respondents identified indicators that were overall representative of all of their organizations' destinations, rather than specific host communities or destinations. Due to the large number of questionnaire respondents and larger number of destinations represented among such respondents' organizations, the high priorities placed on certain indicators reveal key patterns among volunteer tourism organizations. Since the workshops generated indicators specific and relevant to only five communities, it was not expected that the workshop indicators would closely match community-derived indicators. Rather, general themes present in the questionnaire (such as education or biodiversity conservation) corresponded to more nuanced and locally-appropriate indicators generated in the community workshops.

The existence of two minor themes (personal health and agriculture) indicates that there are some topics that may be of high priority to certain communities depending on their unique needs or circumstances, while other communities may place their priorities elsewhere. It is important for VTOs that work with multiple destinations to be aware of which indicator themes

are more universal and which are more specific to particular destinations. The absence of indicators related to agriculture also suggests a shortcoming in the questionnaire, which is largely a result of the absence of agriculture-related indicators in the literature on tourism indicators. This represents a key topic to be included in any future questionnaire or related research.

The discrepancies evident in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 may partly be explained by the generalized nature of the questionnaire, as it did not allow respondents to generate and prioritize their own personal indicators. Although all questionnaire respondents had the opportunity to add additional indicators into an "other" text box in the questionnaire, few took advantage of this opportunity. As the questionnaire indicators were drawn from literature on related topics (sustainable tourism, community well-being, etc.) it is likely that the questionnaire did not capture all key indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism. It also may indicate that some of the local and community impacts of tourism, which were revealed in this study, are absent in the literature. Conversely, it is also likely that many or most of the community-derived indicators are highly relevant to the phenomenon of volunteer tourism and unique to their specific context. Due to the high degree of interaction of volunteer tourists and host community members that is characteristic of volunteer tourism (and less so for other forms of tourism) it is plausible that the high amount of indicators related to cultural impacts and cultural exchange are unique to volunteer tourism. Future indicator development initiatives in volunteer tourism should therefore recognize this point. These findings suggest two other points: 1) some of the impacts of volunteer tourism that are highly valued by host communities (such as education, cultural exchange, sociocultural impacts) may be secondary impacts of projects focused on community development or infrastructure; and 2) some of the indicators currently used to assess the impacts of volunteer tourism (as seen in the questionnaire indicators) may not address the impacts that are most highly valued by host communities. It is important for VTOs to be aware of these findings and develop indicators to assess and maximize the positive sociocultural and educational impacts of volunteer tourism, while minimizing any negative impacts.

Some discrepancies observed in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 have several other possible explanations. It is possible that some very useful or frequently assessed indicators for VTOs are not a priority for host communities, or they may not have been perceived as a potential impact of volunteer tourism by workshop participants. As only five workshops were held, it is possible that some themes would have emerged if additional workshops had been conducted. In some cases

indicators may directly reflect a mission statement or program goal. Some prevalent indicators in the questionnaire may not have been suggested in workshops because they were not important to workshop participants. Moreover, some indicators may be of high priority to VTOs due to ease of assessment rather than their importance to host communities. For example, this may be the case on the "nature" compass point where VTOs prioritized indicators relating to community participation in conservation, and on the "society" compass point where VTOs prioritized indicators relating to community engagement. In such cases, counting the number of community participants in an activity is a relatively easy measure to capture. Nevertheless, this may be a useful indicator and may address a community or program goal of increased community participation. Furthermore, as Parkins et al. (2001) suggests that indicators should be credible and conducive to constant monitoring, this may justify the inclusion of a quantitative indicator such as community engagement.

Some indicators prioritized by VTOs may not have emerged in workshops due to participant bias, lack of representation of certain community stakeholders, cultural factors, or differing needs among different communities. In particular, the lack of indicators referring to women or disadvantaged groups could be due to the lack of women in workshops (as some workshops were more dominated by male participants) or the male-dominated societies in which workshops took place. This is an issue that deserves further attention as the majority of volunteer tourists are female (Palk, 2010), and therefore many volunteer tourist organizations target programs focused on women's groups and women's issues.

Furthermore, some "disadvantaged groups" may not have been present in community workshops due to the fact that disadvantaged groups are often minority groups or groups that are overlooked in society, thus may not have been present in the workshops. The facilitator made arrangements before each workshop to ensure the participation of a diverse group of stakeholders in the workshop, including women and other potential disadvantaged groups, such as cultural minorities and members of different socioeconomic sectors. Workshop groups were diverse as a result, but accurate representation was a greater challenge in the larger communities. In some cases, the female participants or participants with less formal education were less expressive than other participants. A potential future step would be to hold more than one workshop in a community, focusing each workshop on a particular socioeconomic or cultural sector of the

community, or holding special workshops for women in host communities; otherwise some voices may go relatively unheard in community-wide workshops.

Some of the workshop-generated indicators were location-specific and therefore not present in the questionnaire, except in more generic forms. However, such indicators may be useful for VTOs interested in achieving impacts that are locally-relevant and address community needs. Some examples include turtle counts on the "nature" point and indicators related to domestic abuse and drug addiction on the "society" point. A sending organization may not be aware of certain community priorities in the absence of effective and open communication and participatory indicator development with the host community.

A key challenge inherent in this multi-stakeholder approach is the differing vocabulary and use of terms that may be interpreted in many ways by stakeholders with backgrounds in academia, business and international development, as well as by host community members with little formal education. Terms such as 'biodiversity,' 'sustainable natural resource use,' 'capacity-building' and others can be understood in different ways as well as misunderstood. It also would not be expected that rural community members with little access to formal education be proficient in such terminology either. For this reason, the convergence of top-down and bottom-up generated indicators around central themes (as represented in Figure 5.2) may be more appropriate than direct comparison of one indicator to another (as was attempted in Figure 5.1).

Insights from using the compass framework

The use of the compass of sustainability to frame this paper is a critical element to be examined as it has the potential to guide future indicator development initiatives for volunteer tourism or other forms of tourism. A strength of the compass method was that it required workshop participants to think of four unique ways that their communities are impacted by volunteer tourism (nature, economy, society, personal well-being). This approach helped to ensure that key impacts were not excluded from the indicator development process. Other similar frameworks could also have been applied, and would have served a similar purpose of ensuring the inclusion of diverse elements of community well-being, such as the triple bottom line (economy, society, environment) (Wood, 2004) or the community capitals framework (human, social, cultural, political, financial, built, natural) (Flora, Flora & Fey, 2004). Inclusion of

cultural capital would be notably important in considering a framework for indicator development due to the significant mention of cultural impacts of volunteer tourism among the community workshops. An advantage of the compass was its associated literature that helped to use it as a framework to organize the indicators presented in the questionnaire. This facilitated the comparison of questionnaire and workshop data. One caveat in the use of the compass is the generation of indicators that can be arbitrarily placed on different compass points, or that are perceived by different stakeholders as belonging on different compass points. This can also be interpreted as a strength of the compass, as expressed by AtKisson (2011): its focus on a systems approach and the interrelationships among indicators.

For example, education can be viewed as an impact of economic development, which in turn leads to impacts in personal well-being for students and greater understanding of environmental issues through environmental education, leading to societal change in perception of natural resources. The "economy" compass point (Figure 5.1) is another example of this. Some of the workshop-derived indicators that appeared on this compass point were present in the questionnaire on other compass points. This illustrated the interrelationships among the compass points and the fact that one impact can have diverse repercussions. Some examples include scholarships, education, health and infrastructure, which could be categorized as economic impacts of volunteer tourism and yet have social, environmental and/or personal well-being impacts too. Overall the compass was a useful framework for soliciting diverse indicators and emphasizing an understanding of interrelationships among indicators; however the use of thematic categories other than the compass points was a more useful way of illustrating the data and comparing indicators derived through top-down and bottom-up processes.

Insights from interviews

The interviews conducted in each host community following the workshop revealed many insights into the compass method and the effectiveness of the workshops. The interviews also provide additional evidence of the usefulness of the compass of sustainability as a tool for facilitating bottom-up indicator development. The compass framework incorporated diverse perspectives into the indicator development process, including different community stakeholders and the perspectives of VTOs as well. The four compass points allowed participants to perceive impacts of volunteer tourism that may not have been evident to them otherwise. Interviewee

comments on their perspectives of the compass method indicate that it was also effective in assessing community strengths and weaknesses, identifying the advantages and disadvantages of volunteer tourism for a community, and providing a future path for a community to follow.

The compass method was a novel approach and in many cases was the first time that such an activity had been held in the host community. Interview comments suggest that there is potential and need for VTOs to collaborate with host communities in a participatory manner to develop indicators and evaluate impacts. The interest expressed by interviewees in continuing what was initiated in the workshops further reveals the potential to develop more systematic methods of impact evaluation for volunteer tourism. The positive nature of comments regarding the compass also justify its continued use to promote integrated top-down and bottom-up approaches to developing indicators of the local impacts of volunteer tourism.

Suggestions for the future

The data discussed in this paper suggest a need to blend two indicator development approaches: 1) a top-down approach that considers the needs and priorities of VTOs; and 2) a bottom-up approach that considers the needs and priorities of host communities. Collaboration between these two key stakeholders will further help to determine mutually agreed-upon indicator sets and common priorities or goals to work towards. Nearly all workshops included at least one representative of the volunteer sending organization, representing a start to such collaboration. Interview data also suggest that there is mutual support for such collaboration as well. In the end, the needs of both of these crucial stakeholders must be satisfied in order for collaboration to be successful and for mutual benefits to be maximized.

Another potential addition to the compass method would be to generate an indicator "checklist" to refer to after a participatory indicator development process (but not before, so as not to bias the results). The data in this paper and future studies could be used to generate a baseline of indicators, based on agreements among indicators that are prioritized by VTOs and host communities. This indicator list could be reviewed at the end of a workshop to gauge community interest in indicators they may have overlooked. Another advantage of this approach is that it can result in the inclusion of easily-measurable indicators that can promote collaboration in the evaluation process. It is likely that some of the indicators frequently assessed by VTOs are also the most practical to assess, as VTOs have limited time and resources to engage in impact

evaluations. Some such indicators were not generated in the community workshops but may represent a point of mutual agreement on indicators that can be easily measured by host community members or representatives of VTOs. Guidelines on effective indicators as provided by Parkins et al. (2001) and the WTO (2004) can help to forge a master list of general indicators that are appropriate and relevant to VTOs and host communities.

Another future step would be to conduct a second questionnaire to be administered to VTOs and host communities. Indicators presented in this paper that are of high priority for VTOs and/or host communities could be shared again with representatives of VTOs and host community members. This could help to identify indicators that are of mutual importance and prioritize indicators according to ease of assessment and other characteristics of effective indicators. As a corollary, the discrepancies in indicators presented in this paper could also serve as points of negotiation between VTOs and host communities. Such a discussion could help both parties to understand their unique needs and preferences, as well as work towards common ground and set goals.

Conclusions

This paper achieves four key accomplishments: 1) it identified desired host community impacts from the point of view of VTOs; 2) it identified desired local impacts of volunteer tourism from the perspectives of host community members; 3) it revealed the need to consider both approaches and promote collaboration between these two key stakeholders in volunteer tourism to identify goals that can be mutually agreed upon; and 4) it presented a framework and method to guide future initiatives that aspire to develop indicators and assess the local impacts of volunteer tourism.

The workshops described in this paper included the collaboration, participation and support of host communities as well as VTOs. Although this represents a primarily bottom-up approach to indicator development, the presence and support of VTO representatives in the workshops exemplifies the start of a collaborative and hybrid process to indicator development. In addition to the presence of VTOs in workshops, each workshop was also organized and planned with the support and collaboration of one or more VTO (international or domestic). Each workshop was the result of an invitation by a VTO for the author to conduct a workshop in

one of its host communities; VTOs did so because they were interested in obtaining community input and learning about the best methods for doing so.

By comparing workshop data with questionnaire data, two unique approaches to indicator development were assessed in order to determine the merit of each and the potential for a new blended approach. The resulting data strongly suggest that an approach to indicator development must incorporate the needs and perspectives of multiple stakeholders, including host communities and VTOs, to identify mutually agreed-upon and effective indicators. This paper therefore provides the justification, data and an appropriate framework to begin a process that incorporates top-down and bottom-up approaches to indicator development, with the ultimate goal of identifying and maximizing the beneficial impacts of volunteer tourism for host communities.

A local participatory approach produces indicators that are locally-appropriate, of high importance to host community members, and will acquire support from host community members in the assessment and monitoring process. Likewise, consideration of the perspectives, needs and priorities of VTOs will ensure their support and participation in the indicator development and monitoring process. Such organizations must market their programs to potential paying volunteers; for this reason they must also recognize the needs and preferences of the volunteers in designing their programs. This dictates the types of programs they offer and therefore the types of likely impacts that will result from their programs; this will in turn guide the indicator development process. This process must therefore include a top-down element and be cognizant of what is necessary to acquire the support of VTOs.

The compass of sustainability was an effective framework for top-down and bottom-up indicator development, guiding the indicator development process in the workshops and framing the indicators presented in the questionnaire. Although many workshop-generated indicators were placed on compass points that did not correspond to where they appeared on the questionnaire, this illustrates the systems focus of the compass and is not necessarily a weakness. The use of the compass throughout data collection and additional thematic categorizations of indicators facilitated comparisons: commonalities and discrepancies represent areas of future collaboration and discussion among stakeholders. Interviews conducted after the workshops suggest that the compass method has potential for expansion to become a useful tool for the volunteer tourism industry. The collaborative nature of the compass method and the lack of

systematic methodologies as expressed by interviewees and previous research (see Lupoli et al., 2013b) justify continued research on how VTOs and host communities can work together to develop indicators to assess the local impacts of volunteer tourism.

References

AtKisson, A. (1996). Developing indicators of sustainable community: Lessons from sustainable Seattle. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review, 16*, 337-350.

AtKisson, A. (2011). *The Sustainability Transformation: How to Accelerate Positive Change in Challenging Times*. UK: CPI Antony Rowe.

Bell, S. & Morse, S. (1999). *Sustainability Indicators: Measuring the Immeasurable*. London: Earthscan.

Bell, S. & Morse, S. (2003). *Measuring Sustainability: Learning from Doing*. London: Earthscan.

Benson, A., & Wearing, S. (2012). Volunteer tourism: Commodified trend or new phenomenon? In O. Moufakkir & P. Burns (Eds.), *Controversies in tourism* (pp. 242-254). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Broad, S. (2003). Living the Thai Life – a case study of volunteer tourism at the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project, Thailand. *Tourism Recreation Research* 28(3), 63-72.

Broad, S., & Jenkins, J. (2008). Gibbons in their midst? Conservation volunteers motivations at the Gibbon Rehabilitation Project, Phuket, Thailand. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 72-85). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Budruk, M., & Phillips, R. (2011). *Quality-of-life Community Indicators for Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management*. London: Springer Science+Business Media.

Butcher, J., & Smith, P. (2010). 'Making a difference': Volunteer tourism and development. *Tourism Recreation Research, 35*(1), 27-36.

Cox, D., Frere, M., West, S., & Wiseman, J. (2010). Developing and using local community wellbeing indicators: Learning from the experience of Community Indicators Victoria. *Australian Journal of Social Issues, 45*(1), 71-88.

Crabtree, R. (2008). Theoretical foundations of international service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, Fall, 18-36.

Devereux, P. (2008). International volunteering for development and sustainability: outdated paternalism or a radical response to globalization? *Development in Practice, 18*(3), 357-370.

Dwyer, M. (2004). More is better: The impact of study abroad program duration. *The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* 10, 151-163.

Eddins, E. (2013). Bridging the gap: Volunteer tourism's role in global partnership development. In K. Bricker, R. Black & S. Cottrell (Eds.), *Sustainable Tourism & the Millennium Development Goals* (pp. 251-264). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Elliot, D. (2008). Voluntourism. *Conde Nast Traveler*. Retrieved from http://www.concierge.com/cntraveler/articles/12200

Fee, L., & Mdee, A. (2011). How does it make a difference? Towards 'accreditation' of the development impact of volunteer tourism. In A.M. Benson (Ed.), *Volunteer tourism: Theory framework to practical applications* (pp. 223-251). New York, NY: Routledge.

Flora, C.B., Flora, J.L., & Fey, S. (2004). *Rural Communities: Legacy and Change, Second Edition.* Boulder: Westview.

Fraser, E., Dougill, A., Mabee, W., Reed, M. & McAlpine, P. (2006). Bottom up and top down: Analysis of participatory processes for sustainability indicator identification as a pathway to community empowerment and sustainable environmental management. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 78, 114-127.

Guttentag, D. (2011). Volunteer tourism: As good as it seems? *Tourism Recreation Research, 36*(1), 69-74.

Heath, S. (2007). Widening the gap: Pre-university gap years and the 'economy of experience.' *British Journal of Sociology and Education, 28*(1), 89-103.

Ingram, J. (2011). Volunteer Tourism: how do we know it is 'making a difference'? In A.M. Benson (Ed.), *Volunteer tourism: Theory framework to practical applications* (pp. 211-222). New York, NY: Routledge.

Kennedy, K. & Dornan, D. (2009). An overview: Tourism non-governmental organizations and poverty reduction in developing countries. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 14*(2), 183-200.

Lepp, A. (2008). Discovering self and discovering others through the Taita Discovery Centre Volunteer Tourism Programme, Kenya. In. K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 86-100). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Lupoli, C., Morse, W., Bailey, C. & Schelhas, J. (2013a). A survey of volunteer tourism organizations: understanding how indicators are used to evaluate the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. (unpublished manuscript)

Lupoli, C., Morse, W., Bailey, C. & Schelhas, J. (2013b). Volunteer Tourism: An agent of citizen empowerment? (unpublished manuscript)

Lupoli, C., Morse, W., Bailey, C. & Schelhas, J. (2013c). An examination of an indicator development methodology to identify and prioritize the impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities. (unpublished manuscript)

Lyons, K., Hanley, J., Wearing, S., & Neil, J. (2012). Gap year volunteer tourism: Myths of global citizenship? *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(1), 361-378.

Lyons, K.D. (2003). Ambiguities in volunteer tourism: A case study of Australians participating in a J-1 visitor exchange programme. *Tourism Recreation Research, 28*(3), 5-13.

Matarrita-Cascante, D. (2010). Changing communities, community satisfaction, and quality of life: A view of multiple perceived indicators. *Social Indicators Research,* 98, 105-127.

McIntosh, A., & Zahra, A. (2007). A cultural encounter through volunteer tourism: Towards the ideals of sustainable tourism? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15*(5), 541-556.

Mdee, A., & Emmott, R. (2008). Social enterprise with international impact: the case for Fair Trade certification of volunteer tourism. *Education, Knowledge & Economy, 2*(3), 191-201.

Miles, M. & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Miller, G., & Twining-Ward, L. (2005). *Monitoring for a Sustainable Tourism Transition.* Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Njuki, J., Mapila, M., Kaaria, S., & Magombo, T. (2008). Using community indicators for evaluating research and development programmes: experiences from Malawi. *Development in Practice, 18*(4-5), 633-642.

Parkins, J., Stedman, R. & Varghese, J. (2001). Moving towards local-level indicators of sustainability in forest-based communities: A mixed-method approach. *Social Indicators Research,* 56, 43-72.

Prescott-Allen, R. (2001). *The Wellbeing of Nations*. Ottawa: Island Press and the International Development Research Council.

Raymond, E. (2011). Volunteer tourism: Looking forward. *Tourism Recreation Research 36*(1), 77-79.

Roberts, S., & Tribe, J. (2008). Sustainability indicators for small tourism enterprises – An exploratory perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(5), 575-594.

Ruhanen, L., Cooper, C. & Fayos-Solá, E. (2008). Volunteer Tourism Knowledge: a case from the United Nations World Tourism Organization. In K.D. Lyons & S. Wearing (Eds.), *Journeys of Discover in Volunteer Tourism* (pp. 25-35). Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.

Simpson, K. (2004). 'Doing Development': The gap year, volunteer-tourists and a popular practice of development. *Journal of International Development,* 16, 681-692.

Sin, H.L. (2009). Volunteer tourism – "Involve me and I will learn?" *Annals of Tourism Research, 36*(3), 480-501.

Sin, H. (2010). Who are we responsible to? Locals' tales of volunteer tourism. *Geoforum,* 41, 983-992.

Sirakaya, E., Jamal, T.B., & Choi, H.S. (2001). Developing indicators for destination sustainability. In D. Weaver (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism* (pp. 411-429). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Tomazos, K., & Butler, R. (2009). Volunteer tourism: The new ecotourism? *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research, 20*(1), 196-211.

Tourism Research and Marketing. (2008). *Volunteer Tourism: A Global Analysis*. Barcelona: Atlas.

Wallace, G., & Pierce, S. (1996). An evaluation of ecotourism in Amazonas, Brazil. *Annals of Tourism Research, 23*(4), 843-873.

Wearing, S. (2001). *Volunteer Tourism: Experiences that make a Difference*. New York: CABI.

Wearing, S. (2004). Examining best practice in volunteer tourism. In R. Stebbins & M. Graham (Eds.), *Volunteering as Leisure/leisure as Volunteering: An International Assessment* (pp. 209-224). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Wood, M.E. (2004). A triple bottom line for sustainable tourism development for international donors: Defining indicators for conservation, community and local enterprise development. Eplerwood International.

Woosnam, K. and Y. Lee (2011). Applying Social Distance to Voluntourism Research. *Annals of Tourism Research, 38*(1), 309-313.

World Tourism Organization. (2004). *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook*. Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organization.

Final thoughts: Lessons learned and looking ahead

This research represents a significant contribution to a growing sector of tourism at an opportune time. While the popularity of volunteer tourism is rapidly increasing, its role as a tool of international development and the assumption that its impacts are universally beneficial are increasingly scrutinized. Inherent in the use of the term "tourism," it is inevitably a form of leisure travel that is also undertaken for reasons of personal fulfillment. In this age of information and global communication technologies, we are becoming increasingly aware of human suffering, poverty, environmental degradation, unsustainable practices, and inequalities in the development and progress of human societies across the world. Volunteer tourism is not a panacea for these crucial global issues; nor does any single approach claim to have all the solutions.

It is clear that many proponents of global volunteering for humanitarian and environmental causes see tremendous value in such endeavors. This includes the substantial benefits for those who travel and volunteer their time, as such an experience can be enriching, educational and transformative. It also includes the benefits that destinations, communities and ecosystems derive from global volunteering, as the assistance that volunteers provide may address or relieve some of their most pressing issues. Another perceived value of volunteer tourism consists of mutually-shared benefits. These consist of the bonds, friendships and cross-cultural relationships that are formed; often they are conducive to a greater awareness of global issues and respect for cultural diversity.

What is not clear, however, is the balance among these distinct types of benefits that is achieved in volunteer tourism initiatives. When there is a heavy focus on just one of these values or benefits of volunteer tourism, it can result in an experience that does not achieve its full potential. For example, when volunteer travelers gain personal benefits but bonds are not formed with host destination locals and local benefits are minimal, volunteers may view poverty in a superficial manner, fail to understand its roots, and perceive themselves as saviors in a colonialist position. Conversely, when excessive emphasis is placed on generating measurable local benefits, the transformative power of the cross-cultural experience can be overlooked and the experience may not promote an increased understanding of global issues for participants.

Numerous studies have been conducted on the motivations of volunteer tourists, the benefits of the volunteer tourism experience for volunteers, and the cross-cultural skills and understanding of global issues that are the product of international volunteer work. This study therefore did not pursue these aspects of volunteer tourism so as not to replicate existing knowledge. This study instead contributed to a critical gap in our knowledge of the volunteer tourism experience: the ways in which volunteer tourism impacts host communities. The research proceeded without assuming that impacts are exclusively beneficial or that undesirable impacts are occurring. Multiple approaches to data collection and the solicitation of information from different types of volunteer tourism organizations and host communities provided a nuanced perspective to such impacts and ways of assessing them.

The questionnaire that represented the first phase of this research revealed some common priorities and practices among organizations that recruit volunteers for international service. Some key community impacts were identified that are of high priority among such organizations. Furthermore, such priorities also correspond to some nuances among organizations, such as location (international versus in-country) and size (number of volunteers or trips offered). The questionnaire also revealed common practices among organizations regarding how they select projects, host communities, and processes of collaboration. Based on the questionnaire results we know that despite the diversity among volunteer tourism organizations and the programs they provide, there are some key underlying themes and priorities that justify a comparative approach which incorporates the input and perspectives of host communities.

Telephone interviews conducted with questionnaire respondents built upon some of the key questionnaire themes and also revealed some new insights. In particular, there are some trends towards a top-down approach of collaborating with host communities, although many organizations aim to promote local development initiatives and meet the needs of local organizations. In-country organizations and coordinators play a key role in bridging the gap between often distant organizations and host communities, as well as determining the degree to which host communities are empowered through engaging in volunteer tourism programs. Interviews also exposed the often non-systematic and informal nature of impact assessments, the high degree of interest among organizations in improving impact assessments, and the reality that many organizations still do very little to formally assess their impacts. Such findings further

justify a consideration of host community perspectives and the development of an impact assessment tool.

The in-country research represented in the third phase of this research complemented the first two phases by engaging host communities in a participatory process of developing indicators and identifying the community impacts/benefits of volunteer tourism. It represented a step forward in promoting multi-stakeholder collaboration and the empowerment of host communities. The workshops also revealed some key patterns among host communities regarding the most desired and/or observed impacts of volunteer tourism. Of notable mention are priorities placed on education, cultural impacts and community development. Although not generalizable, the workshops identified some community priorities that are essential for volunteer sending organizations to be cognizant of. After testing the compass framework, we also know that with certain modifications, it has the potential to guide future indicator development initiatives in volunteer tourism.

A comparison of top-down and bottom-up indicator development initiatives (the final phase of this research) revealed that some prominent indicators and indicator themes identified by host communities also matched the priorities of organizations. Other host community priorities were not shared by organizations, or were absent in the questionnaire. Comparing these two unique approaches to indicator generation using thematic categories revealed convergence around certain issues (such as education) and lack of convergence around other issues (such as cultural impacts and agriculture). This comparative approach and the commonalities and gaps it revealed can help to guide a future collaborative indicator development process that aims to engage multiple stakeholders (with diverse priorities) in the process.

This research revealed the overall complexities of a system that defies generalizations, as well as the challenges in measuring the multitude of ways that volunteer tourism impacts a destination. Some impacts are quantifiable and in other cases they are based on qualities that are evident but difficult to evaluate, such as human values, culture, relationships and emotions. Many impacts do not follow traditional economic measures and reach into elements of society, human well-being and the relationship between environmental and community wellbeing. Moreover, a systemic understanding of these principles suggests that all of these elements must be considered due to the interconnectedness of human culture, society, natural environment and economy. The results from the study suggest that the impacts of volunteer tourism are diverse

and can be both positive and negative, but that certain patterns are evident which can help to guide and focus the impact evaluation processes. A significant contribution of this research is that it proposes a new strategy and framework to approach this task of identifying and assessing the local impacts of volunteer tourism.

Due to the complexity of the system, the diversity of approaches to volunteer tourism, and the diversity of host communities, it is impossible to identify a finite and manageable set of indicators that can be universally applied in the impact evaluation process. A different approach, however, is to use a framework to organize the different types of impacts that can help to categorize them without losing a more holistic systems perspective. The compass of sustainability was effective in this manner and its continued use is a potential new direction for this line of research. It may be necessary to expand on the compass framework to ensure the inclusion of some of the most prominent, practical and relevant indicators and indicator themes revealed in this research.

Coupled with this framework is the need for a participatory method to identify indicators to assess the local impacts of volunteer tourism; such a method must not be time intensive or expensive as this would prohibit its widespread application. This process can still result in the identification of numerous impacts—too many for an effective process of intervention or collaboration. In order to make this task further manageable, it is necessary prioritize a smaller number of impacts that can each have a significant and systemic impact on a community and its environment. Such priority impacts should address the needs and priorities of multiple stakeholders, including diverse host community members, volunteer tourism organizations and the volunteers that they recruit.

A sequential step in this process (beyond the scope of this dissertation) would be to design a collaborative process to identify practical ways or introduce new ideas to achieve impacts that are desired by the stakeholders involved in volunteer tourism. There could be numerous potential strategies or approaches to implement a single new idea, involving participation or collaboration among diverse groups of stakeholders. It is also a new way of thinking about volunteer tourism that extends beyond recruiting well-intentioned volunteers and sending them to attractive or exotic places to contribute their skills and labor, with the expectation that it will generate positive change. Rather, there is a wider issue to consider of how to implement change through participatory approaches and multi-stakeholder collaboration. It

includes working together to identify strengths and weaknesses of a host community or organization, areas of need and areas where others (potential volunteers) can contribute their skills, opportunities for capacity-building and building upon existing capacities. It is about introducing changes into a system that generate positive outcomes for all stakeholders, devising strategies to do so, and creating opportunities for mutual learning and cross-cultural understanding.

The findings elaborated in this dissertation do not provide all the answers, but they do uncover some of the key elements of the path towards change. A useful framework is presented that can be employed for organizing and developing indicators. A detailed participatory method is suggested for developing and prioritizing indicators and identifying the underlying systems which explain interrelationships among impacts. The findings reveal a need to work with multiple stakeholders and generate valuable insights into how such stakeholders can collaborate and work with indicators that are mutually agreed-upon. The findings also suggest some of the caveats in collaboration and obstacles that will have to be overcome for change to happen that is mutually beneficial.

The next step in this process is the implementation of change. This dissertation puts forth some tools that can be useful for identifying areas of change in the system of volunteer tourism. Much of this is necessary preparation work, but there is no assurance that action will be taken. It is therefore important that this research be disseminated to key stakeholders in volunteer tourism. All of the organizations and host communities that collaborated or provided input during all phases of this research will receive a summary of key findings and the methods used to achieve such findings. Of particular utility to such organizations and communities are the compass of sustainability and the method used to solicit and prioritize indicators from host communities. In the process of communicating with many organizations and host communities during the course of this research, it became evident that there is interest in identifying the ways that host communities are impacted by volunteer tourism, as well as initiating change to maximize the benefits of volunteer tourism for all stakeholders.

This endeavor must be matched with practical, effective and accessible tools to make change a realistic goal. The compass of sustainability as a tool and method of indicator development, as well as modifications made during the refinement of this tool during this dissertation research, represent a start to this process of change. Additional tools are needed to

identify sustainable and beneficial innovations, as well as strategies for doing so. Future implementers may also want to consider a process of benchmarking to identify the status of a community during the indicator generation process, so as to be able to better identify and quantify trends and forthcoming community changes as a result of volunteer tourism. The result of this process can be a future system in which volunteer tourism is a highly beneficial activity for volunteer tourists; for the destinations, communities and ecosystems where volunteers donate their time; and ultimately, mutually-generated value for a new generation of global citizens. If no action is taken, volunteer tourism will continue nevertheless as a new form of tourism: travel-oriented leisure that is undertaken for reasons of personal fulfillment as well as a way for travelers to contribute their time and energy as volunteer workers. However, it may not live up to its full potential of what makes it unique: a new kind of tourism designed to produce genuine and sustainable benefits for underprivileged or impoverished parts of the world.

Appendix 1. Indicators derived from the literature used to develop an initial indicator set (for the questionnaire) relevant to volunteer tourism programs.

Nature Indicators		
Indicator Theme	**Indicator**	**Source**
Funding conservation	% of protected area budget originating from tourism activities	WTO; Lindberg; Wood
	values generated through visitor fees	WTO
	contribution of tourism to cost of protection/restoration	WTO; Wearing
Protected area management	existence of protected areas	WTO
	extent of protected areas	WTO
	tourism contribution to protection/restoration	WTO; Wood
	% of protected area degraded due to visitors	WTO
	number of park officials	WTO
	level of resentment towards protected areas	Wearing
	enforcement of regulations	Parkins et al.
Wildlife/biodiversity	health of population of key indicator species	WTO
	tourism contribution to protection/restoration	WTO
	number of incidents of poaching	WTO
	number of endangered species present	Choi & Turk; Schianetz & Kavanagh
	loss of endangered species	Choi & Turk
	native vegetation cover	Cox et al.
	presence of introduced weeds and pests	Cox et al.
	existence of research on flagship species	Wood
	existence of database of indicator species, flora/fauna	Wood
	key species count	Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
Reforestation/habitat	inventory of trees	WTO
	number of trees cut	WTO
	amount of forest present	Choi & Turk; Parkins et al.
	overall cover of native vegetation	Miller & Twining-Ward

	% of landscapes damaged by inappropriate developments	Miller & Twining-Ward; Wood
	implementation of sustainable principles	Schianetz & Kavanagh
	amount of area reforested	Lupoli
	Maintenance of natural landscape undisturbed by humans	Parkins et al.
Erosion	number of visitors using trails daily	WTO
	existence of inventory of trails	WTO
	use of non-motorized transport	Buckley
	construction of trails/boardwalks	Buckley
Water quality	develop water conservation/management plan	Roberts & Tribe
	condition of natural streams/waterways	Cox et al.
	water consumption	Cox et al.
	existence of wastewater recycling	Cox et al.
	existence of water treatment plants	WTO
	per capita water consumption	Choi & Turk
	% of tourist facilities using wastewater treatment systems	Miller & Twining-Ward
	% of lakes/miles of streams passing water quality standards	AtKisson & Hatcher
Waste disposal	percent of materials recycled/reused	Roberts & Tribe; Cox et al.
	knowledge of types of waste generated	Roberts & Tribe
	development of waste management plan	Roberts & Tribe
	amount of household waste generation	Cox et al.
	separation of solid waste in organic/recyclable/nonrecyclable	WTO
	per capita discharge	Choi & Turk; Atkisson & Hatcher
	% of tourism facilities recycling their wastes	Miller & Twining-Ward
	construction of toilets/letrines	Buckley
Infrastructure	investment in infrastructure from tourism enterprises	WTO
Community participation	engagement of locals in protection activities	WTO

	number of community meetings held	WTO
	participatory process for planning/management of protected areas	WTO
	membership in local environmental associations	WTO
Environmental awareness	presence of policy statement	Roberts & Tribe
	environmental assessments conducted	Roberts & Tribe; WTO; Choi & Turk; Miller & Twining-Ward
	use of renewable resources	Choi & Turk
	environmental awareness of community members	Schianetz & Kavanagh
	access to nature for community members	Parkins et al.; Beckley et al.
Resource use	reduce or eliminate traditional resource use	Lindberg; Buckley; Wearing
	less extractive pressure on natural resources	Lindberg
	reduced local access to resources	Lindberg
	reduction in illegal extraction activities	Buckley
	lost access to land and resources	Wearing
	change in catch/consumption of wild resource	Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
Acceptable change	existence of limits of acceptable change	Buckley
Research	provide funding for fieldwork associated with research	Wearing
	increase in biological knowledge of local ecosystems	Lupoli
Attitudes	local attitudes towards the natural environment	Wearing
	positive resident attitudes towards natural areas	Lindberg
Energy	implementation of alternative energy sources	Schianetz & Kavanagh
	% of energy obtained from alternative energy	Schianetz & Kavanagh

Economy Indicators

Theme	**Indicator**	**Source**
Employment	increase in amount of employed people	Roberts & Tribe; Cox et

		al.; Schianetz & Kavanagh; Parkins et al.
	percent of local residents employed	Roberts & Tribe; Cox et al.; WTO; Wearing; Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
	increase in high skilled/managerial occupations	Cox et al.; Choi & Turk
	total number of workers employed by tourism	WTO
	% of workers employed at different skill levels	WTO
	ratio of men/women employed by tourism	WTO
	competitive wages for employees in tourism sector	WTO; Choi & Turk
	wages that meet basic needs	Parkins et al.
	% increase of people who derive all or some of their income from tourism	WTO
	% of employable population employed in natural resource sectors	Parkins et al.
	decrease in unemployment rate	Choi & Turk
	increase in salaries/wages	Roberts & Tribe
	% of households that benefits from tourism	Lindberg
	opportunities for women/indigenous/rural poor	Wood; Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
	% of program staff that originate in community vs. brought in by sending organization	Wearing (2001b)
Income	per capita income	Cox et al.
	distribution of income	Cox et al.; Lindberg
	ratio of income from tourism versus traditional income generating activities	WTO
	% of community income derived from tourism	WTO
	amount spent per day by tourists	WTO
	number of local families who benefit from homestays	Wearing (2001b)
Small business	growth of local businesses	Cox et al.
	number of tourism related small enterprises in community	WTO
	% of tourism businesses owned locally	WTO
	% of new businesses created that focus on tourism	WTO; Miller & Twining-Ward
	% of foreign ownership of tourism businesses	Choi & Turk; Wearing
	existence of finance programs/credit for small business development	Wood

Revenues/expenditures	increase in average spending of volunteer tourist	Roberts & Tribe
	existence of community tourism budget	WTO
	revenues reinvested in infrastructure improvements	WTO; Choi & Turk
	average annual growth in expenditures by tourists	WTO; Miller & Twining-Ward
	existence of adequate fee structure	Choi & Turk; Lindberg
	existence of revenue sharing program	Lindberg
	increase in revenue for businesses from tourism	Lindberg
	increase in demand for accommodation	Wearing
	amount of profits redirected to host community	Wearing (2001b)
Leakage	% of products purchased that are locally made	Roberts & Tribe
	amount of money spent within local economy	Roberts & Tribe
	increase in market for local products	Wearing
	% of leakage from community	Choi & Turk; Lindberg
	% spent on overhead before tourists arrive	Lindberg
Cost of living	increase in cost of living	Lindberg; Wearing
	change in consumption patterns	Wearing

Society Indicators

Theme	**Indicator**	**Source**
Infrastructure / Public projects	infrastructure development stimulated by tourism which also benefits the poor	WTO
	level of investment in community infrastructure	WTO; Wearing
	financial contribution by tourism to community projects	WTO
	new infrastructure is sustainable	Wood
	implementation of green design	Schianetz & Kavanagh
Traditions	number of opportunities to participate in cultural activities	Cox et al.
	number of residents who participate in cultural activities	Cox et al.
	% of change in traditional activities	WTO
	% of residents concerned about loss of community culture	WTO

	continuance of / # of traditional activities	Choi & Turk; Miller & Twining-Ward; Parkins et al.; Beckley et al.
	loss of traditions via modernization	Choi & Turk
	retention of customs and language	Choi & Turk
	% of residents satisfied with cultural integrity of community	Choi & Turk
	degree to which cultural traditions are commodified for tourists	Wearing
Decision-making / Community engagement	number/type of opportunities for residents to have a say in important issues	Cox et al.
	engagement of citizens in decision-making /planning forums	Cox et al.; Wearing; Parkins et al.
	membership of residents in community organizations and decision-making bodies	Cox et al.
	% of residents stating they can influence tourism related decisions	WTO; Miller & Twining-Ward
	community generates a vision for the future of tourism	Wearing; Pepy
	change in community structure as a result of tourism	Choi & Turk
	shift in power structure as a result of tourism	Choi & Turk
	presence of tourism authority/planner in community	Choi & Turk
	degree of local participation in tourism planning	WTO; Choi & Turk
	implementation of local ideas in tourism plans	Choi & Turk; Pepy
	existence/availability of advisory board for tourism planning	Choi & Turk
	two-way communication between residents and local gov't	Choi & Turk
	level of support for projects at local level	Choi & Turk
	% of residents who feel they can influence types of tourism	Miller & Twining-Ward
	regular meetings held with community interest groups	Wearing
	project leader works in collaboration with community	Pepy
	community members contribute time/service to projects	Pepy
	existence of communication channels between community and organization	Pepy
	employment of indigenous systems in planning structures	Wearing(2)

	voting rates	AtKisson & Hatcher
Policy development	existence of development control policy	Choi & Turk
	existence of tourism master /management plan	Choi & Turk; Wearing; Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
	existence of legal framework to guide tourism development	Wood
Collaboration with agencies	linkages between local/regional/national levels	Choi & Turk
	improved participation of community in municipal/state/national level meetings	Wood
Fair representation	equal opportunity employment for women	Choi & Turk
Social capital	% of residents who feel part of community	Cox et al.
	degree of volunteering among community members	Cox et al.
	increase in social cohesion	Choi & Turk; Parkins et al.; Beckley et al.
	number of community wide activities	Schianetz & Kavanagh; Parkins et al.
Community well-being	% residents who believe tourism is good for community	WTO
	% residents who believe they or their family benefit from tourism	WTO
	number/type of development programs in place	WTO
	existence of survey instrument to assess success of tourism sponsored programs	WTO
	reduction in outmigration from community	Wearing; Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
	volunteers provide services unavailable in the community	Pepy
	volunteers provide services that will create a dependency	Pepy
	increased amenities for community members	Stronza & Gordillo
	tourism goals are linked to broader comprehensive community plan	Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
	long term economic linkage formed between community & organization	Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
	existence of a community needs/strengths assessment?	Pepy

Capacity building	existence of capacity building activities for community	Pepy
	community members trained to maintain any contributions to community	Pepy
	training program for protected area/interpretation staff	Wood
Appropriate behaviors	existence of social guidelines for tourists	Wearing; Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi; Wearing (2001b)
	tourists are educated about social norms, gift giving	Pepy

Personal Well-being Indicators

Theme	**Indicator**	**Source**
Education	literacy rate	Cox et al.; Atkisson & Hatcher; Elisabeth Marks et al.
	incorporation of tourism planning into educational curriculum	WTO
	type/amount of training given to tourism employees	Choi & Turk
	amount of environmental education provided to employees/community	Choi & Turk
	existence of training programs for locals to gain meaningful employment	Wearing; Elisabeth Marks et al.
	existence of educational programs for schoolchildren to work in tourism	Wearing
	existence of apprenticeship positions for community members	Schianetz & Kavanagh
	educational information about local ecosystems provided to community	Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
	access to training opportunities	Sirakaya, Jamal & Choi
	teacher/student ratios	Atkisson & Hatcher
	availability of education within community	Parkins et al.; Beckley et al.
Health	self-reported health	Cox et al.
	increased access to health care services	Lupoli
	infant mortality	AtKisson & Hatcher
	availability of health care	Parkins et al.; Beckley et al.
	physical health of residents	Beckley et al.

Information	access to services	Cox et al.
	types of channels used to promote tourism (internet, media, etc.)	WTO
	% of people with clear understanding of the role of tourism planning	WTO
	% of residents with understanding of sustainable tourism	WTO
Satisfaction	increase/decrease in complaints by residents against tourists	Roberts & Tribe
	local satisfaction level with tourism	WTO; Choi & Turk
	% of community who favors tourism vs oppose it	WTO
	level of satisfaction with community life in general	Choi & Turk
	% of community who perceives positive benefits from their interactions with tourists	Miller & Twining-Ward
Attitude	local attitude towards tourism	Wearing

Appendix 1 References:

AtKisson, A., Hatcher, R. & Green, S. (2004). Draft Paper for Publication: Introducing Pyramid: A Versatile Process and Planning Tool for Accelerating Sustainable Development. Draft Version 4: 24 March, 2004.

Beckley, T., Parkins, J. and Stedman, R. (2002). Indicators of forest-dependent community sustainability: The evolution of research. *The Forestry Chronicle, 78*(5), 626-635.

Buckley, R. (2001). Environmental impacts. In D. Weaver (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism* (pp. 379-390). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Choi, H. & E. Turk (2011). Sustainability indicators for managing community tourism. In M. Budruck & R. Phillips (Eds.), *Quality of Life Community Indicators for Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management* (pp. 115-140). Springer Publishing.

Cox, D., Frere, M., West, S. & Wiseman, J. (2010). Developing and using local community wellbeing indicators: Learning from the experience of Community Indicators Victoria. *Australian Journal of Social Issues, 45*(1), 71-88.

Lindberg, K. (2001). Economic impacts. In D. Weaver (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism* (pp. 363-375). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Lupoli: *these are indicators derived by the author of this dissertation that were deemed appropriate to volunteer tourism and were not identified in current literature*

Marks, E., Cargo, M., and Daniel, M. (2007). Constructing a health and social indicator framework for indigenous community health research. *Social Indicators Research,* 82, 93-110.

Miller, G. & Twining-Ward, L. (2005). *Monitoring for a Sustainable Tourism Transition.* Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.

Parkins, J., Stedman, R. and Varghese, J. (2001). Moving towards local-level indicators of sustainability in forest-based communities: A mixed-methods approach. *Social Indicators Research,* 56, 43-72.

Pepy Tours. (n.d.). Voluntourism operator self-check guide. Retrieved from http://www.voluntourism101.com/voluntourism101_self-check_tool.pdf

Roberts, S. & Tribe, J. (2008). Sustainability indicators for small tourism enterprises – An exploratory perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(5), 575-594.

Schianetz, S. & L. Kavanagh (2008). Sustainability indicators for tourism destinations: A complex adaptive systems approach using systemic indicator systems. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 16*(6), 601-628.

Sirakaya, E., Jamal, T.B., & Choi, H.S. (2001). Developing indicators for destination sustainability. In D. Weaver (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism* (pp. 411-429). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Stronza, A. & Gordillo, J. (2008). Community views of ecotourism. *Annals of Tourism Research, 35*(2), 448-468.

Wearing, S. (2001a). Exploring socio-cultural impacts on local communities. In D. Weaver (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism* (pp. 395-407). Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Wearing, S. (2001b). *Volunteer Tourism: Experiences that make a Difference.* Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Wood, M. (2002). A triple bottom line framework for sustainable tourism development for international donors - Defining indicators for conservation, community and local enterprise development. Keynote address: Conference on ecotourism and conservation in the Americas. Stanford University, May 2002.

World Tourism Organization (2004). *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook.* Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organization.

Appendix 2. Online questionnaire (excluding graphics)

The Community and Ecological Impacts of Volunteer Tourism: An International Study

We appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey. Please remember that you and the name of your organization are confidential and will not be associated with any published data or results of this research study.

1. Please select the most accurate description(s) of your organization. (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ Our organization is directly involved in designing and administering volunteer programs for volunteer tourists that we recruit.
- ❑ Our organization communicates/collaborates with in-country organizations that design and administer volunteer programs for volunteer tourists that we recruit.
- ❑ Our organization forms a link between volunteer tourists and other international volunteer tourism organizations, and we have no direct role in designing and administering volunteer programs for the volunteer tourists that we recruit.

2. For how many years has your organization recruited volunteers to place in volunteer work projects?

_____ years

3. To how many countries does your organization send volunteers?

_____ countries

4. Approximately what percentage of your organization's volunteers were from each of the following countries, in the past year?

_____ % from the U.S.A.
_____ % from Canada
_____ % from the U.K.
_____ % from Australia
_____ % from (please specify) : _____
_____ % from (please specify) : _____

5. Approximately how many total volunteers did your organization send to work on volunteer projects in the past year? (Check one.)

- ❍ 1-250 volunteers
- ❍ 251-500 volunteers
- ❍ 501-1000 volunteers
- ❍ 1001-2000 volunteers
- ❍ over 2000 volunteers

6. Which were the five most visited destination countries (in order of the number of volunteers sent by your organization) in the past year?

Country #1: _____
Country #2: _____
Country #3: _____
Country #4: _____
Country #5: _____

7. Approximately how many different volunteer work sites (places you send volunteers) did your organization offer for volunteer tourists in the last year?

_____ sites

8. Of these work sites, approximately what percentage offer natural resource/environmental work for volunteer tourists?

_____ %

9. We would like to know how long your organization has been collaborating with communities who host your volunteer programs at your work sites. What percentage of your current host community working relationships correspond to each of the following categories?

_____ % of host community relationships that were initiated within the last year
_____ % of host community relationships that have existed 1-5 years
_____ % of host community relationships that have existed 6-10 years
_____ % of host community relationships that have existed over 10 years

10. We would like to know the size of the communities that host your organization's volunteer projects. Approximately what percentage of them correspond to each of the following categories?

_____ % of communities under 500 residents
_____ % of communities with 500-1000 residents
_____ % of communities with 1001-5000 residents
_____ % of communities with 5001-10,000 residents
_____ % of communities with over 10,000 residents

11. We would like to know how long your organization's volunteer service trips last. In the past year, what percentage of your volunteer service trips corresponded to each of the following categories?

_____ % of trips that involved 1-7 days of volunteer service
_____ % of trips that involved 8-15 days of volunteer service
_____ % of trips that involved 16-30 days of volunteer service
_____ % of trips that involved over 30 days of volunteer service

12. We would like to know how many volunteers your organization places into work sites at a given time. Approximately what percentage of your work sites correspond to each of the following categories?

_____ % of work sites with 1-5 volunteers at a given time
_____ % of work sites with 6-10 volunteers at a given time
_____ % of work sites with 11-20 volunteers at a given time
_____ % of work sites with over 20 volunteers at a given time

13. We would like to know the average educational level of your organization's volunteers. Approximately what percentage corresponds to each of the following categories?

_____ % of volunteers that have not graduated from high school yet
_____ % of volunteers that have graduated from high school but not graduated from college yet
_____ % of volunteers that possess a college degree (bachelor's, master's, or PhD)
_____ % other (please specify)

14. In the past year, approximately what percentage of your organization's volunteers fell into each of the following age groups?

_____ % of volunteers under 18 years old
_____ % of volunteers 18-25 years old
_____ % of volunteers 26-55 years old
_____ % of volunteers over 55 years old

15. In the left column is a list of skills that volunteer tourists could offer to a volunteer project. For each skill, please tell us if your organization requires that volunteers have this skill and if your organization provides training to volunteers for this skill.

	Is this a required skill for volunteers?		Do you provide training for volunteers in this skill?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Knowledge of biology/ecology	❍	❍	❍	❍
Wildlife management	❍	❍	❍	❍
Natural resource management	❍	❍	❍	❍
Farming/animal husbandry	❍	❍	❍	❍
Scientific data collection	❍	❍	❍	❍
Ability to speak local language	❍	❍	❍	❍
Cultural sensitivity	❍	❍	❍	❍
Construction/craftsmanship	❍	❍	❍	❍
Leadership skills	❍	❍	❍	❍
Health/medicine	❍	❍	❍	❍
Teaching skills	❍	❍	❍	❍

Computer/information technology	❍	❍	❍	❍
Other (please specify)	❍	❍	❍	❍
Other (please specify)	❍	❍	❍	❍

16. What natural resource/environment related activities are performed by your organization's volunteers? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ Planting trees or plants
- ❑ Caring for or monitoring wildlife
- ❑ Trail maintenance
- ❑ Mapping/GIS
- ❑ Tour guiding
- ❑ Biological research
- ❑ Park management
- ❑ Environmental education
- ❑ Sustainable forestry/agroforestry
- ❑ Organic gardening/agriculture
- ❑ Alternative forest products
- ❑ Infrastructure development for protected areas
- ❑ Improving or installing recycling systems
- ❑ Improving or installing waste disposal systems
- ❑ Assisting environmentally friendly businesses
- ❑ Promoting ecotourism development
- ❑ Sustainable fisheries/aquaculture
- ❑ other (please specify) _____
- ❑ other (please specify) _____
- ❑ NOT APPLICABLE

17. What community development activities are performed by your organization's volunteers? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ Physical infrastructure development
- ❑ Improving or installing water purification systems
- ❑ Skills training for community members
- ❑ Education for adults
- ❑ Education for children
- ❑ Improving access to health care
- ❑ Promoting income generation activities
- ❑ Initiating grassroots organizations
- ❑ Providing financial contributions to community projects
- ❑ Small-business assistance
- ❑ Promoting community organization
- ❑ Empowering women's groups
- ❑ Providing technical assistance or computer skills
- ❑ other (please specify) _____
- ❑ other (please specify) _____
- ❑ NOT APPLICABLE

18. What strategies does your organization use to select host communities for volunteer tourism projects? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ Personal contacts from within our organization recommend communities that they know.
- ❑ Representative(s) from our organization travel in-country and search for communities.
- ❑ International conservation organizations help us find communities.
- ❑ Other tourism-related organizations help us find communities.
- ❑ In-country governmental organizations help us find communities.
- ❑ Local in-the-field contacts help us find communities.
- ❑ In-country non-governmental organizations help us find communities.
- ❑ In-country conservation organizations help us find communities.
- ❑ We choose communities who already receive volunteer tourism or ecotourism projects.
- ❑ There is no clear selection process.
- ❑ other (please specify) _____
- ❑ other (please specify) _____

19. What strategies does your organization use to select projects within host communities where you operate? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ Projects are selected by representatives of our organization.
- ❑ Projects are selected by an in-country volunteer organization with whom we collaborate.
- ❑ Projects are selected in joint collaboration between the community and a local NGO (non-governmental organization) which represents or is created by our organization.
- ❑ Projects are selected in joint collaboration between our organization and a local NGO which represents the interests of the community.
- ❑ Projects are selected in joint collaboration between the community and our organization.
- ❑ Projects are selected by elected officials.
- ❑ Projects are selected by a designated committee of community representatives.
- ❑ Projects are selected which build upon previous ongoing projects of volunteer tourism, ecotourism, or scientific research.
- ❑ There is no clear selection process.
- ❑ other (please specify) _____
- ❑ other (please specify) _____

20. What strategies does your organization use to communicate with host communities where volunteer projects are carried out? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ We form (or help form) an organizational body in the host community, which then communicates with our home office(s).
- ❑ A host community organization communicates with our home office(s).
- ❑ An in-country NGO communicates with our home office(s).
- ❑ A local volunteer tourism organization takes care of communication between the community and our home office(s).
- ❑ An international volunteer tourism organization takes care of communication between the community and our home office(s).
- ❑ An employee of our organization lives in the community and communicates with our home office(s).
- ❑ A local political leader(s) and/or his/her/their staff communicate with our home office(s).
- ❑ We select one or more individuals in the host community who communicate with our home office(s).
- ❑ We have no formalized way of communication between the host community and our home office(s).
- ❑ other (please specify) _____

❑ other (please specify) _____

21. Does your organization conduct evaluations to determine if volunteer projects meet the goals/expectations of volunteer tourists?

❍ Yes
❍ No

22. When your organization conducts such evaluations, which of the following methods do you employ? (Check all that apply.)

❑ Meetings/focus groups
❑ Questionnaires/surveys
❑ Personal interviews
❑ Telephone interviews
❑ other (please specify) _____

23. How frequently does your organization conduct such evaluations?

❍ Two times per year
❍ One time per year
❍ Once every two years
❍ We do not regularly conduct evaluations
❍ Other (please specify) _____

24. Does your organization conduct evaluations to determine if volunteer projects meet the goals/expectations of your organization?

❍ Yes
❍ No

25. When your organization conducts such evaluations, which of the following stakeholder groups do you acquire input from? (Check all that apply.)

❑ Representatives of your organization
❑ Members of host communities
❑ Volunteer tourists
❑ other (please specify) _____

26. How frequently does your organization conduct such evaluations?

❍ Two times per year
❍ One time per year
❍ Once every two years
❍ We do not regularly conduct evaluations
❍ Other (please specify) _____

27. Does your organization conduct evaluations to determine if your projects meet the goals/expectations of host communities?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

28. When your organization conducts such evaluations, which of the following stakeholder groups do you acquire input from? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ Regional/national NGOs
- ❑ Local community organizations/NGOs
- ❑ Host organization
- ❑ Local community members
- ❑ Local business owners
- ❑ Local government agencies/representatives
- ❑ Volunteer tourism project coordinators
- ❑ Volunteer tourists
- ❑ Academics/scientists
- ❑ other (please specify) _____

29. When your organization conducts such evaluations, which of the following methods do you employ? (Check all that apply.)

- ❑ Meetings/focus groups
- ❑ Questionnaires/surveys
- ❑ Personal interviews
- ❑ Telephone interviews
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____

30. How frequently does your organization conduct such evaluations?

- ❍ Two times per year
- ❍ One time per year
- ❍ Once every two years
- ❍ We do not regularly conduct evaluations
- ❍ Other (please specify) _____

The following indicators represent potential contributions of volunteer tourism to host communities. We would like to know how useful each indicator would be for your organization to understand the impacts of its volunteer projects, and which indicators you currently assess or measure.

31. ECONOMIC IMPACTS IN THE HOST COMMUNITY

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF VOLUNTEER TOURISM TO.....	How useful would it be for you to know this?	Do you assess or measure this?

	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Yes	No	N.A.
.....employment opportunities for community members.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the availability of highly-skilled occupations.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....vocational/professional training programs for community members.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....economic opportunities for women/disadvantaged groups.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....local business ownership.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the creation of local businesses.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....local business revenues.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....locally-made marketable products.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....economic opportunities for host families.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....tourism expenditures that stay within the community.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....per capita income.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....income distribution.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

If there are additional indicators of the economic impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities that your organization strives to assess, please list them below.

32. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IN THE HOST COMMUNITY

THE CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEER TOURISM TO.....	How useful would it be for you to know this?	Do you assess or measure this?

	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Yes	No	N.A.
.....the protection of biodiversity.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....captured/injured wildlife that receive assistance.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the protection of natural areas/forests.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the restoration of natural areas/forests.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the restoration of water quality/availability of clean water.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the sustainable use of natural resources.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....funding for conservation initiatives/protected areas.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....staffing for conservation areas/protected areas.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....infrastructure for conservation areas/protected areas.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....environmental sanitation/waste management.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....community participation in conservation/natural resource decision-making.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the degree of community participation in conservation activities.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....community knowledge of conservation/ecological issues.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....local community attitudes towards the	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

environment.								
.....site attractiveness/potential for other forms of tourism.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....environmental assessments conducted.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

If there are additional indicators of the environmental impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities that your organization strives to assess, please list them below.

33. SOCIAL IMPACTS IN THE HOST COMMUNITY

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF VOLUNTEER TOURISM TO.....	How useful would it be for you to know this?	Do you assess or measure this?

	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Yes	No	N.A.
.....community infrastructure.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....continuance of traditional cultural activities.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....engagement of the community in community-improvement projects.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....engagement of the community in decision-making processes.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....community visioning/goal-setting.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....a community tourism management plan.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....participation of the community in regional/national meetings.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....social cohesion.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the rate of out-migration from the community.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....dependency of the community on foreign assistance.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

If there are additional indicators of the social impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities that your organization strives to assess, please list them below.

34. PERSONAL WELL-BEING/ENRICHMENT IMPACTS IN THE HOST COMMUNITY

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF VOLUNTEER TOURISM TO.....	How useful would it be for you to know this?	Do you assess or measure this?

	Not useful	Somewhat useful	Useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Yes	No	N.A.
.....capacity-building programs.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....environmental education.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....educational programs for schoolchildren.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the physical health of community members.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....access to health care services.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....access to internet/information.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the standard of living for community members.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the satisfaction of community members with foreign assistance to the community.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
.....the satisfaction of community members with community life.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

If there are additional indicators of the personal well-being/enrichment impacts of volunteer tourism in host communities that your organization strives to assess, please list them below.

35. What is the mission statement of your organization?

36. If you are willing to share any internal documents regarding your organization's vision, program evaluation or strategic planning, please attach them here.

Please use the following space to provide us with any additional comments or questions that you may have regarding this survey. We thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Appendix 3. Interview guide for conducting telephone interviews

1. How do you select the host communities in which your organization carries out volunteer tourism projects?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which has been the most successful method of host community selection, and why?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which method has had the least success and why?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which method is the most common for your organization?

2. How do you select projects for volunteers in host communities?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which has been the most successful method of project selection, and why?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which method has had the least success and why?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which method is the most common for your organization?

3. How do you maintain communication between your office and host communities?

    probe: Do you designate a person or organization in each host community that is responsible for communicating with you? If so, how were they chosen? What type of person is it? Do you provide training and why?

    probe: (*if they use NGO*) How was the NGO formed?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which has been the most successful method of communication, and why?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which method has had the least success and why?

    probe: (*if the respondent mentions several methods*) Which method is the most common for your organization?

4. Do you provide training for local organizations or NGOs, and what type? What are your motivations for providing this training (if they don't already mention them)?

5. How do you evaluate the local impacts of your volunteer tourism programs?

probe: (*if the respondent mentions the use of indicators to evaluate local impacts*) How did you develop such indicators?

probe: (*if the respondent mentions the use of indicators to evaluate local impacts*) How do you measure and monitor the indicators?

probe: What types of impacts do you currently measure or monitor in host communities?

probe: Do you have any format or method for assessing impacts of your programs in the host community? Who is involved /participates in those assessments?

probe: Do you have future plans/strategies to assess impacts in the host community, or partnerships with other organizations to do so?

probe: Have there been successful strategies for long-term monitoring strategies? Please describe.

6. How do you define success in working with a host community?

7. Do you have anything additional to add or questions about our research study?

Appendix 4. Interview guide for interviews conducted after community workshops

Spanish version

1. ¿Qué le pareció el taller?

    probe: ¿Qué cree usted que logramos en el taller?
    probe: ¿Qué cree usted que podríamos hacer para mejorar los talleres que hacemos en el futuro?

2. ¿Cuál cree usted que sería el próximo paso después de este taller?

3. ¿Cómo fue seleccionada esta comunidad como un destino para turistas voluntarios?

    probe: ¿Cómo se hizo el contacto entre esta comunidad y la organización que recluta los turistas voluntarios?

4. ¿Cómo fueron seleccionados los proyectos que elaboran los turistas voluntarios en esta comunidad?

    probe: ¿Quiénes estaban involucrados en la selección de los proyectos?

5. ¿Cómo se comunica esta comunidad con la organización que recluta los turistas voluntarios?

    probe: ¿Hay una persona designada en la comunidad para facilitar la comunicación?
    probe: ¿Cómo fue seleccionada esa persona?

6. ¿La organización que recluta los turistas voluntarios provee algún tipo de entrenamiento para los miembros de la comunidad? Describa.

7. Hasta ahora, ¿cómo se han evaluado los impactos del turismo voluntario en su comunidad?

    probe: ¿Quiénes han estado involucrados en las evaluaciones, y por qué?
    probe: ¿Qué tipos de impactos se han evaluado?
    probe: ¿Quiénes decidieron como se iban a evaluar?

8. ¿Qué le parece la idea de evaluar los impactos del turismo voluntario en su comunidad?

English translation

1. What did you think of the workshop?

    probe: What do you think we accomplished in the workshop?
    probe: What do you think we can do to improve future workshops?

2. What do you think would be the next step after this workshop?

3. How was this community selected as a destination for volunteer tourists?

    probe: How was contact made between this community and the organization that recruits volunteer tourists?

4. How were the volunteer tourism projects selected in this community?

    probe: Who was involved in the project selection?

5. How does this community communicate with the organization that recruits volunteer tourists?

    probe: Is there a designated person in the community to facilitate the communication process?
    probe: How was this person selected?

6. Does the volunteer tourism organization provide any type of training for community members? Please describe.

7. Up until now, how have the impacts of volunteer tourism been evaluated in the community?

    probe: Who has been involved in the impact evaluations and why?
    probe: What types of impacts have been evaluated?
    probe: Who decided how they would be evaluated?

8. What do you think of the idea of evaluating the impacts of volunteer tourism in the host community?

Appendix 5. All indicators developed in the five community workshops

The last column displays results of the voting process to determine the top four to five indicators generated in each community workshop. The white rows signify priority indicators that are displayed in Figure 5.1. The gray rows represent indicators that were not among the top four or five for each host community; these are excluded from Figure 5.1. The "theme (1)" column represents the 18 thematic categories illustrated in Figure 4.5. The "theme (2)" column represents the seven consolidated thematic categories illustrated in Figure 5.2. The names of host communities and some words have been removed to preserve anonymity.

Workshop indicator	Case study	Compass point	Theme (1)	Theme (2)	# votes
conservation of biodiversity	#2	N	natural resource management	environmental impacts	13
(-) economic dependence	#5	E	economic dependence	personal income; business development	11
workshop or family counseling to avoid domestic abuse	#1	S	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	10
health orientation	#1	W	health	personal health	10
sustainable development (community, culture, volunteers, nature)	#5	N	community development /organization	community development; infrastructure	10
offering educational exchange scholarships to the best students of the community	#1	E	education	education	9
implementation of forestry projects with native trees	#1	N	reforestation	environmental impacts	9
counseling to combat alcoholism and drug addiction	#1	S	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	9
improving the community (infrastructure, sanitation, education)	#3	E	community development /organization	community development; infrastructure	9
environmental education and awareness	#3	S	education	education	9
environmental education workshops: pollution and managing organic/inorganic waste [2]	#1	N	education	environmental impacts	8
environmental education workshops: pollution and managing organic/inorganic waste [1]	#1	N	environmental health	education	8

respect for our culture, customs and traditions	#1	S	cultural preservation	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	8
more turtles	#3	N	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	8
learning of other languages	#3	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	education	8
satisfaction with working (doing something that is necessary for the community)	#3	W	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	8
community unity (more community wide events)	#5	S	community development /organization	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	8
better quality of life (cars, house)	#5	W	personal income	personal income; business development	8
[funding] education (tools, construction, paying teachers, food, transportation, scholarships)	#2	E	education	education	7
health (medicine, botanical gardens, healthy eating)	#2	E	health	personal health	7
supporting classes for students	#1	E	education	education	7
developing projects to raise small animals (ex. Guinea pigs)	#1	W	agriculture	agriculture	7
learning English	#1	W	education	education	7
family income	#4	E	personal income	personal income; business development	7
planting trees and plants	#4	N	reforestation	environmental impacts	7
learning another language	#4	W	education	education	7
personal training	#3	E	education	education	7
becoming a model for other nearby communities to follow	#5	E	local government	N.A.	7
quality of life (protecting the forest, water and animals)	#5	N	natural resource management	environmental impacts	7
(-) laziness (increasing dependence on free volunteer labor)	#5	S	economic dependence	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	7
[improvement of] the road	#5	S	infrastructure	community	7

				development; infrastructure	
fortifying the community	#2	E	community development /organization	community development; infrastructure	6
training the youth (tourism, environmental protection)	#2	W	education	education	6
need to create a committee to plan volunteer tourism	#4	S	community development /organization	community development; infrastructure	6
higher wages	#3	E	personal income	personal income; business development	6
fewer turtle egg poachers	#3	N	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	6
protecting animals from illegal hunting (ex. iguanas)	#3	N	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	6
cultural exchange (learning food recipes from other countries)	#3	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	6
valuing ourselves and others	#3	W	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	6
improvement of infrastructure (road, computer center, soccer field, health clinic, school)	#5	E	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	6
new business ideas (artwork, organic compost, organic coffee)	#5	W	business development	personal income; business development	6
Workshops, courses (music, dance, food, indigenous language, medicinal plants)	#2	E	cultural preservation	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	5
(-) deforestation	#2	N	reforestation	environmental impacts	5
[fortify] the indigenous language, music and dance	#2	S	cultural preservation	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	5
education (language, culture, materials)	#2	S	education	education	5
support with instructional materials	#1	E	education	education	5
economic support for families	#1	E	personal income	personal income; business development	5

cleaning the trails for the animal rescue center	#4	N	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	5
(-) [increased consumption of] drugs: alcohol and cigarettes	#4	S	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	5
preserving customs and traditions: food, dance	#4	S	cultural preservation	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	5
turtle conservation	#3	S	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	5
income (family, stores) [1]	#5	E	business development	personal income; business development	5
income (family, stores) [2]	#5	E	personal income	personal income; business development	5
crop diversification (coffee, avocado, blackberry, granadilla)	#5	N	agriculture	agriculture	5
new friendships	#5	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	5
empowerment and knowledge of ancestral medicine	#2	N	cultural preservation	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	4
(-) pollution (inorganic waste, rivers)	#2	N	environmental health	environmental impacts	4
cultural exchange	#2	S	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	4
educational exchanges	#2	S	education	education	4
foundation (economy, health, social)	#2	W	community development/organization	community development; infrastructure	4
traveling to other countries	#2	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	4
protecting natural resources without destroying them	#2	W	natural resource management	environmental impacts	4
agro-ecological projects	#1	N	agriculture	agriculture	4
collaborating in community work projects and on farms	#1	N	agriculture	agriculture	4
respect for animals	#1	N	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	4
donations: elementary/high schools, church, women's	#4	E	community development/orga	community development;	4

group, cooperative, CEN, infrastructure, health			nization	infrastructure	
(-) economic dependence	#4	E	economic dependence	personal income; business development	4
opportunities for scholarships	#4	E	education	education	4
removing trash in the community	#4	N	environmental health	environmental impacts	4
(-) deforestation along the trails	#4	N	reforestation	environmental impacts	4
taking care of the animals in the rescue center	#4	N	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	4
community projects: trails, schools, parks, projects with the cooperative	#4	S	community development /organization	community development; infrastructure	4
education/teaching of languages	#4	S	education	education	4
friendship	#4	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	4
educational exchanges and scholarships	#4	W	education	education	4
losing other points of view as a result of only thinking about economic benefits	#3	E	cultural impacts	N.A.	4
increased value placed on the community and nature	#5	W	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	4
scholarships	#5	W	education	education	4
construction of an indigenous-style house [2]	#2	N	cultural preservation	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	3
construction of an indigenous- style house [1]	#2	N	infrastructure	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	3
community (construction, coexistence, cultural value) [2]	#2	S	community development /organization	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	3
community (construction, coexistence, cultural value) [1]	#2	S	infrastructure	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	3
contacts - friends from other countries	#2	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	3
construction of cabins or a hotel in the rainforest	#2	W	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	3

fortifying tourism	#1	W	community development /organization	N.A.	3
creation of personal businesses	#4	W	business development	personal income; business development	3
(-) more food consumption (food, meat, tuna)	#3	N	consumption	N.A.	3
beach clean-ups	#3	N	environmental health	environmental impacts	3
less illegal fishing (turtles, fish, crocodiles, sharks)	#3	N	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	3
(-) social division - isolation of the community	#3	S	community development /organization	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	3
support for community infrastructure	#3	S	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	3
training	#3	W	education	education	3
less local government support [the government may stop supporting the community because it already receives support from the volunteers]	#5	E	local government	N.A.	3
prevention of burning of agricultural land	#5	N	agriculture	agriculture	3
recycling program	#5	N	recycling	environmental impacts	3
reforestation	#5	N	reforestation	environmental impacts	3
[improvement of] the school	#5	S	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	3
opportunity to travel (visit the former volunteers)	#5	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	3
more money (ex. increased profits at stores)	#5	W	personal income	personal income; business development	3
(-) [desire to] buy televisions, cell phones, computers	#2	E	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	2
(-) youth abandon their culture and copy western ways	#2	E	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	2
purchase of local artwork [2]	#2	E	cultural preservation	personal income; business	2

				development	
purchase of local artwork [1]	#2	E	personal income	personal income; business development	2
[achieve a] balance among integration [with volunteers] and family privacy	#2	S	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	2
education	#2	W	education	N.A.	2
health - that all families practice good nutrition	#2	W	health	personal health	2
training for people who have not been able to study	#1	S	education	education	2
(-) [increase in] unemployment, resulting spending cuts	#4	E	personal income	personal income; business development	2
income for the animal rescue center	#4	E	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	2
opportunity to travel to other countries	#4	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	2
cultural exchange	#4	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	2
(-) [increase in] bad habits and related illnesses	#4	W	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	2
more tourism brings more economic growth	#3	E	personal income	personal income; business development	2
(-) more pollution (river, beach, air)	#3	N	environmental health	environmental impacts	2
alternatives for economic sustainability	#3	S	community development /organization	community development; infrastructure	2
(-) creating new conflicts with external social groups (turtle poachers)	#3	S	community development /organization	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	2
entertainment/socialization among volunteers and locals (sports, soccer)	#3	S	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	2
learning [from volunteers] (language, culture, politics)	#3	S	education	education	2
more buying power	#5	E	personal income	personal income; business development	2

purchase of local products	#5	E	personal income	personal income; business development	2
[improvement of] the soccer field	#5	S	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	2
[improvement of] the health clinic	#5	S	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	2
(-) volunteers complain about eating local food; need to buy food in the city	#2	E	consumption	N.A.	1
construction of a water tank	#2	N	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	1
re-use, recycling and re-utilization of materials	#2	N	recycling	environmental impacts	1
(+,-) communication/lack of integration	#2	S	community development /organization	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	1
having more domestic volunteers	#2	S	cultural impacts	N.A.	1
production of cacao, fish farming, cultivating peach palm and short cycle crops	#2	W	agriculture	agriculture	1
training (workshops)	#2	W	education	education	1
training in starting businesses	#1	E	business development	personal income; business development	1
appreciation of cultures; cultural exchange	#1	S	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	1
[benefits for] businesses: supermarket, sodas [small restaurants], bar	#4	E	business development	personal income; business development	1
(-) desire for more technology: more theft; community members imitate what volunteers bring	#4	S	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	1
improving the local economy (businesses)	#3	E	business development	personal income; business development	1
(-) more garbage	#3	N	environmental health	environmental impacts	1
less deforestation	#3	N	reforestation	environmental impacts	1

friendship	#3	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	1
appropriate management (coffee farms, local protected area)	#5	N	natural resource management	agriculture	1
all the benefits that the community achieves	#5	S	community development /organization	N.A.	1
[improvement of] the community room	#5	S	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	1
purchase of local natural products	#2	E	personal income	personal income; business development	0
being able to live in a healthy environment	#2	N	environmental health	environmental impacts	0
construction of a house for volunteers and visitors	#2	N	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	0
increasing revenues for stores	#1	E	business development	personal income; business development	0
creating a social fund for the community (with support from volunteers)	#1	E	community development /organization	community development; infrastructure	0
supplying instructional materials	#1	E	education	education	0
utilization of local transportation and communication	#1	E	personal income	personal income; business development	0
strengthening and supporting agricultural work	#1	N	agriculture	agriculture	0
increasing awareness of not polluting	#1	N	environmental health	environmental impacts	0
conservation of nature; protection of the páramo [high altitude grasslands]	#1	N	natural resource management	environmental impacts	0
workshops and projects to reduce pollution and manage recycling programs	#1	N	recycling	environmental impacts	0
language exchange	#1	S	cultural exchange with volunteers	education	0
less selfishness	#1	S	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	0

future generations are sociable and not racist	#1	S	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	0
learning about the culture of the volunteers	#1	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	0
community murals with nature landscapes	#4	N	infrastructure	community development; infrastructure	0
better community organization—increased economic benefits from volunteer tourism	#4	S	community development /organization	community development; infrastructure	0
teaching of dance	#4	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	0
meeting the ideal partner	#4	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	0
(-) feelings of superiority/complaints about the simple lifestyle or life without modern comforts	#3	W	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	0
prevention of deforestation	#5	N	reforestation	environmental impacts	0
prevention of the hunting of birds and mammals	#5	N	wildlife conservation	environmental impacts	0
learning the language, culture and cuisine [of the volunteers]	#5	W	cultural exchange with volunteers	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	0
(-) imitating the customs of foreign volunteers	#5	W	cultural impacts	cultural exchange; sociocultural impacts	0

(-) = *indicates an indicator of a negative impact*
[1], [2] = *denote indicators that were categorized into two distinct themes [theme (1) column]*

Appendix 6. Ranking of questionnaire indicators based on usefulness values

All questionnaire respondents ranked the usefulness of each indicator from one to five. Names of organizations were removed to preserve anonymity. The table is divided into the four compass categories. The average usefulness value for each indicator is displayed in the right column. The top four to six indicators from each compass point are included in Figure 5.1. One exception is the "nature" category, where nearly all indicators had similar usefulness values. Only the top seven are included in Figure 5.1 for reasons of brevity.

Economic Indicators	**Usefulness values provided by five questionnaire respondents**					**Average**
Vocational/professional training programs for community members	4	4	4	5	5	4.4
Economic opportunities for women/disadvantaged groups	4	5	3	4	5	4.2
Economic opportunities for host families	4	5	5	3	4	4.2
Tourism expenditures that stay within the community	3	4	4	4	5	4
Employment opportunities for community members	3	4	4	4	4	3.8
Locally-made marketable products	2	4	4	4	4	3.6
Availability of highly-skilled jobs	2	3	4	4	5	3.6
Income distribution within the community	3	3	3	4	5	3.6
Creation of local businesses	2	4	3	5	3	3.4
Per capita income	2	1	4	4	4	3
Local business ownership	1	3	2	5	2	2.6
Local business revenues	1	3	3		3	2.5
Nature Indicators	**Usefulness values provided by five questionnaire respondents**					**Average**
Community participation in conservation/natural resource decision-making	5	5	5	5	5	5
Degree of community participation in conservation activities	5	5	5	5	5	5
Protecting biodiversity	5	5	4	5	5	4.8
Protecting natural areas/forests	5	5	4	5	5	4.8
Funding for conservation initiatives/protected areas	5	4	5	5	5	4.8
Infrastructure for conservation areas/protected areas	5	4	5	5	5	4.8
Community knowledge of conservation/ecological issues	5	4	5	5	5	4.8

Local community attitudes towards the environment	5	4	5	5	5	4.8
Site attractiveness/potential for other forms of tourism	5	4	5	5	5	4.8
Restoring natural areas/forests	5	5	4	4	5	4.6
Sustainable use of natural resources	5	5	4	4	5	4.6
Environmental sanitation/waste management	5	5	3	5	5	4.6
Water quality/clean water availability	5	4	4	5	5	4.6
Staffing for conservation areas/protected areas	5	3	5	5	5	4.6
Assisting captured/injured wildlife	5	5	4	3	5	4.4
Conducting environmental assessments	5	4	4	4	5	4.4
Social indicators	**Usefulness values provided by five questionnaire respondents**					**Average**
Engagement of the community in community-improvement projects	4	5	5	5	5	4.8
Engagement of the community in community-level decision-making	4	5	5	4	5	4.6
Community tourism planning	4	4	5	5	5	4.6
Dependency of the community on foreign assistance	4	5	5	4	4	4.4
Community infrastructure	4	5	4	4	4	4.2
Continuance of traditional cultural activities	4	4	5	4	4	4.2
Community visioning/goal-setting	4	4	4	4	5	4.2
Social cohesion	4	4	3	4	5	4
Rate/type of criminal activity	4	3	4	1	5	3.4
The rate of migration to/from the community	4	4	3	1	4	3.2
Personal well-being indicators	**Usefulness values provided by five questionnaire respondents**					**Average**
Educational programs for schoolchildren	4	5	5	4	5	4.6
Satisfaction of community members with volunteer tourism program	4	5	5	5	4	4.6
Satisfaction of community members with community life	4	4	4	5	5	4.4
Environmental education for the community	4	5	4	4	4	4.2
Access to health care services	4	5	4	3	5	4.2
Local people's ability to share their cultural knowledge	4	4	4	5	4	4.2
Local people's ability to share their	4	4	4	5	3	4

ecological knowledge						
Capacity-building/training programs	4	4	4	4	4	4
Physical health of community members	4	4	4	4	3	3.8
Standard of living for community members	4	4	4	4	3	3.8
Access to internet/information	4	3	4	4	3	3.6

Appendix 7. Workshop-derived indicators omitted from Figure 5.2

Indicator	Compass point	Theme (if categorized)	Reason for omitting
less local government support [the government may stop supporting the community because it already receives support from the volunteers]	E	changes in local government	rarely mentioned and does not correspond to predominant themes
becoming a model for other nearby communities to follow	E	changes in local government	rarely mentioned and does not correspond to predominant themes
(-) volunteers complain about eating local food; need to buy food in the city	E	increased consumption of non-local food	rarely mentioned and does not correspond to predominant themes
(-) more food consumption (food, meat, tuna)	N	increased consumption of non-local food	rarely mentioned and does not correspond to predominant themes
fortifying tourism	W		too vague
all the benefits that the community achieves	S		too vague
having more domestic volunteers	S		not an indicator of impact of volunteer tourism
losing other points of view as a result of only thinking about economic benefits	E		too vague
education	W	education	too vague
more tourism brings more economic growth	E	personal income; business development	describes a process, not an indicator