

Reproduction for sustainable GIs

The fourth phase of the quality circle, reproduction, consists of ensuring that both natural and human resources used in the production of the GI products are reproduced, improved and preserved, in order to allow long term economic, social and environmental sustainability of the system. This encompasses social and economic reproduction (redistribution of value and remuneration), as well as preservation of natural and cultural resources over time.

For this purpose, it is important to evaluate carefully the impacts of the code of practice on local resources over time, during the set up of the qualification phase. This should allow evaluating negative effects and/or economic, social and environmental changes. It may then be important to reinforce or extend the collective strategy and/or to consider possible changes to the rules themselves to be able to bring about benefits to the entire territory.

The reproduction phase is therefore favourable to assess the impact of the GI system and to develop it with a sustainable development perspective (chapter 4.1). The next chapter provides illustrations explaining the reasons and the process for making the rules evolve (chapter 4.2). One strategy to increase sustainability is to extend the benefits outside the GI production system to all the territory: local stakeholders may use the reputation of the GI product to attract people in the GI territory and sell other products and services (chapter 4.3).

4.1 Key factors for sustainability

Introduction

In order to ensure the reproduction of local resources for a sustainable GI system and for all the territory, even outside the production area, it is important to assess the impacts of the rules (code of practice) and the collective actions undertaken over time. Expected positive impacts on the economic, social and environmental dimensions are not automatic, and negative effects can appear, depending on the way the system is set up and managed.

Reproduction of local resources and sustainability

Reproduction encompasses social, economic and environmental sustainability. Regarding the economic component, reproduction is linked essentially to distributive aspects. The value created by means of remuneration activities, should be fairly distributed along the value chain, between the local production system and the external one, and between different actors involved in the production process, in order to remunerate each actor according to their contribution to the value creation process.

With regard to the environmental component, reproduction means ensuring the preservation or even the improvement of natural resources, by guaranteeing the equilibrium between exploitation and development over time, while maintaining or increasing biodiversity.

With regard to the social and cultural components, reproduction means promoting traditions and cultural heritage, reinforcing the sense of local identity and self-esteem of traditional ways of living that are endangered by rural exodus, poverty, lack of information and access to markets.

The impacts of GI products on the local economy, society, culture and environment, vary greatly according to the characteristics of the production system. Certainly not all GI systems exert the same positive impacts on sustainable development. The intensity (how much?) and direction (positive vs. negative) of the impacts strongly depends on the rules and actions that local and non-local actors undertake around the GI product (see case study 1).

Being aware of possible negative impacts

The potential of a GI product for sustainable development, as part of the quality virtuous circle, should not undermine the fact that it can generate negative effects under certain conditions, and awareness of this fact is important in order to prevent or minimize negative externalities.

Regarding economic and social aspects, negative impacts may relate to the exclusion of certain stakeholders, because they can't meet the requirements of the CoP. These

exclusions could affect smaller firms located in less favoured production areas. Additionally, powerful 'external' actors may succeed in extracting local resources and added-value from the production area, thus undermining its development. Unbalanced collective organization and the impossibility of some producers to actively participate in the decision-making process, may worsen social relationships among local producers along the value-chain or potentially exclude some producers from benefiting from the GI product's reputation.

With regard to environment, negative impacts can also be the result of the rules established in the CoP. For example, loose rules (low requirement level or unclear boundaries) may lead to the substitution of local specific resources with standard and/or external ones in order to simplify the production process. This may increase production and resource productivity or lower production costs, but lead to a loss of biodiversity and of the GI product specificities. The intensification of production methods and product specialisation (monoculture) may lead to the over-exploitation of some specific resources (water, land) or even affect the quality attributes and the specificities of the GI product.

Case Study

Case study 1: Rural development issues ROOIBOS HERBAL TEA (South Africa)

Rooibos herbal tea (see also case study 4 in chapter 2.3) is endemic to a part of the country and considered as part of the South African patrimony. The identification and qualification process for the GI highlights a number of conflicting issues related to sustainability. The main motivation of leading producers for developing a GI was to fight product usurpation, risk of delocalization of the activities and to address the rapid increase in demand. However, defining a common strategy was not easy. Some considered that the GI initiative should enhance small-scale producers' integration in a perspective of social sustainability. This vision was not shared by all stakeholders and



the GI initiative even created conflicts and modified the relative power positions of different actors. Eventually, stakeholders realized the importance of maintaining a rich living tradition and sustained local identity. Environmental problems linked to the production system also emerged and these will have to be dealt with to ensure long-term sustainability of the production system. In this process, intervention of public actors might contribute to promoting inclusion and other issues relevant to the territory and society.

Source: Bienabe, E. et al, 2007.

Key factors for sustainability

Local actors are at the core of the system outcome for sustainability as a result of their role and level of empowerment, their motivations, the social capital and the awareness on issues concerning social equity and environmental preservation. Undeniably, these factors influence whether the objectives of the three pillars (economic, social and environmental) can be met and which of the three in particular. The building up of the process and the collective management are the basis of the positive effects. However, networking activities between private and public actors, as well as the strength and the nature of the “common vision”, will surely influence the strategies surrounding the GI product. These strategies can either be oriented towards the efficiency of the supply chain or more extended territorial approaches (see chap. 4.3).

Collective action can support participation and a fair distribution of the benefits by setting inclusive rules of representativeness and decision-making, as well as assisting producers with conflict resolution. Training courses and education, information and dissemination, technical and financial assistance, are all actions that may lead to a more balanced power distribution and active participation. Information activities and participation in collectively managed marketing initiatives may stimulate producers' pride and knowledge. The GI collective organization should interact with a wider network composed by other stakeholders (private and public), with the specific scope of managing and guaranteeing local resources reproduction.

In order to preserve natural resources, it is necessary to manage them collectively and to have the right to access specific common regulation. The management of natural resources requires principles such as clean water conditions and biodiversity preservation, which justifies the positive action of GI products in sustainable production systems. Some changes in the CoP may envisage protection of the local environment, cultural heritage and traditions (See chapter 4.2).

Social networks in GI systems represent different groups of stakeholders who are involved at different levels of the production process, such as research and education institutions, public bodies, consumer associations, non-governmental organizations, etc. The relevance of a social network is not only from a social point of view but also from an economic point of view. Keeping these networks alive allows the GI system to be more sustainable and to better understand the need to develop actions at the local level.

Assessing sustainability

It is crucial that local actors set up a monitoring and controlling system in order to evaluate the impact of their strategies and actions on local resources and sustainability, comparing individual and collective aims with the outcomes of their actions over time. Local actors should consider the evaluation of the impacts of the CoP and the collective and individual initiatives, as a learning process conducted over time, over the virtuous quality circle. The evaluation process results permit an adjustment of the norms and implementation of new initiatives.

The implementation and discussion of the evaluation should be collective. The results of the analysis may be useful to activate solutions and remedies in order to guarantee long-term sustainability.

4.1

The evaluation activity is all but simple, considering the many actors involved and interested in the GI product, each with different aims and expectations. When evaluating the effects, we must consider at least two different levels:

1. The local production system point of view, that should account not only as a simple sum of individual positions, but also for collective issues. In fact the collective success of the GI system may come from the outcome of divergent individual positions: some producers may have improved their economic and social position while other producers may have suffered. Therefore, it is important to analyze the diversified effects produced on the different typologies of producers.

2. A wider “public” point of view. The positive impact on local producers’ economic and social position may hide some negative effects “outside” the local production system. Producers who have been excluded from the benefits of the GI reputation (being located outside the delimited production area or who may not have sufficient technological, financial or information resources to use the GI), thus threatening social cohesion at the local level.

The accountability for positive effects of the GI system is a very important issue. Local actors should measure and trace performance of the GI system with regard to collective values (social issues, environment, biodiversity preservation, etc.) and be able to communicate these effects outside the local production system, both to consumers and to other relevant actors (public authorities, environmental associations, etc.).

In order to assess the impacts, a conceptual scheme may be useful to evaluate as a whole (see box 1): the actions individually and collectively undertaken to develop and manage the GI product as well as the balance of economic, social and environmental sustainability issues.

Case study 2: Social and environmental sustainability CHERRY OF LARI (Italy)

According to consumers' renewed interest in environmental and cultural traditions linked to food, producers started to set up and manage a network of actors interested in supporting the GI system for Cherry of Lari.

Many local agencies that are not part of the cherry production or value chain have been involved in the valorization strategy: the Lari Municipality, the Local Cultural and Tourism Associations, the Province of Pisa, the Tuscan Regional Administration, the local Chamber of Commerce and the Slow Food Association. These actors are interested in connecting the image of the cherry to other rural amenities, such as landscape, environmental quality, art, culture and traditions, in order to promote the area. The involvement of these actors outside the supply chain has increased the awareness of the cherry producers and as well as the economic and cultural value of the cherry, while strengthening

their will to improve the quality image of the product. Other actors include some agents external to the local production system who have been undertaking research activities aimed at preserving the many native cherry tree varieties (National Research Council, ARSIA-Tuscan Region, Universities of Florence and Pisa). A growing concern for better preservation of biodiversity stimulated the involvement of these actors. Collective initiatives were promoted for technical, agronomic and marketing aspects. A collective brand and a collective processing plant for producing jams has been set up, as well as some educational initiatives with local primary schools on the cherry's history. Riding on the wave of this renewed enthusiasm and producer cohesion, the local Municipality was influential in constituting a National Association of Cherry Municipalities, dedicated to reinforcing research and promotional activities for cherries across Italy. Overall, the qualification process has delivered numerous benefits. It has reinforced solidarity and cohesion between farmers by making producers meet when no association was previously active in the area. The producer association represents the current interests of producers in their negotiations with agencies and institutions. Finally, the qualification process, by encouraging the defence and promotion of the cherry, acted as a catalyst for the involvement of other local and non-local actors. The qualification process stimulated collective action in this case.

Source: Marescotti A. 2003.



BOX 1 : SOME QUESTIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY EVALUATION

Economic sustainability

- Did the GI system increase the product's reputation on the market over time?
- Did the production volume and incomes grow as a result?
- Did it create new marketing opportunities? Did marketing relationships improve?
- To what extent are local actors actually receiving economic benefits from the GI reputation? Did local employment increase?
- What are the main obstacles that producers face in marketing their products?
- To what extent is the legal protection of the GI helping producers to improve their income?
- What are the main obstacles for respecting the code of practice? What are the consequences?
- Did consumer knowledge and reliance on the GI product improve?
- What is the impact of the GI product's initiatives on the local economy? Did the acquired reputation of the product benefit other local actors outside the value-chain?

Sociocultural sustainability

- Which producers benefit the most? And the least?
- How are economic benefits distributed along the value-chain? Are there any bottlenecks?
- To what extent do firms take part in the initiatives set up by the collective organization?
- Did local producers improve in technical, managerial or relational skills?
- Are local actors effectively taking part in decisions and actions around the GI product?
- Do we have an equitable distribution of the benefits between the GI producers?
- Are there any gender equality issues?
- Has communication within the GI system improved?
- Are there any conflicts that have emerged following the initiatives surrounding the GI product?
- Are workers' rights sufficiently respected?
- Are local actors aware and proud of their knowledge, traditions and work, as well as cultural identity and way of living?
- Is local culture and production traditions threatened or negatively affected by the functioning of the GI system?

Environmental sustainability

- Have the rules of the code of practice and the individual and collective actions implemented preserved or improved local natural resources?
- Do the initiatives around the GI products threaten local natural resources?
- Are there any problems with water pollution or scarcity linked to GI production process?
- What are the impacts on biodiversity preservation? Do the initiatives of the GI product threaten local specific plant varieties, local breeds, agro biodiversity or landscape?

PRACTICE

Think about the issues raised in this chapter in relation with your situation.

Answer the questions

- 1) Referring to box 1 of this chapter, answer the questions on social, economic, and environmental sustainability.
- 2) In which area (social, economic, environmental) could your GI system improve the sustainable approach of the reproduction cycle?
- 3) How do you think you can improve this area?

4.2 The evolution of rules over time

Introduction

Different factors influence the GI system: the characteristics of producers, the local environment, the production techniques, consumer needs, retailers' requirements and the legislative obligations that evolve over time. In this perspective, the rules defining GI products may also change, in order to face challenges and adopt new strategies. The local community should validate this development and the modifications in the code of practice (CoP). Local stakeholders are still entitled to suggest changes that further define the CoP, under the condition that the link between the quality of the product and the territory does not change or become threatened by the new rules.

Living products

Indeed, GI systems are not static: they should evolve to take into account the developments of the market and to ensure the reproduction of local resources in a sustainable perspective, that's why evolution of the CoP should always be possible.

It is important to consider that local products are constantly evolving but what makes their specific quality should remain the same after the local producers have defined it. Therefore, some elements in the CoP are key characteristics to maintain the unique originality of the product and its image for consumers; other minor points of the CoP may change, if the management of the GI and the community of producers ensure a meticulous technical evaluation and consensus.

The reasons the rules change

What are the reasons that make the rules change? There are several factors that bring about changes to the rules and can affect different components of the CoP (Definition of the product - raw material and process - delimitation of the area).

1. The rules agreed on in the CoP no longer fit market demand

- If the initial rules are too strict, they may not allow for a sufficient quantity to be sold on markets:

This is the case of GI for meat "Pampa Gaucho da Campanha meridional" beef in Brazil that restricts the production capacity to only a few animals per week. The rules create high barriers to entry in the GI production, especially for small-scale producers. As a result the market impact is low. Some fluctuations in production capacity are possible without changing the overall product. (see case study 11 in chapter 1.4)

- **If the initial rules are too loose**, GI producers may decide to strengthen them in order to enhance higher quality in all products, or incorporate more environmental and social aspects:

For example, the Roquefort cheese made from raw ewes' milk has a high quality natural tradition and image. In order to maintain this reputation and the corresponding quality expected by consumers, breeders in the Roquefort GI management council decided to ban the use of silage feed. They decided to write down this rule into their CoP.

- **Consumer preferences can change**, this may create the need for some adaptations in the production process:

For example, in the case of Prisuttu (ham) in Corse (France), as a result of the trend of consumers to ask for less-salty products, a discussion about the minimum contents of salt for the ham maturing has been conducted between local producers. The use of salt was originally the only way of product conservation, but as cooling facilities are now available, the use of less quantities of salt for maturing the product may even allow for an improvement in the quality (aromatic expression) of the final product.

Case Study

Case study 3: Increasing market demand and resource shortage can lead to the modification of the rules TEQUILA (Mexico)

In the case of Tequila from Mexico, since the establishment of the first official standard (1949), the constraints of production have been eased by different changes in the CoP in order to take into account production and markets constraints.

Agave production is subject to cyclic surplus and shortages. During periods of shortage the ratio of agave for the distillation was reduced to 70 percent in 1964, and then to 51 percent in 1970. Concomitantly a high quality segment was created with 100 percent agave-based Tequila. From 1997 to 2000 the blue agave population decreased drastically by 50 percent, following a fungal infection and an early winter frost. This scarcity of agaves was exacerbated by the contemporary skyrocketing demand for Tequila in domestic and international markets (particularly in the United States and Europe). So in the year 2000, the companies proposed to reduce the agave sugar content to 30 percent, but it was not accepted by the government in order to protect the reputation of the product and avoid conflicts with farmers.



Source: Bowen, S. 2008.

2. Some new scientific information or available technical innovations may facilitate the production process while keeping the basic features of the GI product

- **New scientific information** that permits a better description of local resources.

On the basis of precise qualitative studies, some adjustments have been brought to the original delimited area of Champagne French AOC in 2007, after a long local deliberation process.

- **Technical innovations**, not originally foreseen but then widely adopted by producers and that do not impact on the specificities of the final GI product may need to be introduced in the CoP.

For example, mechanization in wine harvesting has been widely adopted in most PDO wine-producing areas in France. It has been shown not to jeopardize the quality and characteristics of the end product and therefore it has been accepted.

3. Stakeholders want to enhance the system sustainability.

- **The sustainability assessment** in the reproduction phase leads the local community and producers to change some rules to take into account more environmental and social issues.

Beaumes-de-Venise is a famous French protected denomination of origin producing a famous white muscatel wine. The GI management body acted to modify the production rules, in order to forbid vineyard plantation on the wood-planted slopes around the village. These areas will be protected and become part of a communal preservation area. In this way, they ensure soil protection and maintain the beautiful landscape, which is candidate to become part of Unesco as a “cultural landscape”.

4. General changes in the global environment:

- **Climatic changes** may mean that schedules and even some technical activities will need to be adjusted.

Changing the rules

The link between the product and its territory may be continuously under re-interpretation in the light of changes in the economic and social, local and global environment. The producers should act to guarantee that the authenticity of the product is kept over time, in particular that the local specific resources used in the production process are reproduced in order to keep the unity of the product characteristics.

The rule-setting mechanism should therefore allow for evolution of the product. However, this possibility should not dispense the necessary care in setting the rules in the first place. Changes should not be done hastily and must be subject to careful consideration.

The process for changing the rules should follow the same procedures described in part 2, allowing local producers' participation, discussions, and democratic decisions, and after evaluating pros and cons of each change with the help of the external support network.

In the case of protected GI, changes must be done in accordance with laws that regulate the registration and protection of the GIs (See chapter 5.1). Procedures may be more or less complicated according to the countries and over time.

Case study 4: Changing the rules for a GI within a new national legal framework HAM OF UZICE/ZLATIBOR (Republic of Serbia)

The Zlatiborska/ Užiæaka Pršuta (Ham of Uzice/Zlatibor) is a meat product made of smoked beef, produced in the district of Zlatibor, exclusively in the Municipality of Āajetina and more specifically, in the village of Maækat. It is a unique product, which has a long tradition in Zlatibor. Traditionally, the smoked meat of Zlatibor was made with beef and the animals (mainly working animals) used to be 4 to 6 years old before being slaughtered so that the smoked meat retained a strong flavour. Only specific parts of the legs, sirloins, tenderloins and the low end of the back are used for Pršuta.

One semi-industrial producer of Pršuta registered the "Užiæka Pršuta" as a PDO, in 1995 as a state company with the role of coordinating the use among producers, and as a way to reduce constraints to the minimum: absence of conditions regarding the meat origin, no specific practices differentiating the PDO process from any other process. Consequently, more traditional producers sell higher quality products on the market compared to the only official authorised user, which is the semi-industrial company that has since been privatised. In 2006, a new law established the revision of the former registration to guarantee a minimum quality, extend the authorisation for all local users complying with the CoP and make the PDO more sustainable, with a new application procedure. This new application can count on the support of the municipality, IDA, a local NGO, which is in contact with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Intellectual Property Office to re-register the PDO under the new law. Since the beginning of 2007, meetings and working groups have been organized to establish a new CoP, shared by most of the Pršuta producers in the area. In the case of the defined area of primary production and inclusion of the breeding practices in the revised CoP, this could improve economic and social sustainability along the food chain as the product would be more linked to the local place, local breeders will have a stronger negotiation position and a right to benefit from the GI channels. Zlatiborska/ Užiæaka Pršuta could become one of the first registered products under the new Serbian law on PDO/PGI.



Source: Bernardoni P. et al, 2007.

PRACTICE

Think about the issues raised in this chapter in relation with your situation.

Answer the questions

- Do you need to modify your code of practice? Why?
- Which problems could be solved by this modification?
- Does this modification generate a dominant position or increase the bargaining power of certain GI stakeholders?
- Do all producers agree with the modification?
- Will the proposed modification of the code of practice change the characteristics of the GI product? Will consumers accept that modification?

4.3 Extended territorial strategies for increasing rural development

Introduction

Rural development is based on the integration of all the activities located in the area of production, where agriculture is only one of the sectors involved in the process of development and where the environment and local population are important players of the process too. GIs, in this perspective, can represent a valid opportunity to enhance local development and generate a sustainable virtuous circle with positive benefits for the whole community.

Geographical indication as a leverage for extended territorial strategies

GI products, as part of a local system, allow the adoption of extended territorial strategies. This means that local stakeholders can use the GI product, the specific local resources linked to it (local gastronomy, traditions, landscapes, etc.) and its reputation as a tool to increase the competitiveness of the entire local social and economic system, benefiting from its capacity to attract consumers and tourists in the production area and promoting a differentiated basket of local products and services based on the use of local resources. As a result, other economic activities can be developed both by GI producers and by other local firms.

Within an extended territorial strategy, the GI product can benefit from (and also reinforce) the attraction capacity of different local sites. Important tourist locations and attractions (museums, archaeological sites, particular landscapes, ski resorts, etc.) may benefit the marketing of the GI product.

Such a strategy requires effective collective coordination and synergies between different activities to avoid competition for the same resources and conflicts between local firms. It is therefore necessary to consider how a global territorial strategy can be coordinated within sectors.

Investing in rural tourism

Local tourism and GI products present clear synergies, the development of one contributing to the other. This interaction is particularly evident in cultural events organized around products representing a region, as it links traditions, culture or gastronomic itineraries (cheese museum, saffron festival, wine and olive-oil itineraries, etc.). GI reputation can benefit from the local economic and social development. Therefore, actors of the tourism industry can play an important role in supporting the collective promotion of the GI product as an ambassador of the locality, by disseminating information and organizing itineraries for tourists such as a combination of scenic routes and gastronomic stopovers in restaurants or at production site (See box 7).

On the other side, local resources participating in building the specific quality of a product constitute significant resources for tourism as well. Remarkable landscapes shaped by agricultural systems over time, specific native animal breeds or plant varieties, production know-how and traditions can serve as vehicles for tourism attraction.

The development and promotion of a GI product can serve as a starting point for the development and promotion of the entire geographical heritage and related products within a basket of goods. In addition to encouraging the economic development of other local activities, adding value through tourism can facilitate the collective promotion of a product and exploration of new marketing channels. In this perspective, agri-tourism has become a tool for the diversification of farmers' activities, promoting local products and resources through tasting and direct selling to tourists and consumers.

Case Study

Case study 5: Extended territorial strategy: benefiting from the reputation of the GI LARDO DI COLONNATA (Italy)

Lardo di Colonnata (pig fat) is produced in a very small village (Colonnata) in the Tuscan mountains (Massa-Carrara province), with a very specific production process (in particular, maturing the Lardo in marble tubs placed in caves or in cellars, without conditioning) (see case study 5 in chapter 2.3). The Lardo di Colonnata became famous in Italy in the 1990s.

The production area is restricted to the small village of Colonnata which favoured the identification of the product with the village and its population and Lardo became the symbol of the village and the catalyst of a comprehensive local development strategy. Following the growing acquired notoriety and reputation, many other families living in Colonnata, became small and artisanal producers of the Lardo, setting up many other economic activities, too: restaurants, small shops, guesthouses, etc. The Lardo economy also revitalised the tourism activity linked to the visit of the marble quarries close to the village, in the Alpi Apuane mountains. Therefore, many young people that had emigrated to work elsewhere came back to the village to undertake new economic activities, such as opening new restaurants or grocery stores and organizing visits to the marble caves.

Source: Belletti G., Marescotti A. 2006



A typical marble tub for seasoning Lardo di Colonnata



Conditions for setting-up extended territorial strategies

As evidenced above, there are some necessary pre-conditions for activating an extended territorial strategy based on GI:

1. The GI product must represent an element of identity for all local actors (not only those involved in the production process), and assume the role of catalyst in the planning of a comprehensive rural and integrated development strategy.

2. In addition to the reputation of the GI product linked to the territory, the territory should be attractive or have the potential to attract external consumers (tourists), who may enjoy buying typical products (the GI and other local products) and services on the territory itself; this way short distribution channels can maximise the positive economic effects inside the territory.
3. Social cohesion is relevant as well, to support the consolidation of the identity based on the product and enhance linkages between different economic sectors and common projects (for example the organization of a local fair or routes linking production units, tourism sites, restaurants and accommodation, see case study 6)
4. The local resources, natural, cultural, historic, etc., should be very specific and well recognizable by consumers.

Case Study

Case study 6: GI as a tool for promoting the territory Linking local wine and tourism activity - (Brazil)

Goethe wine has been produced in the Urussanga region in Brazil for more than a century, and takes its specific identity from the local wine tradition and the vine variety. The producers, in collaboration with the local government (município), agronomic public services, the state government and the Federal University of Santa Catarina are working for the recognition of their wine through a Geographical Indication. "Vales da Uva Goethe" will be one of the first Geographical Indication registered by the national intellectual property office, under the Brazilian law. The association "PROGOETHE" is also carrying out some rural tourism activities in a dynamic of local development. They propose oenotouristic tours in the area, networking with different local economic activities:

- a visit to a museum presenting the history of wine and the vine culture in the region,
- a church with specific sacred art,
- visit and tasting in Goethe wine cellars
- and meals in a famous restaurant in which they serve the Goethe wine.

Thanks to this kind of tourist activities, the economy of the whole area is benefiting from the fame and the recognition of the wine.



Source: www.progoethe.com.br/atrativos.php

Involving local stakeholders for extended territorial strategies

In order to develop an extended territorial strategy, it is necessary to involve other local stakeholders in the process of adding value. It is important to organize meetings within the local community in order to explain the process of developing and promoting the specific quality of the product and to show that it is also an opportunity for the territory as a whole as a result of interactions with other economic and social networks.

Therefore, there is a need for public support and involvement of local public actors in terms of facilitating the integrated development strategy, involving different sectors and social groups, and providing for an enabling environment that not only considers economic and business aspects, but importantly social, cultural and natural environment aspects. In successful cases, the rural community, private sector, and different levels of government, can contribute to the reproduction or the improvement of local specific resources and to the generation of opportunities to other economic and social activities by working closely together as partners with common goals and reinforcing social cohesion.

This interaction between sectors, in particular agriculture and tourism, is not only relevant at the local level, but it should also be considered at the national level (see case study 7). Indeed, public and private policies for tourism could highlight the gastronomic heritage and facilitate the emphasis of local products in restaurants inside and outside the territory.

Case Study

Case study 7: Linking GIs to rural tourism development (Morocco)

In Morocco, GI products have recently been used as a starting point for mobilizing a wide range of stakeholders into developing tourism in rural areas. This is the case for products such as saffron and argan oil. Some tourist routes have been developed around the theme of saffron and argan oil production, with visits to the villages, introduction to the production techniques, tasting sessions and the possibility to buy the products. Some village groups, supported by NGOs have even developed infrastructures to receive tourist for longer periods letting them spend a few nights in the villages. This has encouraged villagers to invest in the cleanliness and hygiene of their village. This is part of "sustainable tourism" networking, that is promoted through website (www.tourisme-atlas.com) to allow international and national tourists to choose their destination linked to typical products territory, among saffron, argan oil and rose routes, identifying the attractions, accommodation and restaurants.

This development project is supported by different actors:

- Agence de développement social du Maroc
- NGO Migrations et développement
- French Agency for Development
- European commission



Source : FAO, 2006. and www.tourisme-atlas.com

PRACTICE

Think about the issues raised in this chapter in relation with your situation.

Answer the questions

Engaging in the territory

- Do you know your territory?
- What are the activities of the product chain that are located within the territory?
- What are the activities that share resources in the territory? How does coordination work?
- Is the reputation of your product linked to the reputation of the territory?
- What is the knowledge plan (communication, training, etc.)? What are the challenges and the opportunities in order to develop them?

Tourism Potential

- Is your production system attractive for tourists? Why?
- What is the potential for rural tourism/agri-tourism development (attractiveness of the region, site of interests, restaurants, hotels, etc.)? Are there any possibilities for farmers to host tourists at production sites?
- Are the local public actors aware of the rural development potential of the GI products? Are they informed or involved in the development of the GI scheme?
- Are any external consumers coming to the area? Who are they?
- What are the main advantages and constraints?
- What could we do in order to develop direct sales or promotion of the product in restaurants and hotels (improved packaging, selling point, contracting with hotel and restaurants, etc.)?

