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The Appreciative Inquiry Process in Pro-poor Tourism Planning and Development: Experiences from Nepal

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Tourism Management

at Lincoln University

by Lhakpa Tenji Lama

Lincoln University
2012

The Appreciative Inquiry Process in Pro-poor Tourism Planning and Development: Experiences from Nepal

by

Lhakpa Tenji Lama

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (UN, 2000) aimed to halve the 1990 global poverty level of people living on less than a US dollar a day, by 2015. Tourism, as one of the largest economic drivers in the world, is considered to have the potential to make a significant contribution to achieving this goal. Poverty reduction is possible only when the host country retains maximum profit from tourism and ensures that the benefits from tourism reach the poor sectors of society.

Various planning approaches have been used to develop tourism in order to address poverty reduction goals; one such approach is Pro-poor Tourism (PPT). PPT has a specific focus to generate maximum benefits for people living in poverty. One relatively recent approach to PPT planning and development is Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI is considered an alternative to traditional ‘problem solving’ approaches and focuses especially on strengths and successes of individuals, organisations and communities.

This research explored the relevance of the AI process in PPT in Nepal, and examined the contribution of AI to local people’s participation in PPT planning and development in rural areas. Nepal has been using AI in tourism planning and development for more than a decade. However, to date, no empirical studies have been conducted to assess AI’s effectiveness in pro-poor tourism planning and development. This research is expected to contribute to the literature by filling the gap from theoretical, as well as practical, perspectives. It also provides context to policy makers and planners to develop appropriate policies to maximise tourism benefits to the local people, including the poorest.
Two communities (Junbesi and Pattale), at different stages of tourism development in Nepal’s Solukhumbu district, were used as case study sites where the AI approach was implemented. The research applied qualitative approaches to reveal the experiences of local residents, and both district- and national-level experts in tourism planning and development processes. The local people’s perception indicates that the poorest people in the communities are likely to benefit less from tourism due to lack of skills and capital. However, despite this finding the study also shows that AI has potential to become an effective planning tool to promote PPT, provided there are adequate strategies and means in place to address existing challenges such as political instability, socio-cultural stratification, resource availability, and the local context.

Keywords: Pro-poor tourism; Appreciative Inquiry; community participation; participatory approach; tourism planning; Nepal
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<th>Description</th>
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<td>ACAP</td>
<td>Annapurna Conservation Area Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Appreciative Inquiry</td>
</tr>
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<td>ALDM</td>
<td>Appreciative Learning and Development Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPA</td>
<td>Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Constituent Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>Central Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Community Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>District Development Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>DNPWC</td>
<td>Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation</td>
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<tr>
<td>FG</td>
<td>Functional Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GO</td>
<td>Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIDS</td>
<td>International Institute for Sustainable Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoTCA</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Mountain Spirit</td>
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<tr>
<td>MUVC</td>
<td>Multiple-use Visitor Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Planning Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTB</td>
<td>Nepal Tourism Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLA</td>
<td>Participatory Learning and Action</td>
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<td>PPT</td>
<td>Pro-poor Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRA</td>
<td>Participatory Rural Appraisal</td>
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<tr>
<td>RRA</td>
<td>Rapid Rural Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>Netherland Development Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>STDC</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism Development Committee</td>
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<td>STDS</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism Development Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STDU</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism Development Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMI</td>
<td>The Mountain Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRPAP</td>
<td>Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environmental Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNWTO</td>
<td>United Nations World Tourism Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>VDC</td>
<td>Village Development Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organisation</td>
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<td>WWF</td>
<td>World Wildlife Fund</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a planning tool for Pro-poor Tourism (PPT) development at the community level. It also critically examines AI’s contribution to PPT development in developing countries, such as Nepal.

Tourism has become one of the fastest growing industries in the world. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) reported that the total international tourist arrivals have more than doubled within two decades, from 438 million in 1990 to 940 million in 2010 (UNWTO, 2011). UNWTO (2009) has predicted that there will be more than 1500 million international arrivals by 2020. Globally, as an export category, tourism ranks fourth after fuels, chemicals and automotive products. However, for many developing countries, tourism is one of the main income sources and the primary export category, creating much needed employment and development opportunities (UNWTO, 2009). Tourism involves diverse activities with both positive and negative social, economic and environmental consequences for destination regions. It is important to develop sustainable tourism in order to mitigate negative impacts and facilitate positive social, economic and environmental development for destinations (Rogers & Aitchison, 1998).

As mentioned above, tourism is an important sector in many developing countries because of its potential to assist in poverty reduction. Globally, poverty reduction has become one of the challenges of the 21st Century. It is estimated that 1.2 billion people live in extreme poverty (WTO, 2004). The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (UN, 2000) has targeted halving the proportion of people living on less than a US dollar a day by 2015. It is widely acknowledged that there is considerable potential for tourism to help address poverty alleviation. However, tourism-based poverty alleviation is possible only when the host country retains more profit from tourism and ensures that more of the benefits from tourism reach the poor sectors of society (Ashley, Roe, & Goodwin, 2001). It is surmised that tourism can create opportunity to generate new sources of revenue in rural areas where three quarters of the world's poor people live (UNEP & WTO, 2005).

As Gunn (1988) and Williams (1998) suggested, without tourism planning there is the risk that tourism activity will be unregulated, formless and haphazard, and likely to lead to a
range of negative economic, social and environmental impacts. Nepal (2003) also made a similar point that without proper tourism planning and management, such development would lead to unequal benefits among the local people; this would increase the gap between the rich and the poor, as well as deterioration of the cultural and ecological landscapes. The inclusion of local people as participants in the planning process is an important aspect of tourism planning and development to ensure that any benefits are shared. The PPT concept is one of the approaches in tourism that aims to “increase the net benefit for the poor from tourism, and ensure that tourism growth contributes to poverty reduction” (Ashley, et al., 2001, p. viii).

1.2 Appreciative Inquiry in PPT planning

This research is focused on how Appreciative Inquiry (AI) contributes to people's participation in PPT planning and development at the community level. AI is one of the recent approaches used in tourism planning at the community level in different countries, including Nepal. Raymond and Hall (2008) stated that AI is perceived to be a significant development for the field of action research, organisational management, community planning, as well as providing a new evaluation technique for field research. AI is an approach which has emerged as a counter to traditional problem solving approaches, and focuses on the strengths and successes of individuals, organisations and communities. The appreciative approach has also been used for baseline information collection, need identification, planning and evaluation of tourism programmes in Nepal.

For this research, two villages (Junbesi and Pattale) in the Solukhumbu district of Nepal, having contrasting exposure to tourism, were selected as the sites for a case study. There are two reasons why the author became interested to conduct this research in these sites. First, he was born in the Tumbuk village, a remote village near Junbesi in Beni VDC in the Solukhumbu district of Nepal. Although the village is not on the main tourist trail, locals are involved in trekking and mountaineering activities during the tourism seasons. In addition, the PPT project was implemented in these villages by using AI as a planning and implementation tool. Second, the author first heard about AI in 1994 when he became one of the founding members of Mountain Spirit (MS), a non-governmental organisation supporting mountain people to conserve their environment and culture. MS has been using AI as the main framework for developing community plans, projects and also for project evaluation and capacity building. Personally, the author was involved in conducting a
number of socio-economic surveys, baseline surveys, community planning, community-based tourism planning, and village ecotourism planning by using appreciative and participatory approaches for various national and international organisations. His familiarity with these villages and involvement in AI process made him interested to understand the perspectives of local residents and experts about the approach and its application.

1.3 Research problems and objectives

AI has been used in PPT as well as community-based tourism development in Nepal for more than a decade. It is considered, by some, that the approach has been effective in increasing community participation in planning and development processes (Bhattarai, Adhikari, & Bamford, 2006; Raymond & Hall, 2008). However, there has not been any study conducted to assess AI’s effectiveness in PPT planning and development. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, with limited livelihood options for economically marginalised people. Tourism has been identified as one of the industries that can generate income to support development initiatives in the rural areas (Rogers & Aitchison, 1998). Tourism planning can play an important role to maximise the tourism benefits through community participation in destination region. According to Simmons (1994), community involvement in tourism planning is important for two main reasons: (1) tourism directly impacts the local destination area, and (2) community residents are important parts of the “hospitality atmosphere” in the destination (p. 98). Since AI has been used in tourism planning and development, it is essential to assess its effectiveness and to understand more fully how this approach contributes to tourism planning processes. The outcome of this research will be useful in assessing various aspects of the AI process in PPT planning and development process in the rural context of Nepal. The overarching goal of this research is to assess the effectiveness of AI application in PPT planning and development, and to analyse how this approach contributes to people's participation in planning and development processes. More specifically, this research is based on the following objectives:

a) To critically review the concept of PPT planning and development;

b) To critically review the concept of AI and its application to tourism in general;
c) To evaluate the effectiveness of AI in PPT planning from the perspective of local residents, district and national level experts in Nepal; and

d) To investigate the extent to which local residents are engaged in tourism planning processes through two Nepalese community case studies with contrasting exposure to tourism development.

1.4 Thesis organisation

The thesis is presented in seven chapters. Chapter 2 describes the case study sites with an overview of the socio-cultural, economic and political situation in Nepal. In particular, the chapter provides a description of the two case study sites (Junbesi and Pattale) to help contextualise the study sites.

Chapter 3 reviews the relevant literature on PPT and participatory approaches, including AI. It provides the overview of the concept, its principles, strategies and practice of PPT in different geographic locations, and reviews various participatory research and evaluative approaches related to empowerment and community participation. The chapter also reviews the concept of AI, including its principles, the differences between AI and problem solving approaches, the 4-D model in AI, and the application of AI in Nepal. The chapter is illustrated by reference to the Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme (TRPAP) project.

Chapter 4 describes the methods used for this research. It includes the context of selecting a qualitative and case study approach, with details on site selection, participant selection, semi-structured interviews, and other data sources. The chapter also discusses data management and analysis techniques, limitations of the methods, and ethical issues.

The results and discussion are divided into two chapters: Chapter 5 presents the results and discussion on local residents’ perspectives on tourism planning and development, and Chapter 6 provides the expert participants’ perspectives on AI in tourism planning and development.

Finally, Chapter 7 reappraises the research objectives with a summary of findings, identifies possible future research, and provides some concluding remarks.
Chapter 2: Study Setting

2.1 Background

Nepal is a land-locked country situated in South Asia. Its boundaries extend north to the Tibet Autonomous Region of China, and east, south and west to India (see Figure 1). In 2008, the 240-year old Shah monarchy was abolished and Nepal was declared a secular federal democratic republic. Although Nepal is a relatively small country in comparison to its neighbours, India and China, it has a diverse landscape that ranges in altitude from 70 metres above sea level in the south to 8,848 metres in the north. Nepal is known for its exotic natural and cultural diversities. Eight of the ten highest mountains in the world, including Mount Everest, are located in Nepal (MoTCA, 2010).

![Figure 1: Map of Nepal (adapted from www.maps.google.co.nz)](image)

According to the population census in 2001 (CBS, 2001), Nepal’s total population was 23 million; it is estimated to have an annual growth rate of 2.25 per cent, and believed to have reached to about 28 million in 2010. The proportion of male and female are almost equal. The preliminary estimate of the per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was US$562 for the year 2009/10. One fourth of the population (25.4%) lives below the poverty line (CBS, 2010), making Nepal one of the poorest countries in the world. The global Human Development Index (HDI) for Nepal is 0.553, which ranks the country at 144th out of 182 countries. HDI varies widely within Nepal; on average, urban dwellers have a much higher HDI than their rural counterparts (0.630 vs. 0.482) (UNDP, 2009). According to the
National Planning Commission (NPC) report (2010), the level of poverty in Nepal was 31% in 2005, and was reduced to 25.4% by 2009. The NPC report stated that the decrease in poverty levels was due to increases in literacy rates, wages for agricultural workers, migration from rural areas to the cities, and foreign remittances, as well as developments in commercial vegetable farming during this period.

2.2 Social composition
Nepal is rich in natural and cultural diversity. The population census of 2001 listed more than 100 types of castes and indigenous groups with a similar number of languages. Nepal’s main religious groups are Hindus (80.62%) and Buddhists (10.74%), followed by Muslims (4.20%), Kirats (3.60%) and Christians (0.45%) (CBS, 2001). Mongoloid, Caucasoid, Dravidian and Proto-Australoid are the four major social groups in Nepal, and can be distinguished by their physical features. Brahmin and Chhetri are the dominant caste groups, belonging to the Caucasoid racial group. Caucasoid is divided into four different caste groups. Mongoloid, Dravidian and Pro-Australoid are known as indigenous people and do not belong to the Hindu caste system (Bhattachan, 2008). The Muluki Ain (Civil Code) in 1854 formally codified the caste system in Nepal, with Hindu stratification of social relations in four different rungs. The priestly Brahmins were regarded as the high caste, followed by the warrior/ruling class, Chhetris. The casteless with differing cultural and religious groups were accorded as middle rung. The Dalits were at the bottom of the hierarchy and were traditionally neglected, discriminated against and treated as an untouchable caste. Though untouchability was legally abolished in 1963 with the revision of the Civil Code, it is deeply rooted and still prevalent. The Panchayat system (1960-90) adopted a mono-cultural policy with the slogan of ‘one nation, one dress and one language’ as a state policy, despite the fact the country consists of multi-cultural society (Bhattachan, 2008; Mahat, 2005). Mahat mentions that the indigenous, ethnic and marginalised communities started to voice demands for their rights after the People’s Movement of 1990 and the restoration of multiparty democracy in Nepal, which ultimately led to a change in the political system.

2.3 Recent social and political history
Nepal went through various political systems over the years. The autocratic Rana prime ministers ruled for 104 years, from 1846 to 1950, which was considered a dark period for the country. The Rana rulers used their power for family enrichment by exploiting all
national resources to promote self-interest and personal wealth. The country was closed to foreigners, and it remained cut off from the rest of world until the establishment of democracy in 1950. However, the multi-party democracy in 1950 could not work effectively due to the lack of unity and confusion among the political parties. This caused King Mahendra Shah to dissolve the elected government and introduce a party-less Panchayat system in 1960 (Mahat, 2005). The People’s Movement in 1990 abolished the Panchayat system and restored multi-party democracy with constitutional monarchy. However, the cultural discrimination and political exclusion of marginalised groups (such as the Dalits, indigenous nationalities, the Madhesi people of the southern Terai region, and women) continued in the post-1990 political era (Lawoti, 2010). Using these socio-political and economic discriminations as a pretext, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) declared a ‘People’s War’ against the state in 1996, marking the beginning of a violent insurgency. Many people from marginalised groups joined the Maoists army, and the movement gradually expanded in most parts of the country. More than 16,000 people died, and thousands of people were displaced or injured (Bhattachan, 2008; Lawoti, 2010). The economy suffered due to infrastructure destruction and a deteriorating security situation. Tourism, along with other economic sectors, was heavily impacted. Hoping to quell the Maoist movement, King Gyanendra dismissed the elected government in October 2005. The King’s action backfired. The political parties formed an alliance with the Maoist rebels to sign a 12-point agreement in 2005. This agreement provided the Maoists with an opportunity to suspend their armed revolt and join mainstream politics. This also led to a popular people’s movement in 2006 that ended the rule of the monarchy. The first meeting of the Constituent Assembly (CA), formed after the election in April 2008, officially abolished the monarchy on 28 May 2008, and declared Nepal as a Secular and Federal Democratic Republic (Lawoti, 2010).

Although the two-year term for the CA was extended to four years through political consensus, the CA was dissolved automatically on May 27th 2012 without fulfilling its mandate of producing a new constitution. The Government of Nepal has declared a new CA election date for 22 November 2012. To date, however, opposition parties have refused to take part, and instead demanded the formation of a national consensus government. It was the hope of the Nepali people that a new constitution would instil peace and stability in the country and allow for economic prosperity. If political stability can be maintained,
there is considerable potential for tourism development and consequent improvements to livelihoods in Nepal.

2.4 Tourism in Nepal

Nepal is well known for its natural beauty, the mighty Himalayas, its diverse culture, and friendly people. These qualities make Nepal a unique tourism destination, and the potential for growth and development of the tourism industry is promoted at the highest levels (MoTCA, 2010). Nepal has high economic potential in areas such as hydropower and tourism development. While the former requires large inputs of financial and technical resources, tourism can be developed with a smaller level of investment (Nepal, 2003).

Historically, Nepal’s tourism era began from 1950, after the establishment of democracy in the country. Before this period, foreigners were not allowed to enter Nepal. The first ascent to the top of the world’s highest mountain, Mount Everest, by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa in 1953 attracted the attention of the global community (Nepal, 2003). Since then, the number of tourists gradually increased and reached 334,000 arrivals in 1992, compared to 4000 visitors in 1962. There have been fluctuations in the number of tourist arrivals due to political instability in Nepal (see Figure 2). The ‘Visit Nepal 1998’ campaign was launched by the Nepal Government, and received 491,000 visitors, which was the highest number until that period. The number of visitors gradually decreased from 2000, and dropped to 275,000 in 2002 due to lack of safety and security during the unstable political period in the country. However, the number of visitors gradually increased again from 2003, and the growth peaked in 2010 at 602,000. The beginning of the peace process in 2005 showed a positive impact on the number of visitor arrivals in Nepal (MoTCA, 2010). The Government of Nepal declared 2011 as ‘Nepal Tourism Year’, and aimed to attract one million international arrivals during that year. The campaign was not able to meet the target due to ineffective promotion (Republica, 2012), but the number of tourist arrivals still increased to 730,000, the highest ever number of visitors in Nepal’s tourism history.

Tourism plays a significant role in the economy of Nepal. It generated over US$329 million in 2010, which contributed roughly 3.2% of the country's GDP and 7.5% of the total foreign exchange earnings (MoTCA, 2010). As per the records of MoTCA (2010), the average length of stay of visitors is 12.67 days and the average expenditure per visitor per day is US$43.20. Guiding activities associated with trekking and mountaineering are major
economic activities for many local people in the mountain areas of Nepal. Therefore, the potential of spreading the economic benefits of tourism to local communities in mountain areas is significant. However, tourism development in Nepal has been achieved with little planning and investment, which is arguably the reason for the haphazard growth and development of this sector (Nepal, 2003).

![Figure 2: Tourists arrivals in Nepal from 1962 to 2010 (Source: MoTCA, 2010)](image_url)

The most popular activities enjoyed by visitors in Nepal are trekking and mountaineering. Annapurna, Sagarmatha (Everest), Langtang, Dolpo, Humla and Helambu are the major trekking destinations. Similarly, mountaineering is a major attraction for adventurers from different countries. Other tourist activities include village and cultural tours, elephant safaris, biking, river rafting, kayaking, bungee jumping, parasailing, mountain flights, and hot air ballooning (DNPWC, 2010).

Administratively, the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoTCA) is the main governmental authority for tourism in Nepal, and is responsible for the formulation of the Tourism Act and Regulations. The Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), an autonomous and organised institution established in 1998, plays the role of Nepal’s national tourism organisation. The NTB is in a partnership between the Government of Nepal and the private sector tourism industry. The overall objective of the NTB is to develop, expand and promote tourism by establishing Nepal in the international market as a tourist destination (NTB, 1998). The NTB develops its operational plans based on ‘Tourism Vision 2020’, a
national strategy which aims to improve livelihoods and spread the benefits of tourism (NTB, 2008).

2.5 The district setting

Situated in the northeastern part of Nepal, the Solukhumbu district is one of six districts where the Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme (TRPAP) implemented its programmes (see Figure 3). TRPAP was a multi-national funded project to promote pro-poor tourism (PPT) in the rural areas of Nepal; this is described in further detail in section 3.2.3.1. There are 34 Village Development Committees (VDCs) in the Solukhumbu district. Each VDC has nine wards, each constituting one or more settlements. The Khumbu region, which constitutes three VDCs, is also known as Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park. Located in the northern part of the district, it is a popular tourist destination and receives about 30,000 visitors per year. The Park is popular due to the local Sherpa culture and several high mountains, including Mt Everest (8,848 m), Lhotse (8,516 m), Cho-Oyu (8,201 m), Gyachukhang (7,952 m), Nuptse (7,276 m), Pumori (7,161 m) and Amadablam (6,812 m). The region to the south of the Park is known as Solu, where 95.1% of the district’s population lives. The total population of the Solukhumbu district is 119,901, with Rai (31.93%), Sherpa (20.80%), Chhetri (18.80%), Tamang (8.51%) and Magar (4.35%) as the major cultural groups (CBS, 2001).

The total land area of the district is 3,397.76 km², which is divided into high mountains, high hills, and mid hill regions. Khumbu, or the Everest region, is in the high hill region, and is inhabited by the Sherpa people. In the past, agriculture (mainly potato and barley), animal husbandry and trading were the major occupations, but now tourism has become a major income source for the local people in the Khumbu region. Solu is in the mid hill region with fertile land, where the majority of people are involved in agriculture. Rice, corn, millet, wheat, mustard, potato and fruit (such as apple, orange, pear, guava and banana) are the major agricultural products. Pikey Peak, Ratnange Peak, Chiwang, Junbesi, Thupenchholing, Jyalsa and Pattale are some of the areas tourists visit in Solu (DDC, 2002).

TRPAP developed and promoted the Solukhumbu Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail in 2005 in order to distribute tourism benefits in the southern region of the Solukhumbu district (see Figure 3). The easiest way to get to this destination is by taking a flight to Phaplu from
Kathmandu, and begins the 12 day trek. The trail passes through the villages of Ghunsa, Pattale, Junbesi, Takshindu, Basa and Chyangmiteng, which are the major settlements on this trail. Sengi Phuk, Beni and Dudhkunda are out of the settlement area, where only camping treks are possible (TRPAP, 2005). There are alternative routes to get to this destination (for example, from Jiri, Rumjatar and Lamidanda). The Jiri trail passes through the Junbesi and Takshindu villages, and was the traditional route to the Everest region. Junbesi and Pattale, the villages along the Solukhumbu Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail, were selected as a case study site for this research. The following section provides a brief overview of these two villages.

Figure 3: Solukhumbu District map with Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail
(Adapted from Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations, Nepal, n.d)
2.5.1 Junbesi village

Junbesi, located in the west of the Solukhumbu district at an altitude of 2,575 m, is a beautiful Sherpa village located in a green picturesque valley (see Figure 4). Administratively, it lies in ward number 4 of Beni VDC, covering a total area of 3.66 km² (DDC, 2002). To get to Junbesi, one must fly into Phaplu and walk about three hours from the landing strip, or drive to Jiri, and hike for three days, crossing the 3,630 m Lamajura Pass on the way. There are 40 households in Junbesi, with a total population of 237 (DDC, 2002). Many of the men are involved in leading treks, some operate lodges, teashops, shops, and almost all have fields to farm in the area. The village is rich with Sherpa culture and tradition. Junbesi has a high school built by Sir Edmund Hillary where more than 250 students from surrounding villages come for their high school level education. Junbesi has a sub-health post¹, a public library, a police post, and telephone facilities.

Figure 4: Junbesi village in the front, with Numbur Himal in the background.

Junbesi was first exposed to international tourism during the 1950s, which was also the beginning of Nepal’s tourism era. It is located along the trail to the Mount Everest region, which was one of the popular trekking routes in the past. Prior to the establishment of the Lukla airport in 1970, this was the only trail to the Everest region. The trail begins with a one-day bus travel from Kathmandu to Jiri, followed by at least three days’ walk from Jiri

¹ Sub-health posts are government-funded health centres established at local level. The centres provide primary health services such as family planning and safe motherhood, immunisation, prevention of emerging diseases and referring patients to upper level health institutions.
to reach Junbesi, and another three days’ walk to Lukla. Nowadays, the majority of visitors fly directly to Lukla from Kathmandu to start their trek up to Mt Everest. Due to the political instability after 1996, the number of visitors on this route decreased further. Annually, there were only about 2000 tourist arrivals in Junbesi (Poudel, 2007).

Junbesi is one of the major attractions along the Solukhumbu Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail promoted by TRPAP. There are comfortable lodges (10), teashops (3), grocery shops (3), and camping site facilities. Junbesi village itself is an attraction for tourists because of the local Sherpa culture and tradition. Besides this, the Tashi Thongmon monastery, the Thuptenchholing monastery, and Sengi Phuk are some of the important religious sites and attractions for tourists. Dumji, a traditional festival, is celebrated every year during March or April at the Tashi Thongmon monastery and attracts tourists from many different countries.

2.5.2 Pattale village
Pattale is situated in the southwest of the Solukhumbu district, and is in ward number 2 of Kerung VDC. This village has 48 households, with a total population of 561. The total land area is 5.13 km². Sherpa, Tamang and Magar are major ethnic communities in Pattale (DDC, 2002).

The village is situated on the border between Solukhumbu and Okhaldunga districts, and is six hours’ walking distance from Salleri, the Solukhumbu district headquarters, and is seven hours from the Rumjatar airport in the Okhaldunga district. A dirt road was constructed from Okhaldunga to Phaplu, and passes through Pattale. The road construction makes it easier for local and visitors to travel. The Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail developed by TRPAP passes through Pattale village. The trail from Pattale then goes off the road towards Jhapre and Junbesi. Visitors can also get to Pattale from Phaplu or Okhaldunga by local transport to start their trek.

Agriculture is the traditional occupation for majority of the local people of Pattale village. Small businesses and tourism are the other two economic activities that help supplement local incomes. In the past, Pattale was a well known marketplace for local people for both Solukhumbu and Okhaldunga. Even today, the Friday weekly market in Pattale is the main
place where local people and those from surrounding VDCs purchase food, clothes and other essential items.

Pattale’s diverse culture and its magnificent views of the mountains are the major tourist attractions. It is located below a hillock, which is a suitable viewpoint to see mountain ranges, including Mt. Everest (see Figure 5). Pattale is home to the important Hindu religious site of Changesthan, where many local devotees arrive for religious reasons. Similarly, many domestic visitors from Okhaldunga and lower Solukhumbu come to see the mountain ranges. The blossom of rhododendrons in surrounding forest during March and April adds to the beauty of Pattale (DDC, 2002).

Figure 5: Pattale village

Since it is a newly promoted trail, less than 500 visitors arrive in Pattale annually. There are five lodges in Pattale catering to visitors. These lodges are like homestays, where the owners prepare and serve local food in a homely environment. There are 13 teashops and five other shops that are run year-round. However, the weekly market is the main business day for shopkeepers and teashop owners. Pattale has a lower secondary school, a police post, a sub-health post, and communication facilities, such as mobile and landline telephones.
2.6 Chapter summary

The social and political landscape of Nepal has altered significantly over the last 60 years, with consequential effects for communities, the environment and the economy. Nepal was declared as a secular and Federal Democratic Republic in 2006. The country is rich in natural and cultural diversities, which have become major attractions for international tourists and this tourism is central to the national economy of Nepal.

In order to capture and redistribute the emerging economic benefits of trekking tourism, a PPT project was implemented by TRPAP in Solukhumbu, a district famous for its high mountains and diverse cultures. The villages of Junbesi and Pattale, as part of the TRPAP, make useful case studies for the present research, particularly considering their contrasting experiences of tourism.

The next chapter provides the review of literature relevant to this research.
Chapter 3: Literature Review

The review of literature presents the theoretical background of this research and reflects the conceptual materials relevant to the research questions and objectives.

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section (3.1) describes the Pro-poor Tourism (PPT) concept, its principles and application. The second section (3.2) provides an overview on participatory approaches, including Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI). Sub-section 3.2.1 provides a brief introduction to the differences between RRA and PRA, followed by a description of empowerment and community participation in tourism planning and development. Sub-section 3.2.2 explains AI in more details, including its application, principles and differences with a problem-solving approach. Sub-section 3.2.3 explains the application of AI in Nepal, with a brief introduction of Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Project (TRPAP), which applied AI in tourism planning in Nepal.

3.1 Pro-poor Tourism (PPT)

When poverty reduction became one of the challenges for the world, the United Nations came up with Millennium Development Goals to reduce 1990s world extreme poverty level to half by 2015. The proportion of people whose income is less than one US dollar a day is considered as extremely poor. The one-dollar-a-day poverty line is compared to consumption or income per person, and includes consumption from own production and income in kind (UN, 2000). Tourism is believed to be one of the largest global economic drivers that can play a more active role in achieving such an ambitious goal set by the United Nations (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). Similarly, “compared with many other sectors, tourism provides a growth market for countries with a high incidence of poverty, in which they have comparative advantage. Tourism also has potential to generate income directly for the poor in places where they live” (WTO, 2004, p. 5). The tourism industry makes important contributions to the economies of developing countries, particularly to foreign exchange earnings, employment, and GDP. For example, tourism's contribution to GDP varies from 3-5 per cent in Nepal and Kenya, to 25 per cent in Jamaica; contribution to employment is estimated at 6-7 per cent in India and South Africa (Department for International Development [DFID], 1999a).
The tourism industry is the amalgam of various elements. The relationship between these elements is known as tourism ‘system’. According to Leiper (1989), the tourism system consists of five basic elements: tourists, generating regions, transit routes, destination regions, and a tourist industry operating within physical, cultural, social, economic, political, and technological environments. Therefore, tourism management and planning is crucial to ensure that local residents, including economically marginalised groups, benefit from tourism development.

Tourism has both positive and negative economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts. According to Weaver and Lawton (2010), the basic aim of tourism management at the destination is to maximise positive impacts, while minimising its negative impacts. They, as well as other researchers such as Hall and Lew (2009) and Rogers and Aitchison (1998), have analysed tourism impacts using three categories: economic, socio-cultural and environment. Rogers and Aitchison’s research is particularly important for this study. Their research is focused on discussing various impacts of tourism in the southern Solukhumbu and Sagarmatha National Park in the Khumbu region of Nepal, as illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Tourism impacts after Rogers and Aitchison (1998)

Similarly, the demonstration effect is a widely used concept in the tourism literature to discuss the impact of tourism on host culture and behaviour. It refers to the changes incurred in hosts’ cultures and behaviours resulting from their interaction with tourists (de Kadt, 1979). Fisher (2004) argues that the demonstration effect is a vague concept, and suggests that there may be different factors other than tourism as a cause of change. Therefore, Fisher proposes four forms of demonstration effects based on exact imitation,
deliberate imitation, accidental inexact imitation, and social learning, which is considered to be helpful in distinguishing tourism from other factors.

Various tourism concepts have been developed to manage tourism impacts for the benefits of visitors, host communities, and environment. According to Ashley, Boyd and Goodwin (2000), interest in ‘green’ tourism, ecotourism and community tourism has grown rapidly among decision-makers, practitioners and advocates from the 1980s. All of these niche sectors try to ensure that tourism does not erode the environmental and cultural base on which it depends. But these niche sectors generally do not consider the full range of impacts tourism might have on the livelihoods of the poor. As a result, an alternative approach, labelled Pro-poor Tourism (PPT) emerged (Ashley, et al., 2001). PPT is an approach to industry that generates net benefits for the poor, not only economically, but also socially, environmentally and culturally. PPT involves a range of stakeholders operating at different levels, from the micro to macro scale. Stakeholders include government, the private sector, and civil society, as well as the poor themselves who act as both service providers and decision makers in the process (Ashley et al., 2001).

Although the concept of PPT sometimes overlaps with sustainable tourism, there is a difference in the core focus. According to Ashley et al. (2001), sustainable tourism emphasises the triple bottom line of environmental, economic and social sustainability. However, Ashley et al. (2001) argues that the emphasis of the tourism industry has been on environmental sustainability. For example, the main thrust of Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry is on environmental sustainability. PPT also overlaps with both ecotourism and community-based tourism, but it is not synonymous with either. Ecotourism focuses on providing benefits to people, but is mostly concerned with conservation of the local environment. Likewise, community-based tourism focuses on the involvement of communities in tourism planning and development, which are central components of PPT; but PPT involves more than a community focus – it requires mechanisms to provide opportunities for poor people to be involved at all levels and scales of operation (Ashley, et al., 2001).

The proponents of PPT have developed principles which emphasise the participation of poor people in tourism, a holistic livelihood approach, distribution of benefits and costs, flexibility, commercial realism, and learning from experience (see Table 1). Case studies
compiled by Ashley et al. (2001) on PPT in Southern Africa, Uganda, the Gambia, Nepal, Ecuador, the Caribbean and the Czech Republic explored the benefit of partnerships involving the private sector and communities and community-based tourism enterprises. The case studies in South Africa, Ecuador and Uganda found that the PPT programmes followed the strategies of direct efforts to develop partnerships between the private sector and communities. Similarly, the case studies in Namibia and Nepal indicated that PPT was implemented with the emphasis on involvement of local people in planning, and efforts were made to secure the changes in policy that would facilitate PPT development.

Table 1: Pro-Poor Tourism principles (Source: Ashley et al., 2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
<td>poor people must participate in tourism decisions if their livelihoods priorities are to be reflected in the way tourism is developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A holistic livelihoods approach</strong></td>
<td>the range of livelihood concerns of the poor – economic, social, and environmental, short-term and long term – need to be recognised. Focusing simply on cash or jobs is inadequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distribution</strong></td>
<td>promoting PPT requires some analysis of the distribution of both benefits and costs – and how to influence it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flexibility</strong></td>
<td>blue-print approaches are unlikely to maximise benefits to the poor. The pace or scale of development may need to be adapted; appropriate strategies and positive impacts will take time to develop; situations are widely divergent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commercial realism</strong></td>
<td>ways to enhance impacts on the poor within the constraints of commercial viability need to be sought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning</strong></td>
<td>as much is untested, learning from experience is essential. PPT also needs to draw on lessons from poverty analysis, environmental management, good governance and small enterprise development.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

However, the DFID (1999a) report argues that PPT is not necessarily an appropriate intervention for poverty alleviation in all countries. It will be feasible only when there is an existing and growing tourism product, government commitment to pro-poor growth (or, specifically, to PPT), a large number of poor people with tourism assets, and opportunities for intervention which would complement other activities. This indicates that developing countries with high potential for tourism development can apply tourism as a poverty alleviation tool. This requires a high level of community participation in tourism planning and development.

A critical question for many donor agencies, academics, governments, tourism organisations, and conservation bodies around the world is the extent to which tourism can be used as a tool for poverty alleviation (Scheyvens, 2011). There is a lack of convincing evidence to justify the claim that increased tourism development will create significant benefits for the poor (Chok, Macbeth, & Warren, 2008). Tourism has been criticised for
creating a disparity between ‘the have’ and ‘the have nots’, as tourism development often has been found benefitting rich and powerful people (Britton, 1982; Brohman, 1996; Nepal, 2003; Rogers & Aitchison, 1998). The DFID (1999b) report warns that PPT cannot be expected to benefit all poor people equally, and “some will lose” (p. 4). The ‘fairly poor’ are more likely to get tourism benefits than the ‘poorest’ in society, who lack the “capital and skills to exploit the economic opportunities, but are likely to suffer the negative impacts on local resources” (DFID, 1999b, p. 1).

Participatory approaches have been used in tourism development and planning for many years with the aim of involving all types of people in the communities. These approaches focus on enabling the capacity of local communities in development processes. The next section describes the participatory approaches including the application of AI in tourism planning and development.

### 3.2 Participatory approaches to tourism planning

Participatory approaches evolved since the mid 1970s as an alternative to previous centralised (top-down) approaches. Thereafter, participatory approaches became popular. Participatory approaches aim to involve the community or concerned stakeholders throughout the process of development (Chambers, 1998). Participatory approaches are still dominant in the development process throughout the world, including Nepal. Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) are well known participatory approaches. Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is becoming popular as a recent innovative approach in the development field (Chapagain, 2004). AI has been used in community participation and empowerment for development and planning in different sectors, including tourism, throughout the world.

The next section presents an overview of RRA and PRA, and discusses the differences between the two approaches, followed by a brief explanation of empowerment in relation to community participation.

#### 3.2.1 Development of RRA to PRA

RRA began as a better way for outsiders to learn and gain information from rural people about their conditions in the 1980s (Chambers, 1992). An ‘outsider’ here refers to the researcher or an expert who goes to rural areas for information collection. According to
Chambers, RRA mainly focuses on collecting information where outsiders go to rural areas and collect information, take it away and process it. In this process, the outsiders have the central role, and information is collected for their use. This shows that the process is more expert-driven and intended for learning by the outsiders. For example, RRA follows methods such as semi-structured interviews; transect walks with observation, and mapping and diagramming and outsiders play dominant role while conducting these methods (Panzeri, Lama, & Sherpa, 2009).

In the late 1990s, in order to address the concerns on the role of experts on behalf of rural people in RRA methods, the PRA approach emerged with the concept of involving rural local people in research, planning and development. PRA is distinguished by the use of local graphic representations created by the community that legitimise knowledge and promote empowerment (International Institute for Sustainable Development [IIDS], n.d.). Chambers (1998) stated the importance of PRA with the emphasis on “changes in the behaviour and attitudes of outsiders, to become not teachers but facilitators, not lecturers but listeners and learners” (p. xv). In PRA, experts convene and facilitate the appraisal process where local people are the main participants in the process – they map, diagram, observe, analyse and act (Panzeri, et al., 2009).

PRA is one of the methods that have been widely used in different sectors, including tourism planning. Chambers (1992) defines PRA as more participatory than RRA, meaning that the process “enables local people to undertake and share their own investigations and analysis” (p. 13). The goal of PRA is to build the capacity of rural people to conduct their own investigations and analysis to plan, and to own, the outcome as part of the empowerment process.

The major difference between RRA and PRA methods is presented in Table 2. RRA methods basically focus on secondary sources, semi-structured interviewing, and observation. By contrast, PRA methods place emphasis on group discussions, shared visual representation, and analysis by local people. RRA has been a key tool for donor agencies and universities to obtain information from rural people in order to develop plans, projects and publications. By contrast, PRA is mainly used by NGOs and GOs in order to build the capacity of local people for sustainable local activities and organisations.
Table 2: Differences between RRA and PRA (adapted from Chambers, 1992)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differences</th>
<th>RRA</th>
<th>PRA</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period of major development</td>
<td>Late 1970s, 1980s</td>
<td>Late 1980s, 1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major innovators based in</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>NGOs, Government field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main users</td>
<td>Aid agencies, Universities</td>
<td>NGOs, Government field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key resource earlier</td>
<td>Local people’s knowledge</td>
<td>Local people’s capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overlooked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main innovation</td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant mode</td>
<td>Elicitive, extractive</td>
<td>Facilitating, participatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideal objectives</td>
<td>Learning by outsiders</td>
<td>Empowerment of local people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer-term outcomes</td>
<td>Plans, projects, publications</td>
<td>Sustainable local actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The PRA approach still incorporates techniques used by RRA. However, they differ basically in the ownership of information and the nature of process. The major difference between these two approaches is that in RRA, data collection techniques are more verbal and data is collected by experts, while in PRA, data collection techniques are more visual and data is shared, analysed and owned by local people, to encourage their participation in the process (Chambers, 1992).

However, the methods have been criticised since they do not necessarily facilitate genuine participation by stakeholders. For example, participation of rural people in public meetings without any (verbal) input is counted as individual contribution to the project (Cleaver, 1999). Cleaver argues that sometimes participatory methods could be used simply to justify ‘top-down’ decisions by including stakeholders. If there is no real devolution of power to the local level, then in the majority of cases, “most methods remain under the control of outsiders” (Sofield, 2003, p. 93). This type of situation limits the level of community participation in the development process. Tosun (2000) emphasises that implementation of participatory approaches requires a change in socio-political, legal, administrative and economic structures of many developing countries.

There are various frameworks of community participation. The frameworks developed by Arnsstein (1969) and Tosun (1999) are useful to measure the degree of participation of stakeholders in the development process (see Figure 7). The following sections briefly discuss the notion of empowerment and degree of community participation in development processes.
3.2.1.1 Empowerment and community participation

As mentioned above, the major goal of participatory approaches is empowerment of local communities through their participation in development processes. However, questions are raised about empowerment and community participation in terms of who are participating and to what extent they are participating. Empowerment has been defined differently in many disciplines, but is often interpreted as “a process by which people acquire the ability to act in ways to control their lives” (Gauthier, 1993, p. 108, as cited in Bith, 2011). In the context of tourism, empowerment is regarded as enabling communities in decision making, implementing those decisions, taking responsibility for those decisions and actions, and directly benefiting the community or its members from the outcomes (Sofield, 2003). Sofield also comments that there will be difficulties in achieving the sustainability goals of tourism development without empowerment at the community level.

![Figure 7: Typologies of community participation](adapted from Tosun, 2006)

According to Arnstein (1969), citizen/community participation is the “redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future” (p. 216). Community participation tends to assure the involvement of have-nots in decision making who are
excluded from the mainstream development in the society. However, Arnstein (1969) commented that “there is a critical difference between going through the empty ritual of participation and having the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process" (p. 216). Arnstein further commented that participation without devolution of power to communities, who are powerless, is “empty”, which is frustrating. There are different forms of community participation. These forms of participation are briefly defined below using the typologies of Arnstein (1969) and Tosun (1999) (see Figure 7).

Arnstein's (1969) “ladder of citizen participation” is a useful framework to assess community participation in various programmes. The ladder is divided into eight rungs. The bottom rungs, (1) Manipulation and (2) Therapy, are described as “non-participation”, where the intention of the power holders is not to enable the communities in the planning process but to ‘educate’ or ‘cure’ the participants. In this case, power holders advise and persuade the community participants to follow and support their decision by signing the meeting minutes. Rungs 3, 4 and 5 are known as “degrees of tokenism”. At this level, communities provide their views, but there is no assurance that their feedback and inputs are considered for decision making because the right to make a decision is still retained by the power holders. The top rungs, (6) Partnership, (7) Delegated power, and (8) Citizen control are regarded as “degree of citizen power”. This is top level community participation where communities (powerless) obtain the right of decision making and full managerial power.

Tosun (1999) developed a typology of community participation with reference to tourism development process. Tosun mainly divided the level of community participation into three levels: coercive, induced and spontaneous. The explanation of these levels represents a similar concept as Arnstein’s ladder of community participation. Tosun’s model suggests coercive participation as non-participation in Arnstein’s ladder, induced participation as the degree of tokenism, and spontaneous participation as the degree of citizen control. The significance of Arnstein’s ladder is that these three levels of participation are divided into eight rungs, and each rung explains the degree of community participation and also reflects the power relationship between the power holders and the powerless. Moreover, Arnstein’s ladder shows that the community power increases as the rungs progress from Manipulation to Citizen control.
In brief, the RRA approach is intended for learning by outsiders who collect information for the purpose of publication and for a project. In contrast, PRA is focused on enabling rural people’s capacity where outsiders play the role of convener or facilitator. Empowerment and community participation are the major focus of participatory approaches. AI is one of the recent approaches used in community development, as well as tourism planning, in different countries, including Nepal. The following section describes AI and its process and application in tourism planning and development.

3.2.2 Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

In 1986, David Cooperrider (1986) introduced the AI concept in his doctoral thesis on “Appreciative Inquiry: Toward a methodology for understanding and enhancing organisational innovation”. Now the AI concept has been widely used as a methodology for organisational management and community planning in both public and private sectors, as well as in international development efforts (Koster & Lemelin, 2009; Panzeri, et al., 2009; Raymond & Hall, 2008). Shifting from traditional approaches of identifying, analysing problems, and solving problems, AI builds on the strengths of organisations or communities to develop a positive approach in addressing issues (Raymond & Hall, 2008). Various scholars have defined AI in different ways as a theory, a process, knowledge or a philosophy (Bushe, 2007; Grant & Humphries, 2006; Raymond & Hall, 2008). However, Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros’s (2003, p. 3) description provides the following practice-oriented definition, which is widely cited in the AI literature:

Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative, co-revolutionary search for the best in people, their organisations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives life to an organisation or a community when it is most effective and most capable in economic, ecological, and human terms.

Cooperrider et al. (2003, p. 1) also provides the following dictionary definitions as a means of introducing AI:

**Ap-pre’ ci-ate**, v., 1. Valuing; the act of recognizing the best in people or the world around us; affirming past and present strengths, successes, and potential; to perceive those things that give life (health, vitality, excellence) to living systems. 2. To
increase in value, e.g. the economy has appreciated in value. Synonyms: valuing, prizing, esteeming, and honouring.

**In-quire** (kwir), v., 1. The act of exploration and discovery. 2. To ask questions; to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities. Synonyms: discovery, search, and systematic exploration, study.

The proponents of AI believe that conducting an AI simply allows participants to approach difficulties in a more positive manner by focusing on how the situation could be improved, rather than on the problem itself. AI does not necessarily ignore negative or difficult experiences, but reframes problems in a more positive light (Raymond & Hall, 2008). AI is generally considered to have emerged due to the shortcomings of the traditional problem-solving approach. It is argued that the problem-solving approach focuses too much on problems, which hinder social innovation and change (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1999).

According to the proponents of AI, the main aim of this approach is seeking the root cause of success and identifying the existing resources, skill and capacity of individual, organisation and community. They believe that the use of AI allows people to identify the reality, the vision, and the organisational plan of both the community and the individuals (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). In brief, this concept is based on the principle of appreciation and positive thinking, which believes in creating a relaxed and comfortable environment to share ideas and experiences about the organisation or community even in unstable situations (Panzeri, et al., 2009). For example, AI was applied to evaluate a donor-funded project in Sri Lanka working with victims of trauma in an environment of civil war and high security risk (Jacobsgaard, 2003). Jacobsgaard claims that AI was more effective, and information gathered using this approach had richer and better qualities than other approaches.

AI comprises a 4-stage cycle of **Discovery, Dream, Design** and **Destiny**; it is also known as the 4-D cycle. Each phase of the cycle and its application is described in the next sections.
3.2.2.1 Appreciative Inquiry 4-D Cycle

According to Cooperrider et al. (2003), AI constitutes a 4-stage cycle, which begins with *Discovery* (appreciating and valuing), followed by *Dream* (envisioning), *Design* (co-constructing the future), and *Destiny/Delivery* (learning, empowering and improvising to sustain the future). Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003) describe the 4-D cycle as a process to unleash the energy of the positive core for transformation and sustainable success by focusing on the most positive potential of individuals, organisations or communities.

Figure 8 shows how the 4-D cycle can be used as a framework for personal development, partnership or alliance building, and large-scale community and organisation development and planning. Various participatory tools are integrated with AI in different stages of the 4-D cycle. For example, participatory tools like resource mapping, social mapping, mobility mapping, trend line, and seasonal calendar are used in the Discovery phase to explore information. Likewise, ranking and matrixes are used in the Dream and Design phases to prioritise activities (Panzeri, et al., 2009).

![Diagram of the 4-D cycle in AI](adapted_from_Cooperrider_et_al._2003)

**Figure 8: 4-D cycle in AI (adapted from Cooperrider et al., 2003)**

**Discovery Phase:** An extensive search to understand the “best of what is” and “what has been” in organisations or communities. This can be conducted via one-on-one interviews; it may also include focus groups and large group meetings (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom,
According to Cooperrider et al. (2003), the list of positive (or affirmative) topics for this stage is endless: high quality, integrity, empowerment, innovation, customer responsiveness, technological innovation, team spirit, best in class, and so on. In each case, the task is to discover the positive exceptions, successes, and most vital or ‘alive’ moments.

**Dream Phase:** The proponents of the AI approach consider this stage as an energising exploration of “what might be”. After discovering the details in the community, organisation or individual, the participants ‘make dreams’ for the future. This is not subconscious or unconscious dreaming, but rather it is conscious dreaming. It is visualising the aspirations and expected changes of the people in their future. This phase is a time for people to collectively explore hopes and dreams for their work, their working relationships, their organisation, and the world. The Dream phase is both practical and generative. It amplifies the positive core, and challenges the status quo by helping people envision a more valuable and vital future, better bottom line results, and their contributions to a better world (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003).

**Design Phase:** A set of provocative propositions, which are statements describing the ideal organisation or “what should be”. Design activities are conducted in large group forums or within a small team (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). As it is the dream of each individual, organisation or community, they can provide a list of activities that are necessary to achieve the dreams. They will then select and prioritise the activities, and make plans according to the preference. The main purpose of this phase is to make action plans based on the discoveries found in the first phase (Discovery) of the methodology. It is essential to simplify the visions of the organisation and communities, and converting the conceptual dream into defined activities. Then the organisation or communities will make plans and define the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder to achieve the vision (Panzeri et al., 2009).

**Destiny Phase:** A series of inspired actions that support ongoing learning and innovation or “what will be”. The Destiny phase focuses specifically on personal and organisational commitments and the paths forward (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). This is the implementation phase of action plans prepared in the Design phase, and adopt changes if necessary. Cooperrider et al. (2005) state that Design delivers the organisation to its destiny through innovation and action. The Destiny phase delivers on the new images of
the future, and is sustained by nurturing a collective sense of purpose. It is a time of continuous learning, adjustment and improvisation; all in the service of shared ideals. The momentum and potential for innovation are extremely high by this stage in the process. Because of the shared positive image of the future, everyone is invited to align their interaction in co-creating the future. Since the 4-D cycle is a continuous cycle, the Destiny phase would lead to new discoveries of community and organisational strengths, and hence beginning the process anew.

3.2.2.2 The five principles of AI
Cooperrider et al. (2003) present five principles of AI that are considered central to AI’s theoretical basis for organising positive change. These principles claim that it is the positive image that results in the positive action. The principles are briefly defined below:

i. Constructionist Principle
Social knowledge and organisational destiny are interwoven. The proponents of this principle believe that the individual is part of a social system – a person’s behaviour and performance are affected by and exists within socially constructed reality. Human knowledge/learning takes place through interactions with and within a social system. So, appreciative process of knowing is socially constructed and socially determined which believes that words create worlds (Cooperrider, et al., 2003).

ii. Principle of Simultaneity
According to this principle, inquiry and change occur simultaneously. The proponents of AI believes that inquiry brings change because the seeds of change are the things people think and talk about, the things people discover and learn, and the things that provide information and inspire images of the future (Cooperrider, et al., 2003).

iii. Poetic Principle
The proponent of AI believes that human organisations are like an open book where they can choose what they want to study. An organisation’s story is constantly being co-authored. Moreover, pasts, presents and futures are endless sources of learning, inspiration or interpretation. The important implication is that one can study virtually any topic related to human experience in any human system or organisation (Cooperrider, et al., 2003).
iv. Anticipatory Principle

Cooperrider et al. (2003) claims that positive images of the future lead to positive actions – this is the increasingly basic presumption of AI. The most important resource for generating constructive organisational change or improvement is collective imagination and discourse about the future. For example, “much like a movie projected on a screen, human systems are forever projecting ahead of themselves a horizon of expectation that brings the future powerfully into the present as a mobilizing agent” (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008, p. 9).

v. Positive Principle

According to Cooperrider et al. (2008), the momentum for change requires large amounts of positive outlook and social bindings – things like hope, inspiration, caring, purposefulness, sense of urgency, and sheer joy of creating something meaningful together. Organisations, as human construction, are largely affirmative systems and thus are responsive to positive thought and positive knowledge. It emphasises that the more positive the questions used to guide a group building an organisational development initiative, the more lasting and effective is the change.

The major difference between AI and traditional problem-solving approaches is how these approaches address the problems in organisations or communities. The next section explains the differences between AI and traditional problem-solving approaches in detail.

3.2.2.3 Comparing AI and problem-solving approaches

The centralised top-down planning approach was dominant during the 1950s to 1970s. There was no involvement of local people in the planning process. Later participatory approaches, such as RRA and PRA, appeared with the concept of community participation, and placed local people as a main source of information (Chambers, 1992). However, top-down and even more participatory-led approaches focused on identifying problems in organisations or communities, and lacked appreciation of their strengths and successes. The initiators of AI regarded these as ‘problem-solving’ or ‘deficit-based’ approaches in development, and considered AI as an alternative. The problem-solving approaches are criticised because of the emphasis on fixing problems in organisations or communities. The proponents of AI suggest that if planners focus on problems only, they will find more problems, not solutions (Chapagain, 2004).
According to Chapgain (2004), organisations have used the problem-solving approach for a long time. The approach begins with the organisation identifying the problems, which are considered the weak link in its system. Typically, there is a diagnosis, and then alternative solutions are recommended. In contrast, Cooperider et al. (2008) argue that AI challenges the problem-solving approach with an ‘affirmative’ approach, embracing organisational challenges in a positive light. They claim that AI offers an alternative – to look for what is good in the organisation, and embrace its success stories.

Table 3: AI beyond Problem Solving (adapted from Cooperrider et al., 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Appreciative Inquiry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Felt Need&quot;</td>
<td>Appreciating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of Problem</td>
<td>&quot;Valuing the Best of What Is&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Causes</td>
<td>Envisioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;What Might Be&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;What Should Be&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Possible Solutions</td>
<td>Dialoguing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;What Should Be&quot;</td>
<td>Innovating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Planning (Treatment)</td>
<td>&quot;What Will Be&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation is a problem to be solved</td>
<td>Organisation is a mystery (infinite capacity) to be embraced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 3, Problem Solving begins its process with identification of problems or deficit, followed by analysis of causes, analysis of possible solutions, and plans for treatment. The main theme of the deficit approach is to solve problems. Every analysis in this approach begins with questions like, “What is wrong?”, “What are the problems?”, and “What are the causes?” In contrast, AI has a completely different approach. The AI process begins with identification of the best values, followed by vision, dialogue and innovation. It believes that organisations have infinite capacity to be embraced.

3.2.2.4 Critiques of AI

Though AI is considered as an alternative to traditional problem-solving approaches, it is not free from criticism. Collins (2000) labels the AI approach as a “management fad”, whereas Fitzgerald et al. (2001) criticise AI as “Pollyanna-ish” or excessively focused on “warm, fuzzy group hugs” (p. 17). The practitioners of this approach have presented AI as a positive revolution in society, and emphasised only the positive side. This may create
unrealistic expectations among members of the communities in which the approach is applied. Similarly, Reed (2007) labels AI as a method for opportunistic consultants indicating that the approach is initiated by a certain group of people with vested interest primarily to create jobs or consultancy opportunities for themselves. Bushe (2007) argues that focusing on only positive aspects cannot create transformational change; there should be common problems and issues as a basis for such change. Dick (2004) comments that AI literature is “very often evangelical about its own advantages, often dismisses other approaches as deficit-oriented or problem-solving” (p. 427). Although it has been criticised, it is widely used by various organisations throughout the world. Furthermore, there is no evidence of research analysing how local residents’ participation in planning has been assisted by this approach. This research allows further assessment of the approach and in determining the contribution of this less ‘traditional’ planning process. The next section provides a brief description on the application of AI in Nepal.

3.2.3 AI in Nepal

AI was first introduced in the 1990s in Nepal and widely used in community development programmes – mainly by non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The AI concept was exercised during the implementation of projects by The Mountain Institute (TMI) in 1993 for organisational review. Later in 1996, TMI incorporated the idea of AI in different projects, in collaboration with various organisations in Nepal and Sikkim (India). Similarly, Mountain Spirit (MS), an NGO supporting mountain people and communities, incorporated both Participatory and AI approaches for community planning and development in different sectors, including ecotourism and conservation in Nepal, Tibet (China), and Sikkim (India). AI and PRA approaches were integrated to develop the Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action (APPA) methodology for planning (Chapagain, 2004; Panzeri et al., 2009).

In Nepal, NGOs have been actively involved in the social development sector, along with other activities such as resource mobilisation, social mobilisation, awareness, skill development, community infrastructure development, human rights, education and economic development (Timsina, 2010). Likewise with other sectors, there are many NGOs working in the tourism development of Nepal. These organisations support activities such community capacity building, infrastructure development, tourism planning and management, policy development, product development and marketing, and promotion.
of destinations. According to the Social Welfare Council Nepal (SWC, 2011), there were only 17 NGOs in 1978, but by 1990 there were 393. The number of NGOs greatly increased after the restoration of democracy in 1990. The open political system favoured NGOs to work independently in the communities, so the number of NGOs working in different sectors increased extensively. Now, there are about 30,000 registered NGOs in Nepal. NGOs develop and implement their own programmes with the financial support from donor organisations and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs).

There are many NGOs and INGOs using the AI approach at a community level for development programmes, including tourism. AI is being used in different sectors by organisations such as The Mountain Institute, Mountain Spirit, Karuna Management, Plan International Nepal, Pact Nepal, Nepal UK Community Forest Programme, Habitat for Humanity Nepal, Luthern World Service, SAGUN, Danish Volunteer Organisation – MS Nepal, Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), Winrock International, and Pragya Management and Imagine Nepal (Chapagain, 2009; Panzeri, et al., 2009; Tamang, 2002). Many donor agencies, including the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Department for International Development (DFID), and the Netherland Development Agency (SNV), have implemented various projects in Nepal following the AI approach (Panzeri, et al., 2009). For example, SNV Nepal implemented a PPT programme in the Humla district of Nepal, where APPA were used in programme identification and planning at the community level (Saville, 2001). Similarly, The Mountain Institute (TMI) used the APPA methodology in the Langtang Ecotourism Project (Lama, Sherpa, & Lama, 1997). The Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme (TRPAP) was one of the largest tourism programmes that used the APPA methodology for community consultation and planning (Bhattarai, et al., 2006). The next section provides more details on the TRPAP project.

3.2.3.1 Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme (TRPAP)
TRPAP was a joint undertaking of Nepal’s Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA), Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), and Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC). The project was jointly funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Bhattarai, et al., 2006). The project was implemented in Nepal from September 2001 to October 2006 in six districts:
Taplejung, Solukhumbu, Rasuwa, Chitwan, Rupandehi and Dolpa (see Figure 9). TRPAP covered 715 settlements of 48 Village Development Committees (VDCs) in six districts, and benefited over 28,000 households and around 160,000 individuals (Dhakal, Khadka, Sharma, & Choegyal, 2007).

The development objective set for TRPAP project was:

To contribute to the poverty alleviation objective of the government through review and formulation of policy and strategic planning for sustainable tourism development which are pro-poor, pro-environment, pro-women and pro-rural communities (Bhattarai, et al., 2006, p. iii).

Figure 9: The TRPAP districts (derived from www.mapsofworld.com)

The project focused on developing sustainable rural tourism (that is pro-poor, pro-women, pro-environment and pro-community) and, to this end, worked in partnership with multiple stakeholders at all levels, including community interests, local government and national tourism organisations. It developed a mechanism in order to implement the programmes effectively in collaboration with various stakeholders (see Table 4). At the local level, the project formed functional groups (FGs) for the establishment of backward linkages through tourism development. At the VDC level, the project established a Sustainable Tourism Development Committee (STDC) to co-ordinate with the FGs formed within the VDCs. At the District Development Committee (DDC) level, the Sustainable Tourism Development
Section (STDS) was formed. At the national level, a separate unit was established in NTB to collaborate closely with local bodies (Dhakal, et al., 2007).

**Table 4: Mechanism developed for TRPAP implementation**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Organisations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Village level</td>
<td>Functional Groups (FGs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>VDC level</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism Development Committee (STDC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>DDC level</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism Development Section (STDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>National level</td>
<td>Sustainable Tourism Development Unit (STDU)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The project supported the government of Nepal in reviewing and formulating sustainable tourism development policies and strategies, conducting tourism capacity building programmes, preparing district level tourism plans, and establishing sustainable tourism development committees in the VDCs. The project also identified new tourism destinations, and supported tourism infrastructure development and promotion of destinations; spreading the benefit not only in the main tourism destinations, but also in other areas. TRPAP used the APPA methodology in all the VDCs and settlements to identify core activities and future expectations of communities, as well as providing a strategy to achieve them. APPA was also used in monitoring project activities (TRPAP, 2007).

APPAs conducted at the village level resulted in the drafting of five-year rural tourism development and management plans in the TRPAP districts, and supported the construction of multiple-use visitor centres (MUVCs) and other tourist facilities. APPA exercises included identifying different social groups and their issues, prioritising development programmes, assessing community well-being (social, political, economic, natural, cultural, environmental, infrastructure and human resources), and exploring development opportunities and external sources for their implementation (Dhakal, et al., 2007).

The final evaluation report of TRPAP revealed that the project was able to achieve a considerable amount of progress in all key outcomes specified in the project document. The report noted that the biggest external influence on the results of the project was civil unrest and the general decline of tourism during the project implementation, particularly in rural areas (Bhattarai, et al., 2006).
3.3 Chapter summary

Since tourism is believed to be one of the largest economic drivers in the world, it is considered that tourism can contribute in achieving the Millennium Development Goals of poverty alleviation. There are various approaches in tourism that focus on minimising negative impacts and maximising the positive impacts on social, economy and environment. PPT is one such approach that emphasises in generating benefits to the poor people in the society. The core focus of PPT is the poor people and the strategies to assist them. PPT may not apply to all places, but it may be suitable in places that have great tourism potential, like Nepal.

As in other sectors, planning is an important aspect in tourism. Various participatory approaches, such as RRA and PRA, have been used in planning for many years. In the mid 1980s, the concept of AI evolved in the development sector with the concept of positive philosophy. The proponents of the AI approach consider it as an alternative to previous problem-solving or deficit-based approach. The problem-solving approach concentrates on and tries to fix the problem. AI focuses on building on the strengths of the organisation or community to develop a positive approach to addressing the issue. The 4-D cycle in AI is a process of identifying strengths and successes, envisioning the future, developing plans and strategies, and implementing the plans with the involvement of stakeholders. For the purposes of planning processes, AI has been incorporated with PRA tools to develop the APPA methodology. For more than a decade, many NGOs in Nepal have been applying the APPA approach in community development as well as in tourism planning and development. TRPAP was one of the biggest multinational tourism projects implemented in Nepal, utilising the APPA methodology in planning processes at the community level. However, to date, no empirical studies have been conducted to assess AI’s effectiveness in PPT planning and development and its contribution to community participation. This research is expected to contribute to the literature by filling this gap from theoretical, as well as practical, perspectives, by undertaking the case studies in the Junbesi and the Pattale villages where TRPAP implemented the PPT project.

The next chapter provides the description of methods applied in this research, including data collection, analysis and presentation techniques.
Chapter 4: Research Methods

The chapter describes the methods used for this research. Section 4.1 includes the details of the methodological approach used and its justification. Section 4.2 describes the techniques used for data collection and analysis. It includes describing the selection of the research sites, selection of participants, semi-structured interview techniques, data management, and data analysis. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 outline the limitations of the methods and ethical considerations.

4.1 Methodological approach

This research used a qualitative case study approach to collect field data in the Junbesi and Pattale villages in the Solukhumbu district of Nepal.

4.1.1 The qualitative approach

A key feature of the qualitative research method is to describe and display phenomena as experienced by the study population (Ritchie, 2003). Qualitative research is considered distinct from quantitative research, as it mainly involves non-numerical data and does not generally deal with hypothesis testing as an integral part of the research process (Bui, 2009; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). Moreover, qualitative research emphasises human values, interpretative aspects of knowing about the social world and the significance of the investigator's own interpretations and understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Snape & Spencer, 2003). Phillimore and Goodson (2004, p. 4) define the qualitative approach in connection with tourism research, and in general, as follows:

Qualitative approaches offer a great deal of potential, much of which remains largely untapped, for helping us understand the human dimensions of society, which in tourism include its social and cultural implications. With the qualitative approaches, the emphasis is placed upon studying things in their natural settings, interpreting phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them, humanising problems and gaining ‘emic’, or insider’s perspective.

Qualitative research methods generate descriptions in the form of a person’s own written or spoken language and observable behaviour (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). Descriptive data involves a fact-finding activity generally undertaken to assess the opinions, behaviours or characteristics of a specified group, community or population (Chapagain, 2004). There are
certain data collection methods in qualitative research, such as observation methods, in-depth interviewing, group discussions, narratives and the analysis of documentary evidence, discourse analysis and conversation analysis (Snape & Spencer, 2003).

Since this study focuses on assessing the effectiveness of the AI approach from local residents and expert’s perspectives, the qualitative research method is well suited. More specifically, a case study approach was used to get an in-depth understanding of the research participants’ experience and perspectives on AI approach in PPT planning and development in Nepal.

### 4.1.2 The case study approach

‘Case study’ is a widely used research strategy in social science, including tourism research (Stewart, 2009; Yin, 2003). It is “a preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (Yin, 2003, p. 1). The case study approach is appropriate when it is important to understand a particular phenomenon in its own context but not to identify how it functions in other contexts. Therefore, the case study approach is applied when generalisation is not the aim of the research (Kappelle, 2001).

A comparative case study approach was used to obtain the perspectives and experiences of local communities in two Nepalese communities (Junbesi and Pattale). In this research, case studies were useful to understand the effectiveness of the AI approach in PPT planning and development from the perspective of local residents and experts. Moreover, a case study approach was appropriate because the levels of exposure to tourism development in the two communities were different.

### 4.2 Methods used in this study

This section explains the selection of the Junbesi and Pattale villages as case study sites, the selection and recruitment of participants, process of the semi-structured interview, and data collection, management and analysis.

#### 4.2.1 Site selection

Bogdan and Taylor (1975) suggest that “any setting that meets the substantive and theoretical interests of the researcher and that is open for study might be chosen as a
research site” (p. 27). In the context of this research, two different communities, Junbesi and Pattale in the southern part of the Solukhumbu district of Nepal, were selected. Section 2.5 described the case study sites in detail. TRPAP developed the Solukhumbu Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail in 2005, with an objective of spreading tourism benefits in the southern region of the Solukhumbu district. The Junbesi and Pattale villages are located along this trail. Junbesi is on the trail to the Everest region, whereas Pattale is located off the main trekking route. As a consequence, local residents in Junbesi are more exposed to tourism than those in Pattale. Therefore, the data generated from this study was useful to compare and contrast between the two communities, based on different levels of exposure to tourism planning and development.

Additionally, the majority of research activities are concentrated in the Everest region in the northern part of the Solukhumbu district. Since Junbesi and Pattale are less developed, compared to other tourism destinations in Nepal, neither of them has been subjected to excessive research demands. These two village sites were suitable for this research project because PPT projects were implemented using appreciative and participatory approaches in this region.

4.2.2 Participant selection

For this research, 31 participants were selected for semi-structured interviews using purposive sampling techniques (see Table 5). Babbie (2007) defines purposive sampling as “a type of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's judgement about which ones will be the most useful or representative” (p. 184). Key contacts were identified in consultation with the local people and district authorities. They became the first group of participants for the interviews, and subsequent participants were selected via the snowballing technique (i.e. as recommended by interviewees) (Babbie, 2007). All participants were approached personally by the researcher.

The research participants were divided into three categories: local residents, district level experts, and national level experts.
Table 5: Categories of research participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Participants profile</th>
<th>Number interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Local residents</td>
<td>Local villagers, lodge owners, teashop owners, tourist guides, and women groups or clubs</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>District level experts</td>
<td>Experts working for governmental and non-governmental organisations in tourism planning and development at the district level</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>National level experts</td>
<td>Experts working for governmental and non-governmental organisations in tourism planning and development at the national level</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total participants</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local residents

The first category of interviewees was local residents. 21 participants were selected: 10 from Junbesi and 11 from Pattale. Participants were chosen to ensure a balanced and broad based representation of local people involved in the tourism development processes. The interviewees were chosen from local villagers, lodge owners, teashop owners, tourist guides, and representatives from women’s groups and local clubs (see Table 6).

Table 6: Categories of local resident participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Number interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Junbesi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Local villagers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lodge owners</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teashop owners</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Trekking guides</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Women’s group representative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Local club’s representative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All participants were local residents but had different roles. In the participant categories, *Local villagers* mean those who are not directly involved in tourism enterprises, groups or clubs. Participants who run lodges or teashops were categorised under *Lodge owners* and *Teashop owners*. *Trekking guides* refers to those who had exposure to tourism development in different destinations in Nepal while travelling with foreigners. *Women’s group* is a local institution formed for working women and is focused on the overall development of the village. *Local clubs* is community based organisations established with specific objectives for village development, including education, health, environment and skill development. Both *Women’s groups* and *Local clubs* are interested in tourism development in their village.
*District level experts*

Five district level experts were interviewed. The number was determined on the basis of the researcher’s own judgement from data generated from interviews, as well as time and resources allocated for this research (see Table 7). The interviews were useful in understanding their experiences and opinions on AI at a local level. Participants were chosen from local planners and authorities involved in tourism planning and development independently, or in affiliation with governmental or non-governmental organisations.

**Table 7: Categories of district level experts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expert’s profile</th>
<th>Number interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>District level NGOs</td>
<td>Involved in tourism and community planning process by using different approaches including Appreciative Inquiry approach in grass root communities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>Involved in district tourism planning and development for sustainable tourism development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No affiliation</td>
<td>Independently involved in tourism planning and developments in community level</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*National level experts*

Five interviews were conducted with national level experts who were working in governmental and non-governmental organisations in tourism planning and development (see Table 8). The interviewees were affiliated with the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), The Mountain Institute (TMI), Mountain Spirit (MS), Appreciative Learning and Development Management (ALDM), and the Centre for Environment and Sustainable Tourism (CEST) Nepal. Since tourism experts in Nepal have been using the AI approach in community as well as tourism planning and development programmes, they were a useful source of information on the development and implementation of the AI approach.

**Table 8: Categories of national level experts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expert’s profile</th>
<th>Number interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>NGOs/INGOs</td>
<td>Involved in tourism planning and development using Appreciative Inquiry approach at grass root level communities</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>National Tourism Organisation</td>
<td>Involved in national level tourism planning and policy making, product development, marketing and promotion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research participants were approached by the research, and consulted for a suitable date, time and venue for the interviews. They were briefed on the research objectives, the time required for the interview, as well as issues relating to confidentiality and anonymity. All participants were involved in a voluntary capacity. Before starting the interviews, the research information sheet and consent form (see Annexes 1 and 2) were provided to the participants. When they agreed to be interviewed, they were requested to sign the consent form before the interview began. Different research information sheets were developed for the local residents and the experts. The information sheet contained detailed information about the research, including the purpose of the research, the intended information to be collected, data analysis, methods and presentation of the results. It also included a summary of the rights of a participant, and assurance of protecting their confidentiality and anonymity. The information sheet and consent form for local residents were translated into the local Nepali language, and interviews were conducted in Nepali language.

4.2.3 Semi structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were useful for this research, because it encouraged respondents to openly express their opinions and experiences. It also provided opportunities to ask additional questions relevant to the research. Two different interview guides (see Annexes 3 and 4), one for local residents and another for district and national level experts, were used during the interviews. In general, the interviews focused on the following themes: general information of the study sites; tourism development; involvement of local residents in tourism; opinions and experiences of local residents, as well as district and national level experts.

All interviews were recorded on digital recording devices (with the consent from the participants), and short-hand notes were taken during the interviews. All interviews were between 20 to 70 minutes, and the locations were selected in consultation with the participants. Most of the local residents were interviewed in their homes, and the experts were interviewed at their offices. There were five non-respondents (two local residents and three experts) who were not able to be interviewed because they did not have time.

Interviews with local residents

Interviews with local residents were conducted in Junbesi and Pattale. The local interviewees were asked about their experiences in tourism in general and the usefulness of the AI approach in tourism planning and development in their area, in particular. Annex 3
provided a list of the questions, which included their involvement in the tourism planning and development, their experiences in tourism related enterprises, their perspectives on local tourism development, constraints and opportunities, challenges and risks, and significance of the AI approach in tourism planning.

**Interviews with district and national level experts**

Interviews with district level experts were carried out in the district headquarters of the Solukhumbu district, and the national level experts’ interviews were conducted in Kathmandu, the capital city. The participants were from governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in tourism planning and development using the AI approach. The questions for the experts were focused around the application of AI as a planning tool in tourism development processes, particularly to reflect on their experiences on the effectiveness and significance of AI in terms of achieving PPT goals (see Annex 4).

### 4.2.4 Other data sources

The researcher’s own field experience with AI in rural settings for community development and tourism planning were reviewed and cited to support and enrich the study. In order to find out some additional data about tourism planning and development in Nepal and the Solukhumbu district and specifically the two case study sites (Junbesi and Pattale), it was essential to collect data from other sources. These data were collected: statistical information from the Nepalese Ministry for Tourism; district profile of Solukhumbu; a brochure on the Solukhumbu Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail; various publications from the Nepal Tourism Board; and reports from various organisations on tourism planning involving the AI approach. Also, secondary data were gathered from books, journal articles, and published and unpublished theses.

### 4.2.5 Data management and analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. The data analysis began with a search for key themes using coding and memos (Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006). There are various forms of data management and analysis techniques and tools in social science. For this purpose, NVivo qualitative computer database analysis programme was used. The logic of coding in a computer database programme versus analogue methods is the same, but “there is the added advantage of instantaneous filing in one or more files” in computer database (Lofland, et al., 2006, p. 203). Each transcribed interview was imported to NVivo, and initial analysis of the data was undertaken. This involved
identifying key themes and categories to code the data. Then each theme, known as a ‘node’ in NVivo, was analysed.

4.3 Limitations of the research
This research focused exclusively on two case study sites in the southern region in the Solukhumbu district of Nepal. Due to the lack of time and resources, the research could not cover more than two case study sites or a larger number of research participants.

The study is limited to the perceptions of stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of AI, and does not assess the economic and other outcomes of the AI process. There was a long gap from completion of the TRPAP project in 2006 to this study. Therefore, most of the data was dependent on the memories of research participants – especially when asked to recall past events and approaches used by the project.

Since this research presents two different case studies with their own context, it cannot be replicated in other places of Nepal or elsewhere in the world. Therefore, the results and outcomes from this research are not generalisable in a specific sense.

4.4 Ethical considerations
The research was conducted in accordance with commonly practised ethical considerations, which was reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee. All research participants contributed voluntarily.

Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity are also important aspects in social science research. In this research, names and contact details were collected and kept separately from transcripts/data. Pseudonyms were used in place of names on all documents, including transcripts (except informed consent) and data files. No names and contact details of the participants were disclosed in any written or oral presentations, or in general discussion.

To avoid bias in this study due to the researcher’s familiarity with the case study sites and experience in the AI process, his personal views on both the AI process and the TRPAP
project were not revealed. Instead, the research participants were encouraged to give their own views regarding the project and the AI planning process. Probing questions to the participants were used and repeated until the researcher was clear on the views expressed.

4.5 Chapter summary
A qualitative approach was used in this research to understand the perspectives of local residents and experts on the effectiveness of the AI approach in PPT planning and development in Junbesi and Pattale. Thirty-one participants, which included local residents and experts, were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. Data were managed and analysed using the NVivo programme. Confidentiality and anonymity of research participants were maintained by following the commonly practiced ethical considerations.

The next two chapters present the findings and discussions of this research. Chapter 5 shows the local residents’ perspectives on tourism development in their region and their views on the PPT project implemented in their villages. Chapter 6 presents the experts’ perspectives on the application of AI.
Chapter 5: Results and Discussion (Part I)

Local Residents’ Perspectives on Tourism Planning and Development

The results and discussion of this study are presented in two chapters. Chapter 5 includes the local residents’ perspectives on tourism development and planning. The next chapter presents the experts’ perspectives on AI in tourism planning and development.

This chapter presents and discusses the findings generated through interviews with the residents of the Junbesi and the Pattale villages of the Solukhumbu district of Nepal. The interviews focused on how local people felt about the tourism planning and development in their region. Section 5.1 includes the tourism experience of local people, followed by local views about the contribution of tourism to their village, poverty reduction and its perceived impacts. Section 5.2 explains the perspective of local people on tourism planning, their views on the AI approach in PPT planning and development and their opinion on the TRPAP project implemented in their village.

5.1 Tourism development in Junbesi and Pattale

One of the purposes of this study is to understand the local residents’ perceptions regarding tourism development in Junbesi and Pattale, two villages with contrasting exposure to tourism. This section explains tourism development, its impact and future potential in the two case study sites.

5.1.1 Local residents’ experiences of tourism

The village of Junbesi first experienced tourism in the 1950s, making it one of the earliest Nepalese communities visited by tourists. Since then, Junbesi has been exposed to foreign visitors, and tourism has developed as part of the livelihood of the local people. Prior to the establishment of an airport at Lukla in 1970, Junbesi was the only trail to the Everest region for trekkers and mountaineers (see section 2.5.1). In the past, the trekkers and mountaineering groups, who were accompanied by a large number of staff members and porters, used to pass through Junbesi. The local people, who were economically disadvantaged, had opportunities to work as porters. However, the travel pattern gradually changed from camping groups to lodging tourists along this trail. In recent years, the majority of tourists who walked the traditional trail were individuals and small groups. The
changes in travel patterns appear to have a direct influence on employment opportunities for the poor people. These people belong to the lowest income groups who lack resources and skills to use economic opportunities.

Respondents from Junbesi shared various experiences of tourism development in their village. Sange, a local lodge owner who is now 63, saw tourists for the first time in Junbesi when he was 13 years old. He recalled that “there were no lodges in my village and tourists used to come in camping groups. I still remember that local people were surprised when they saw tourists eating rice because they thought tourists only ate biscuits and chocolate.” Initially, there were no facilities for tourists. According to Sange, “tourists had to sleep on straw mats in the dining hall in the past, and there were was no toilets or bathrooms.”

In the early stages of tourism development in Junbesi, tourists who travelled independently had to take accommodation in the houses of the local people. Dawa, a trekking guide with more than 15 years’ experience, observed that tourists in the past used to come to Junbesi with their own food from Kathmandu: “Local people didn’t know who the tourists were. It was a kind of surprise for us when tourists came to our village.”

Chhepal, a 57 year old lodge owner in Junbesi, expressed his experience in connection with Sir Edmund Hillary’s initiative of building a school in Junbesi in 1964. He thinks that the number of tourists increased after Hillary’s visit to this region. He explained:

> When I was 10 years old, Sir Edmund Hillary came during the construction of [the] Junbesi School. Few other tourists used to go through Junbesi at that time. After Sir Ed’s visit, [the] number of tourists gradually increased. There were no facilities of lodges and teashops for the tourists at that time.”

While it is difficult to calculate the number of tourists to Junbesi, Pasang, a trekking guide, observed that “during the 1990s, there were many tourists”, which led to a shortage of rooms.

Compared with Junbesi, Pattale has only recently been promoted as a trekking area, and so has less exposure to tourism. It is a market centre for the surrounding VDCs of lower Solukhumbu and the Okhaldunga districts (see section 2.5.2). As such, the Pattale residents are familiar with domestic travellers but not so accustomed to international tourists.
Respondents from Pattale reported that there are more domestic visitors than international visitors. However, data for domestic tourists were not available. Mohan, a local resident noted that “many domestic visitors travel along this trail, but only a small number of foreigners visit here.” He thinks that the reason for fewer tourist arrivals is due to the distance of the airport from Pattale.

Ram, a social worker and a farmer, shared that most of the people in the community were excited to see international tourists in their village, because tourists come from completely different cultures. He explained how the local people in Pattale felt when tourists came to their village: “They [tourists] used to come in camping group[s]. We didn’t know their language and we could not interact with them. They only knew the word ‘namaste’ [a local term for greetings] and we also used to say ‘namaste’.”

According to the Pattale interviewees, local lodges are currently getting some benefit from tourism, but others (including the poor people) are not. For example, Shyam, who is now 44 years old, thinks that they are not benefiting from tourism because “we receive some tourists but only lodges are getting the benefits, not the whole village.” He indicated that the local lodges require skill development training to improve their quality of services. Shyam also believes that “we are still not capable of preparing good food for tourists. The lodges here simply serve dhalbhat [Nepali traditional food – rice and curry with lentil soup] but do not have ideas about what to serve for breakfast. They need training.”

Overall, it appears that the people in Junbesi have more experience than their counterparts in Pattale, and they are able to accrue more benefits from tourism. Currently, there are ten lodges in Junbesi. They do not run at full capacity throughout the year, because tourist numbers are inconsistent. Most of these lodges are run by family members. Although lodges run by households are economically self sustaining, they do not host many tourists, and thus are not able to create any employment opportunities for the other local people. As a consequence, the tourism benefits remain mainly in families who run the lodges. While Pattale is a newly promoted place and less exposed to international visitors, the facilities for tourists and the skills of local people still need to be developed.

The following section discusses tourism impacts from the perspectives of the local people.
5.1.2 Perceived tourism impacts

Tourism has both positive and negative social, economic and environmental impacts in destination regions (see section 3.1). The impacts from tourism have the potential to improve the livelihood of the local people. However, if the negative impacts are not considered, tourism will destroy itself (Plog, 1974).

The different level of exposure to tourism in Junbesi and Pattale presents variations on social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts. In terms of the types of tourism impacts, the data suggested that there are fewer impacts in Pattale than Junbesi. The following sections discuss the local residents’ perceptions of economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts at both case study sites.

5.1.2.1 Economic impacts

Research participants had various views on the economic impacts of tourism in their livelihoods. The Junbesi participants perceived that the locals are benefitting directly or indirectly from tourism. However, the Pattale participants had inconsistent views from those in Junbesi, in that they think only local lodges and teashops in their village are able to reap the benefit. Generally, the local households with the highest economic status are the most likely to benefit. The wealthier households in the community run established lodges, while middle income families depend upon less established lodges, teashops, and seasonal employment with trekking groups (Rogers & Aitchison, 1998). Tendi, a club member from Junbesi, commented that the poor people in the villages are least likely to benefit from tourism. He commented that “the lifestyle of lodge owners and other people in the villages are completely different; this shows the gap between the ‘better off’ and the ‘poor people’. In fact, poor people are getting the least benefit from tourism.”

There is little direct involvement of the poorest households within the tourism economy, except through a minimal amount of seasonal portering in the lower Solukhumbu region (Rogers & Aitchison, 1998). Since the benefits are not equally distributed in the communities, this tends to contribute in widening the gap between wealthy and poor households. Opportunities to redress this divide have been further eroded as tourist travel patterns changed from camping to individual tea house tourists – thus reducing employment opportunities for the poorest households. According to Dawa, the trekking guide, “when there were camping groups, poor people had more opportunities to get jobs
for carrying loads, but now most of the tourists do not come in camping groups. That means poor people are getting less benefits now."

Apart from any direct benefits from tourism, local residents, including poor people, recognise some indirect benefits from tourism development in Junbesi. Infrastructure development and livelihood improvements of local people are the major tourism contributions highlighted by local residents. Sange, who has been running a lodge for more than two decades in Junbesi, stated that tourism has made good contributions in the development of his village. He added that “Junbesi has benefited from tourism though we received a small number of tourists. Because of tourism development, we have received support for the school, electricity, trails etc. I think these are all benefits, not losses.”

The economic status of the local people has changed as a result of tourism development. For example, Tenji, the local teashop owner, observed, and shared:

I think it [tourism] is doing well and contributing to village development... they [tourists] are supporting poor people, schools and monasteries in this village... There were only small houses here in the past, but now you can see these big buildings which are [a] contribution from the tourism industry.

Another participant, Tashi, who is a local club member, thinks that “tourism is one of the main income sources for local people in Junbesi. Lodge and teashop owners, vegetable farmers, dairy producers, guides and porters are receiving benefits.” Tourism in the region has also developed a network with people from different countries; as a result, local people sometimes receive support for their children’s education from tourists who are willing to act as sponsors. For example, Phuti, a lodge owner, said “tourists are providing scholarships and clothes to children. Many tourists who come to visit Junbesi have sponsored local people and children for education.” Consistent with Phuti’s perception, Pasang (a trekking guide) explained that “tourism has benefitted individual[s] as well as the whole community.” He added that “there are examples of tourists supporting individuals to build a house.”

In Pattale, the majority of the participants explained that tourism has not contributed greatly to their village, yet they are expecting, and are supportive of additional tourism developments in the future. Ram, a farmer and social worker, reported that only lodge
owners and teashop owners were benefiting from tourism businesses in his village, and the community, on the whole, had not benefitted. Shyam, a trekking guide, also expressed a similar concern about the local community not benefitting from tourism. Akash, a local farmer, agreed that “tourism benefits in his village are more concentrated on people who are involved in lodge or teashop businesses.” He commented that “tourists come to Pattale with everything they need, so local people do not get employment opportunities.” There were no cases of tourists supporting individuals, schools or monasteries in Pattale as reported in Junbesi.

5.1.2.2 Socio-cultural impacts

While the Pattale respondents had difficulty identifying the social-cultural impacts due to the low number of visitors, the Junbesi participants had noted various impacts. Tourism contributes towards the infrastructure and education development for the social well-being of the people. Funds generated from tourism have been used to construct school buildings, renovate religious monuments, and improve trails (Rogers & Aitchison, 1998). The Junbesi locals indicated that tourism has contributed in improving their livelihood, as well as preserving religious and cultural heritage in their village. Pasang, who works as a trekking guide during the trekking season, thinks that tourism has brought “more positive than negative impacts in social and cultural aspects to the society.” He mentioned that tourism has contributed in the “conservation of religious heritage such as renovation of monasteries and also created educational opportunities for children.” This indicates that tourism needs to maximise the positive impacts to benefit everyone in society (Weaver & Lawton, 2010).

There were also negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism reported in Junbesi. The locals perceived that tourism development brought changes in local people’s attitude and behaviour, and degraded the traditional culture and value system. The commercialisation of local culture through tourism contributed to changes in the traditional patterns of local people’s lives and perceptions (Hall & Lew, 2009; Rogers & Aitchison, 1998; Weaver & Lawton, 2010). The locals perceived that tourism has changed the traditional way of hospitality, due to the commercialisation of local culture. For example, Tashi, the local club member from Junbesi thinks that tourism has brought changes in culture and tradition, suggesting evidence of the tourism demonstration effect (de Kadt, 1979). Tashi commented:
There are changes in culture – people copy tourists and that creates changes in local dress and culture... We are also losing our traditional food items; local people have developed a misconception that people who eat packet food are higher class. People having chocolate or biscuits are considered different, and people are ashamed to have locally produced food like popcorn.

Tashi observed that tourism has not only brought physical changes, but it has also influenced people’s attitudes. He observed that “people were very service-oriented in the past and they used to serve their guests with warm hospitality.” But now he thinks that those types of services are lost when people move toward commercialisation. He reckoned that this change is due to tourism, and commented that “people are greedy now.” Tashi also mentioned that people in the past had better cooperation in society, so that they could build religious heritages like monasteries and mani walls (religious text carved on slates or rocks) with community effort and support. He said, “Nowadays, if we start even a small project, there is always conflict over representation in the groups, resource sharing as well as transparency in the community development works.”

Phurba, a lodge owner from Junbesi, raised the concerns about the commercialisation of local religious events. He expressed that the local culture is becoming a display item for tourists, and he considers this as a negative impact of tourism. Phurba believes that “our culture is becoming like a showcase product for tourists. Dumji and Mani Rimdu are sacred religious festivals, but sometimes such important festivals are presented on stage for tourists.”

### 5.1.2.3 Environmental impacts

The local residents did not perceive environmental impact of tourism in lower Solukhumbu as significant. A few participants indicated minor environmental problems in Junbesi, but none were reported in Pattale. Rogers and Aitchison’s (1998) study shows minimal effects of tourism on forest in the lower Solukhumbu region. The primary causes of pressure on local forests are expansion of villages and population growth, because local residents have no alternatives to fire wood for cooking. Certainly, tourism has added an extra burden on local resources, but these are not distinct and are not reported during this study fieldwork. This may be due to the small number of tourist arrivals in the region.
The environmental impacts reported by the Junbesi participants were typically waste management problems. Dawa, the trekking guide from Junbesi said, “I think waste materials such as mineral water bottles, beer bottles, cans and plastic bags produced by tourists groups are a negative impact on the local environment.” However, there have been some local measures taken to minimise these impacts, with initiation from the Himalayan Yeti Club. Tendi, the local club member of Junbesi, mentioned that “the club organises regular village cleanup programmes and also places rubbish bins in appropriate locations of Junbesi.”

5.1.3 Residents’ perceptions of tourism and poverty alleviation
Local residents had various perceptions about the contribution of tourism to poverty alleviation. It is apparent that people who have resources will benefit more, compared to those who do not have resources to invest (DFID, 1999b). Households with better economic conditions run lodges and teashops, whereas economically disadvantaged people in the community have fewer options in the tourism industry. In this case, it is obvious that local lodges and teashops benefit more than the poor, with portering remaining as one of the few employment options for the latter.

Sange, the lodge owner in Junbesi, said that poor people in Junbesi are “benefiting from tourism particularly working with tourists as porters. If they work as a labourer in the village, they are paid a very low amount, so they get better payment when they go with the tourists.” Tashi agrees that tourism has benefited poor people in Junbesi. He said that “poor people can sell vegetables, and also they can earn some money working with trekking groups.”

Dawa (trekking guide) had a slightly different view from the other participants about how tourism benefits the poor. As recorded earlier, he believes that the changes in travel pattern influenced the employment opportunities for the poor in the lower Solukhumbu region. He thinks that camping groups were a better option for the poor, but currently, the majority of tourists travel individually or in small groups using lodge accommodation.

Similarly, the Pattale participants mentioned that the poor people in their village have not received benefit from the tourism development. They are, however, optimistic that the recent road development, which passes through Pattale, will bring more tourists to their
village. Ram (local farmer and social worker) explained that “tourism has no contribution for the livelihood of poor people in my village.” Another participant, Krishna (local farmer), believes that tourism development will create opportunities for all people, including the poor. He added that “currently poor people in the village are not receiving any benefit from tourism.” He thinks this is due to the small number of tourist arrivals in Pattale. Similarly, Phuli (member of a local women’s group) sees the potential of getting working opportunities with tourists as porters. She also added that “poor people can sell agricultural products to tourists groups.” But Ngima (a lodge owner for many years) reckons that “local people have received benefits from tourism even though they are not directly involved in the industry.” He thinks “unskilled people gain opportunities to earn some money as porters, and skilled people can get better jobs like guiding.” However, he indicated that these opportunities are not available in the village, and local people have to go out of the village to work as trekking porters or guides.

5.1.4 Local residents’ views on tourism’s potential in the future
All participants in Junbesi and Pattale expressed that they would like to see more tourists in their village in the future. Most of the participants raised peace and security as the basic requirements for tourism, and that it could not flourish during political insurgency in the past (see section 2.3). Pasang (trekking guide from Junbesi) commented that “if there is peace and security, tourism development will take place.” Currently, approximately 2000 tourists arrive in Junbesi annually, and locals are expecting more number of tourists in future. Dawa (trekking guide) said that “we want more tourists in Junbesi so that we can get benefits as in the Everest region.” Since communities in the Everest region get more than 30,000 tourists per year, tourism benefits are perceived to be high, compared to Junbesi (MoTCA, 2010). Tendi (local club member) added that “the concern is that authorities are not taking interest in developing tourism in the lower Solukhumbu region.” Some participants commented that there will be chances of diverting many tourists to the lower Solukhumbu region, as the Everest region is already overcrowded. Tendi further added that “many tourists will seek less crowded destinations, and the lower Solukhumbu region could be an alternative destination for such tourists.” However, he thinks that government initiatives and support are important to promote this region.
Transportation facilities to the destination are an important component of tourism. However, it may have both positive and negative impacts on local tourism. For example, road development in the tourist destination area may increase the number of visitors, but it may also reduce the length of their stay (Lama, 2010). In this regard, research participants had contrasting views about road construction to their village. Pattale is already connected to the road network, but Junbesi is not. Some participants expressed that the road development to Junbesi will reduce the length of visitors’ stay and will negatively impact on their businesses. Dawa, who has travelled in different parts of Nepal as a tourist guide, says that “if the motor road is developed, the number of tourists and length of stay in Junbesi will decrease.” By contrast, Purna (club member in Pattale) said the road construction in Pattale has added to the value of the place and improved the accessibility in the region. He thinks this will increase the number of tourists in his village, and believes that “this place will be one of the important tourism destinations in Solukhumbu.”

Since the number of international tourists coming to Pattale is less than 500 per year, the local people have not experienced the contribution of tourism in their village. However, most respondents were expecting more tourists in the future. For example, Mohan, a local resident in Pattale, said that “VDC and DDC have already declared Pattale as a tourism destination by considering the potential of tourism development.” He is hopeful that “tourism development will bring employment opportunities for local youths.” Similarly, Akash (local farmer) also thinks that “tourism can be one of the tools to support the generation of employment opportunities in their region.” Ram (Pattale resident) also believes that “Pattale is a centre for Okhaldunga and Solukhumbu district, and this is the best place to see mountains.” Therefore, he believes that Pattale has the potential for tourism development.

5.1.5 Interim summary
Junbesi has a long history of tourism development, which began in 1950s during the first successful attempt on Mount Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa. By contrast, Pattale is a newly promoted destination; hence the local people in this village are less exposed to tourism. The general opinions in Junbesi indicated that tourism has more or less contributed towards livelihood improvement, as well as development of the village. However, the findings suggest that lodge and teashop owners are taking more
benefit than other local people. It is also apparent that the poorest people in the communities have limited options to get benefit from tourism, which was the case in both villages. Compared to Junbesi, Pattale village residents have not realised the significant contribution of tourism in their village. Both villages are expecting more tourist arrivals in their village, and are hopeful that it will create more opportunities for local people. While increasing the number of tourists to the destinations, it is important to involve local people in planning process in order to make sure that tourism will benefit local people. The next section presents the locals’ perspectives on the tourism project implemented by using Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a planning tool.

5.2 Locals’ perspectives on AI in tourism planning

In addition to seeking local residents’ views on the contribution of tourism to their communities, a key purpose of this study was to assess the local people’s experience of the tourism planning process. In particular, it focused on understanding the local residents’ perspectives on the AI approach in tourism planning. Many research participants were not aware of the AI approach, which was used by TRPAP while implementing the tourism project in their village. Therefore, local people’s perspectives were based on the outcome of the TRPAP project rather than on the process of the AI approach.

This section begins with the views of local residents on their involvement in tourism planning, followed by their perspectives on the effectiveness of the AI approach in tourism planning and the perceived sustainability of the programmes.

5.2.1 Involvement of local residents in tourism planning

Local residents had various views regarding their involvement in tourism planning and implementation process of the TRPAP project. They shared their experiences of the planning process. The project formed local functional groups, trained and mobilised them in the process of planning and implementation at a local community level. The groups were responsible for implementing local level project activities (see section 3.2.3.1). The local residents perceived that the project was useful to their communities; therefore they were involved in the planning and implementation process. For example, Phuti, one of the user group members in Junbesi, thinks that “local people in Junbesi and Pattale welcomed
TRPAP programmes and provided their support because the programme was useful.” Similarly, Akash, another member of the local user group, commented that local people were “involved in the programme because it was useful for their village’s development.”

Phurba (member of the local user group in Junbesi) was involved as a group member in different programmes organised by TRPAP. He said that “we were involved from the beginning to the implementation of the project.” Similarly, Dawa stated that he was involved in “developing of programmes for his village” and also “provided a certain number of days labour contribution for the programme.”

Ram (resident and social worker in Pattale) explained that “TRPAP built an incinerator, a toilet, a trail, and area maps, and sign posts in my village.” Prior to this, two women’s groups were formed and mobilised in planning and implementation of the project in Pattale. Purna (Pattale resident) commented that “women’s participation in the programme was high”, which he thinks “developed the feelings of group spirit among women.” He also added that local people contributed in the project implementation:

There was very good participation among local people. The local people provided labour contribution for the programme. For example, while building a green house, only plastics were provided by the project and local people contributed other expenses. Local people also contributed to improvement of trails and village cleanup campaigns initiated by women’s groups.

Unless people in the communities have access to decision-making and the right to use resources, ‘participation’ may be considered superficial (Arnstein, 1969). The observation and findings from this research show that TRPAP did involve local people in planning as well as in implementation of the project. Local residents also reported that there was a high level of involvement from the planning to the implementation process. While local residents seemed satisfied with their level of involvement in the planning and implementation process, further scrutiny reveals that the types of participation was relatively low level. This is because the local user groups were not independent in decision-making; they were mobilised on the basis of guidance provided by the project. This suggests that the level of community participation could not go beyond ‘placation’, which is the high degree of tokenism in Arnstein’s (1969) ladder. If compared with
Tosun’s (1999) typology, the degree of participation of local people in a project can be placed as ‘induced participation’ (see section 3.2.1.1).

5.2.2 Locals’ perspectives on the effectiveness of AI in tourism planning

The majority of local residents from Junbesi and Pattale had little idea about the AI concept used by TRPAP, but were able to comment on the outcomes of the project. Pasang (trekking guide from Junbesi) commented that the TRPAP project was different from other previous programmes implemented in his village. The major difference he found was the participation of local people through local functional groups in project planning and implementation. He considers that the formation of local groups was a good concept and said that “if there is a group, people are encouraged to participate.” Pasang also thinks that “TRPAP made a good contribution to his village through infrastructure development and promotion of the area.”

Tashi (Junbesi club member) was aware of the approach used by TRPAP. He is a local social worker who was actively involved in the project, and explained that “TRPAP used appreciative and participatory approaches which was quite effective for the programme... The local functional groups were formed and mobilised by providing funds. The government also implemented programmes but I think there were no programmes like TRPAP before.”

Lhamu, who owns a lodge in Pattale and was involved in the TRPAP programme, had no idea what approach was used for planning. She shared her experience on how she was involved in the programme: “The project organised workshops for the groups which was useful to learn about the importance of tourism hospitality and working in a group.” Purna (Pattale participant) also had no idea about the specifics of the planning approach: “We don’t know about the approach. The planning was facilitated by the project staff and the women group was given implementation responsibility.” However, Ngima (Pattale resident) thinks that the “planning approach was good because it focused local people’s involvement in community development.”

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the TRPAP project followed the 4-D cycle, which provides different stages of planning and implementation of the programmes. Various participatory
tools were used in generating information at the discovery phase. Two views were evident, irrespective of villages: (1) that the project was successful to promote a new tourism destination by developing new trails and infrastructure, and the number of tourists is increasing due to the impact of the project activities; and (2) that the project could not achieve its goal as mentioned in section 3.2.3.1, and could not benefit the poor in the villages. Tenji (Junbesi teashop owner) mentioned that the main objective of TRPAP was tourism development to support poverty reduction in their village, but he thinks that the project did not achieve this goal. He added that “developing Dudhkunda trail was a good initiative though they could not achieve the goal of poverty alleviation.”

Participants think that the project left a positive impression among local people as they appreciated the programmes implemented by TRPAP. Tashi commented that “TRPAP was one of the most impressive programmes we had because it involved locals in the programme, upgraded trails, and also developed uniformity in lodge menus, etc.” Most participants noted that the project worked only for a short time and did not have enough time to implement the programme. For example, Dawa (trekking guide) commented: “TRPAP came only for short time ... The programme ended when we were starting to understand it... a programme like that should have come for at least ten to fifteen years.”

Phuti (Junbesi lodge owner) thinks that “TRPAP’s way of working in the community was better and different from others.” She found that the difference between TRPAP and other projects was that TRPAP involved local people in planning and capacity building programmes. She was involved in the planning exercise and also made it her commitment “to accomplish the plan”. Tashi (from Junbesi) appreciated the initiatives taken by the project of developing the Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail, where the number of camping groups increases every year. He believes that the approach used by TRPAP was “effective to encourage local people’s participation in various activities conducted by the project.”

The overall perception of participants in both villages suggests that the project was not able to achieve its goal, although the concept of the programme was good and left a positive impression among local residents.
5.2.2.1 Locals’ perceived sustainability of TRPAP programme

Local residents had various views about the sustainability of the TRPAP project. TRPAP developed a mechanism to continue the programmes after its completion. However, the mechanism was not effective to carry on the project activities. Currently, local user groups are running the information centre and continuing a savings and credit scheme in Junbesi. While explaining the status of the TRPAP programme, Pasang commented that “savings, credit schemes and the information centre are running.” The information centre developed by TRPAP in Junbesi is running by the local user group. Phurba (Junbesi lodge owner) said that “we are distributing documentary CDs, brochures and maps. We are also showing a documentary for tourists in the information centre.” However, it was observed that the information centre was not operating regularly due to financial constraints. Dawa (Junbesi participant) explained the difficulties for regular operation of the information centre:

TRPAP gave some maps, books and other stuff to the information centre which was supposed to sell it for the staff salary. We started the operation by employing staff but didn’t have any success. The number of tourists is low and if we sold everything for the staff salary, there would be no income for the information centre. So, after that we decided not to employ staff. Now a chairperson of the group runs the information centre when he has time and sometimes I help him.

The project document states that the programme had to be continued through the local user groups, with the support of the VDC Sustainable Tourism Development Committee in collaboration with the DDC and NTB (TRPAP, 2007). However, most of the local residents were not aware of this mechanism, and were not capable enough to handle the project. For example, Tashi commented that “there was not any provision to continue the programmes and local groups were not ready to undertake the responsibility when the project term was ended.” He thinks the “programme went well only during the time of the TRPAP project coupled with regular monitoring, but it could not run at the same pace after it was phased out.”

The Pattale participants also had consistent views with the Junbesi participants regarding the TRPAP programmes. The women’s groups are continuing with the savings and credit scheme. Local residents commented that other programmes, including infrastructure development and promotional activities, were not continued after the project’s completion.
For example, Ram (Pattale participant) commented that the project activities were not sustained:

> Nothing happened after the TRPAP project. They [the project staff] installed maps and signposts in a number of places which lasted for a few years. They said their responsibility was to fix those things and would not support any renovation or maintenance again. We were happy when they installed those maps and signposts but now we cannot do anything to maintain. Even no one upgraded or renovated the trails after the project.

The majority of local residents indicated that there were no human and financial resources in place to continue the tourism programmes. Pasang (Junbesi resident and trekking guide) shared that the TRPAP was not continued because “there is no one to monitor and support the project activities.” Similarly, Purna (Pattale resident) thinks that financial support is very important to continuing the programmes. He said that “we have strong commitment to work in our village but we cannot do anything without external support. It was observed that the trails, sign board, maps and sign posts built by the project are now in poor condition and need renovation/repairs.

Overall, the views of the local residents indicated that the project was not able to effectively implement the exit plan. Although a mechanism was developed, the local user groups were not ready to take over the responsibility of continuing the project. The project was unable to empower local stakeholders and arrange alternatives for essential financial resources to continue the programme for the longer term.

### 5.2.2.2 Local residents’ perspectives on challenges of the TRPAP

Junbesi and Pattale participants reported various challenges that were preventing TRPAP from fulfilling the project goal. Political instability, short timeframe, lack of effective mechanism, illiteracy of local people, and lack of resources were some of the challenges perceived by local residents. Participants mentioned that the political instability was one of the challenges for the TRPAP project. Tashi shared that “the main challenge was the political situation during that time. There were obstacles to work. In some cases the local groups had to provide a certain percent of project funds to the rebels.” Consequently the
number of tourist arrivals decreased; Phurba (Junbesi lodge owner) observed that “very few tourists visited during the insurgency situation in the country.”

Local residents reported that the project could not continue after its completion, because the mechanism that was developed could not work effectively. Tashi commented that “the mechanism could not come into action.” He said that “NTB’s commitment of continuing project activities was not fulfilled.” This statement shows the local dissatisfaction towards the projects, and also that planning process has to be undertaken carefully and not raising false expectation among local people.

The participants perceived that the illiteracy of local people was another challenge for the project. The district profile (DDC, 2002) shows that only 47.86% of the total population in Solukhumbu is literate, where women literacy (41.67%) is lower than men’s (58.33%). Tashi (Junbesi club member) mentioned that “it was difficult to convince local people about the programme because of illiteracy.” He thinks that “people want immediate results from the project, but it is hard to convince them about future outcomes.”

Some of the participants believe that resource constraint was also a challenge for the project. Dawa (Junbesi resident) thinks that the “resource is more important than the approach followed. So, the planning approach can be effective only when there are enough resources to mobilise.” This indicated that the project was not able to continue its programmes after completion due to lack of resources. Dawa further added: “It is difficult in our place [Junbesi]. You can’t expect anything without money and it’s not possible to serve as volunteer all the time. That’s why things are not moving as per the plan.”

Akash (Pattale resident) also had a similar view to Dawa. He thinks that there was a lack of resources for continuation of the programmes after completion: “I think the process was effective and it was a good programme. The project provided various skill development training but it could have been better if they arranged funding sources to the groups in order to continue the programmes”.

5.2.3 Interim summary
TRPAP implemented various programmes such as capacity building, infrastructure development, new tourism trail promotion, and income generation. The general opinion of
the participants indicated that the project was not able to achieve its goal of poverty alleviation. The project developed a mechanism, considering the sustainability of the programme, but the mechanism did not work well. Local user groups were not able to handle the responsibility of the programme at the time of the project handover. This indicates that the project’s efforts of capacity building and empowerment were not sufficient, as the local user groups lacked skills, confidence, power and financial resources to continue the programmes on a long-term basis. The groups also lacked financial resources and the capacity to carry on with the programmes. However, local residents reported that the programme worked well when it was running, and also made some contributions to tourism development in their village (such as tourism infrastructure development and promotion).

Local people were involved in tourism planning and implementation through local user groups, who were responsible in implementing the programmes. Local residents also made contributions in order to accomplish the programmes goals. The APPA exercises were conducted for the planning, but most participants did not have knowledge about the planning approach.

5.3 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the local residents’ views on tourism planning and development in the Junbesi and the Pattale villages of the Solukhumbu district. Both Junbesi and Pattale are along the Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail developed by TRPAP. Local residents in Junbesi are more exposed to tourism but Pattale people are new to international tourism. Accordingly, local residents in Junbesi perceive more benefits from tourism than Pattale.

Local people have experienced both positive and negative impacts in their village. Positive impacts include the contribution of tourism for their economy, education development, and infrastructure development. Conversely, commercialisation of the local culture, the changing attitudes of local people, rubbish problems, and deforestation were noted as negative impacts from tourism.

Local people in Junbesi and Pattale were involved in tourism planning and the implementation of programmes conducted by TRPAP. Since many participants were not aware of the AI approach, the local residents’ perspectives were based more on the
outcomes of the project rather than the detail of the planning approach. The views from local residents indicate that they were satisfied with the level of participation in project planning and implementation. However, further analysis shows that there was a high degree of tokenism because local people were dependent on the project for decision-making as well as resources. Local people believed that TRPAP was not able to accomplish the project goals due to various challenges such as political instability, a short timeframe, illiteracy and an overall lack of resources. However, despite these findings local people agreed that the programme was effective, and had some degree of benefit and contribution for tourism development in their region.

Experts, who were involved in tourism planning and development, were interviewed to understand their perspectives on the application of AI in tourism planning in Nepal. The next chapter presents the findings and discussions of interviews with the experts.
Chapter 6: Results and Discussion (Part II)
Experts’ Perspectives on Appreciative Inquiry in Tourism Planning and Development

This chapter presents and discusses the findings generated from interviews with district and national level experts working in various governmental and non-governmental organisations in Nepal. The chapter begins with the views of the expert participants on various reasons for selecting AI as a planning tool, followed by their perspectives on AI in tourism planning in Nepal, perceived differences of AI from other approaches, and views on Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme (TRPAP). The final section presents the participants’ views on the effectiveness of AI in tourism planning, including their perspectives on the local people’s participation in tourism planning, perceived sustainability of the AI process, monitoring and evaluation, and perceived challenges in the application of AI in tourism planning.

6.1 Experts’ views on the reasons for selecting AI for planning

The expert participants shared various reasons as to why they or their organisations used AI in tourism planning and development: AI focuses on strengths and successes, which, it is intended creates hope for the people who are facing problems; it is convenient to use at a time of political conflicts; it can be used within a limited timeframe; and, in some cases, it satisfies donors’ requirements.

From a positive point of view, Nepal is a beautiful country with natural landscapes and cultural diversity, which has great potential for tourism development. The AI concept focuses mainly on the positive aspects of Nepal and on ‘building on strengths and successes’ in the community or organisation. As such, it is believed that AI can be a useful tool for developing countries like Nepal, as explained by Dambur, one of the research participants:

If we look from a positive perspective we can see many attractions for tourism such as our [Nepalese] culture, nature, tradition, heritage, ritual, and so on. But if we look from problematic point of view, we cannot see these aspects. Additionally, the AI approach involves local people in planning and implementation processes by identifying their strengths and successes.
As previously mentioned in Chapter 3, problem-solving approaches concentrate mainly on the problems while planning, but AI focuses on strengths and successes of the communities or organisations (Cooperrider, et al., 2008). Dambur thinks that the AI approach emerged as an alternative to problem solving. He believes that there are mainly two reasons for using AI in developing countries like Nepal:

First, in poor countries like ours [Nepal], we have lot of problems; if we go to solve each of these problems individually then we get lost in an ocean of problems. The AI approach provides some hope by focusing on the strengths and successes of the community. Second, Nepal’s tourism is based on nature and culture which can be promoted with the concept of AI by enabling local communities.

Shusila, an expert, thinks that the alternative for the problem-solving approach was essential because it tended to increase the problems rather than find solutions. She explained: “We spent a great deal of time and investment for development but the impacts in communities were very low. We always sought out problems, envisioned problems, planned around problems, and acted on our problems... we were lost in problems.”

Shusila also mentioned that the external organisations and experts (she called them ‘outsiders’) had dominant roles in the community development; although they used participatory approaches such as PRA. She thinks that, compared to AI, PRA involves a “lengthy process and it does not emphasise positive discovery as in AI.” However, the role of outsider as a facilitator still plays an important role in the AI exercise where he or she needs to build the trust with the community (Panzeri, et al., 2009).

Some expert participants shared their experiences of using the AI approach during the political conflict. The process involves local people and makes them responsible for the planning and implementation of programmes. So, the local people develop ownership of the programme which helps to implement planned activities even in unstable situations (Chapagain, 2009). For example, Kamal worked in the most conflicted area in the eastern part of Nepal. “During the political conflict time in Nepal, villagers took ownership of the programme... there were no problems to implement programmes during that period.” This indicates that if local residents have strong support and commitment towards the programme, there may not be any problems to implement the programmes even in unstable
political situation. However, in the case of TRPAP, both expert participants and local residents reported political instability as one of the challenges.

The data suggested that in some cases selection of the planning approach is determined on the basis of donor interest and the nature of the project. In developing countries like Nepal, projects are implemented after fulfilling the requirements of the donors. Tharke, a freelance AI consultant, thinks that the AI approach is useful in programme design and planning, but the selection of an approach may depend on the nature of the programme and the interest of donors. He said, “Most of the programmes in developing countries are based on interest from donors.” Chapagain (2004) also mentions that many donor agencies in Nepal who provided funding for the projects using the AI concept considered it a suitable approach for local people’s participation. As mentioned in Chapter 3, many NGOs and INGOs (with the financial support from donor agencies) are involved in various projects in Nepal using the AI concept. Therefore, there is a high degree of donor influence on the selection of planning approaches. In this context, donor interest is one of the key reasons why AI was adopted.

The following section provides the views of expert participants on AI in tourism planning and implementation; this is based on their experiences in different parts of Nepal.

6.2 Experts’ perspectives on AI in tourism planning

The expert participants working in governmental and non-governmental organisations at the district and national level had various experiences of using AI in tourism planning. They expressed their experience with various examples of tourism projects implemented in different parts of Nepal.

Dambur is affiliated with an NGO working for sustainable tourism, and has considerable experience in using AI in conservation as well as in tourism. He worked as a ranger in a national park, and also worked in the TRPAP project in the Rasuwa district. He explained: “We used AI as a planning tool for pro-poor tourism planning through local authorities – DDCs in Nepal. I was actively involved while using this tool in nine VDCs in Rasuwa and developed 33 settlement based tourism plans.”
Kamal, a senior programme manager, working in an international NGO for more than two decades, is experienced in using AI in tourism planning and development. He first used it in tourism in 1995, while implementing tourism programmes in five VDCs of the Makalu Barun area in the Sankhuwasava district in the eastern part of Nepal. The programme followed 4-D models (Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny) of the AI process in programme identification, development, planning and implementation, as referred in Cooperrider et al. (2008). Kamal explained the context in the society, and shared his experience on how the process was used in the community:

[Nepalese] society has a trend of emphasising problems rather than what positive things we do have, but AI focuses on positive aspects. When we worked in a community, local people identified the positive aspects of their village such as cultural and natural resources for tourism at the discovery phase. Then in the dream phase they envisioned the future followed by the design phase of planning.

Since all dreams listed by the community cannot be fulfilled within a short period of time, Kamal explained that the dreams need to be categorised on the basis of priority for local people by using various ranking tools. As described earlier in section 3.2.2.1, the AI design phase selects activities to fulfil the dreams, prioritise activities, and prepare a plan. Then the destiny phase focuses on implementation of the plan, with personal commitment and contribution from the stakeholders. Kamal elaborated:

After completing the design phase, participants at the meeting took immediate action which was considered to be helpful towards fulfilling their dream. For example, if a person contributes 10 minutes, then 60 people in the meeting can do a lot. With that esteem, a toilet can be constructed within an hour, or a half kilometre trail can be improved for tourists. This type of action is taken in order to support and reflect their discovery and dream.

The AI approach emphasises the role of local people in the planning and implementation of the programmes, develop ownership, and enable their capacities for sustainable development (Chapagain, 2009; Cooperrider, et al., 2008). The expert participants, who were involved in the TRPAP project, suggested that the AI approach places local people in the centre of the process of planning and implementing the programmes. For example,
consistent with the perspectives of local residents, Mingphuti (who worked in a TRPAP project in the Junbesi region) said:

We organised APPA workshops at the village level to identify human, natural and cultural resources available within the village. After identification of those resources, local people developed a plan to promote and preserve those resources. We looked to the local people as centre for information, that’s why the planning was effective as compared to VDC or DDC.

Karma worked for a TRPAP project in Junbesi, and is currently working for one of the local NGOs in Solukhumbu. He explained that “local people identified many issues during the planning exercises which were essential for their livelihood as well as village development.” The project categorised those issues under the theme of “pro-poor, pro-women, pro-environment and pro-community”. Karma added that “all issues were not possible to include in the plan, so priorities were given to more feasible activities for the project.” This indicates that the process was used to identify different activities for the project, where priorities were given to activities that were of interest and feasible to the project.

Most expert participants involved in tourism planning process using AI were consultants for different national and international organisations. During this fieldwork, it was revealed that the experts had no further role after the planning exercises, and in most cases, they were not aware of the progress of the project they designed. For example, Tharke (a consultant involved in various tourism planning exercises with different organisations) indicated, “I was involved in various planning exercises, but I am not sure whether those programmes were successfully implemented or not.” This statement shows that the programmes developed by an AI consultant may not be implemented effectively due to lack of follow-up assessment and knowledge on AI process among stakeholders.

Ongel works for NTB and was closely involved in a TRPAP project. He believes that the APPA process is helpful in identifying local strengths and resources. But, he said:

Sometimes all the tourism products identified by local people are not realistic. For example, local people might think the small lake in the village which is sacred to
them could be developed as important tourism product, but tourists may not find it as important and interesting as the villagers think it is.

The above argument challenges the ‘building on strength’ concept of AI that identifies the strengths and resources of community for development, as mentioned in Chapagain (2004).

In summary, the general opinion of the expert participants indicated that AI can be a useful approach in planning, because it emphasises participation by the local people and considers them as the main source of information. The 4-D model is a planning cycle in AI, where the locals are involved in all phases: Discovery Dream, Design and Destiny. The expert participants also claimed that the AI process develops ownership of the programme among local people, and also builds on their capacity. Many expert participants were consultants who worked only for a short term with the project, and they were not aware of the outcome of the project they designed. There was also a lack of follow-up assessments on the projects. In this case, the project designed by AI consultants may not be able to achieve the goal if the implementing body is not familiar with AI concept.

As mentioned in section 3.2.2.3, there are differences between AI and other approaches. The following section presents the expert participants’ views on what distinguishes AI from other planning approaches.

### 6.3 Perceived difference between AI and other approaches

The expert participants used the term ‘problem-solving’ and ‘top-down’ approaches as the traditional approaches, so these terms are used interchangeably in this discussion. In some cases, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is considered problem-solving approach, but is not referred to as a traditional approach.

Consistent with Chapagain (2004), the expert participants believe that the PRA approach focused more on problem-solving rather than identifying the strengths of the local communities. The major difference between problem-solving and AI approaches is the way they deal with problems or opportunities. Mingphuti, who works with an NGO, expressed her views about VDC’s current planning approach at local level. The government’s policy envisages people’s participation in planning at a local level. Every year, VDCs (the
smallest administrative unit in Nepal) are supposed to develop plans with the participation of local people, and to send these plans to the DDC for inclusion in its district level plan. But practically, according to Mingphuti, the VDCs are still following traditional top-down approach and do not involve local people in planning processes. She said that the “VDC council prepares a plan every year but local people are invited only to approve the plan developed by the political leaders.” This reflects Cleaver’s (1999) concern about using participatory methods to justify top-down decisions by including the stakeholders. Karma (works with a local NGO), who had similar views with Mingphuti, said:

In a traditional top-down approach, a limited number and range of people are involved in planning and preparing plans at central level. In contrast, AI is considered as a bottom-up approach which involves local people in planning. There is no opportunity to provide your vision or ideas in traditional approach; it only comes to local level for implementation.

Shusila commented that PRA focused on problem-solving, and lacked appreciation of local strengths and resources which, she thought, was important, and AI fulfils this requirement. She said that having “only participation of local people in the programme cannot work and appreciation of their strengths and values is [also] important.”

Another participant, Gyalpo, expressed that Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) was used to collect information by outsiders for their own purposes, such as publications, plans or projects. Later, PRA tried to involve the local community in generating information, considering that the local people are experts about their context (Chambers, 1992). Gyalpo thinks that AI emerged as a new philosophy in community development, with the emphasis on positive aspects of the community rather than identifying the problems. He added that AI not only focuses on the particular programme, but also places emphasis on the future dreams of the community.

Overall, the difference between AI and other approaches is the way they deal with problems and issues. A top-down approach develops planning at a central level and implementation at a local level, but lacked the involvement of local people. PRA appeared with the concept of community participation and placed local people as the main source of information; but AI experts think that PRA does not focus on the
strengths and successes of the local community. Both approaches are also considered as the problem-solving type, because they focus on finding the problems. The proponents of AI believe that it emerges with an affirmative approach and embraces the challenges in organisations or communities in a positive light (Cooperrider, et al., 2008). AI was used in the planning and implementation process of the TRPAP project in six different districts of Nepal (see section 3.2.3.1). The following section discusses the expert participants’ views on the TRPAP project.

6.4 Experts' perspectives on the TRPAP project

This section presents the expert participants’ perspectives on contribution made by TRPAP in Pro-poor Tourism (PPT) planning and development in Nepal. They had various views on the TRPAP project. As mentioned earlier, TRPAP conducted various programmes, such as tourism destination development and promotion (TRPAP, 2007). Karma, who works for a local NGO, thinks that TRPAP raised the awareness of tourism among local people: “Local people used to think that only foreigners could be tourists, the project could change that concept.” He commented that TRPAP was able to develop and promote the Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail in southern Solukhumbu; as a result, the number of tourists in this region has increased. This is in agreement with the local participants, as reported in Chapter 5.

Tharke, a freelance consultant, said that “TRPAP was a good initiative” and he considers that the “project introduced AI approach to mobilise local resources for development.” He believes that the “infrastructure developed by the project was useful for local people” and that the project was able to develop a ‘group spirit’ among local people to work together; an example is the saving and credit scheme, which is still continuing in Junbesi and Pattale. Sonam, an officer working for the District Development Committee (DDC) in Solukhumbu, commented that “TRPAP was well received because it went to the grass root level even in the time of political conflict.” He thinks that the “local user groups and beneficiaries were happy with the project.”

Contrary to the prevailing views among local residents, Ongel, an officer of a national tourism organisation, had a different view on the continuation of the project. He explained that the Sustainable Tourism Development Unit (STDU) established in NTB, as mentioned
in Dhakal et al. (2007), is continuing the programme in different forms. He added that the project was able to develop long-term strategic planning and local capacity building in project areas.

Consistent with the views of most residents, expert participants also raised various issues related to the sustainability of the project. Kamal, who works with one of the international organisations, thinks that “conceptually, TRPAP was a good project, but practically, it could not achieve as expected.” The reason, he suggested, was because the project could not develop good cooperation and coordination with government agencies and other stakeholders. Similarly, Gyalpo thinks that the “the mechanism developed by TRPAP did not work effectively” due to a lack of coordination.

Tourism revenue can be expanded by increasing the number of visitors, their average length of stay, and their average daily expenditure (Weaver & Lawton, 2010). As the Junbesi and Pattale residents expected more tourists in their village, Gyalpo (an expert) thinks that “the number of tourist arrivals needs to be increased to benefit local people and promote pro-poor tourism.”

In summary, the general opinion of the expert participants indicated that the project was not able to achieve the ultimate goal of poverty alleviation; an observation also made by the local participants. There was a lack of an effective exit plan and a mechanism for sustainability of the programmes. However, the expert participants perceived that the project had made some contribution in tourism promotion and development. The initiatives of developing tourism infrastructure and raising awareness among local people about tourism are major outcomes of the project. The next section presents the expert participants’ perspectives on the effectiveness and various challenges of AI in tourism planning.

6.5 Experts’ perspectives on the effectiveness of AI

The expert participants had different views on the effectiveness of the AI approach in tourism planning and development. While most of the participants expressed that AI can be an effective tool for planning, they also raised concerns about various challenges in the application of this approach. Dambur shared his experience based on his field experience
while working with TRPAP in Rasuwa. The project mobilised local people in programme planning and implementation through local groups. He believes that the AI approach worked effectively, but thinks that the number of tourists visiting the area decreased due to political instability during the programme’s implementation. As a result, he said, local people did not receive the benefit instantly from tourism:

We trained and mobilised local Tamang people as facilitators to prepare settlement level plans. These facilitators were fully involved in the planning and implementation process in 33 settlements. Therefore the overall process was effective. But one thing we should not forget is that the duration from 2002-2005 was the peak situation of conflict in Nepali politics. Hence, the local community could not get immediate benefit from tourism at that time.

From the experience of working with TRPAP project, another participant Mingphuti said, “I think AI is effective because it encourages people to participate and also that they take ownership of the planning when they prepare themselves”. She had similar view with local residents that the project period was short and raised the concerns that such project cannot help much in improving the livelihood of local people. She also thinks local capacity building is important to carry over the responsibilities of the project as consistent with local residents’ perceptions.

Kumar explained that AI is not only a particular approach for specific field, but it can be used as a framework for any subject. He thinks that AI cannot be rigid because it generates new ideas all the time. He emphasised that the planning and empowerment of local people should go together:

When we follow the AI approach, it motivates people and brings together the differences in [the] way of doing things. Planning is not a big deal, but we need to impart education while planning. When both things come together, people will get motivated and also get outcomes. This is possible through AI.

Gyalpo thinks that AI can be an effective approach, but there are a few issues that need to be taken into consideration. Resources for programme implementation, mechanisms for programme continuation, and ownership by the local people towards the programme are important issues. He explained:
... a few things still need to be done to make AI effective in planning. We have to be clear why we are using AI. It is important to arrange the resources and technical support to accelerate the planning. Sustainability and follow up mechanisms should be considered. In the village, people are always busy with their own business; this type of programme is forgotten within a few days. Therefore, it may be necessary to have an institution to facilitate the programmes and resources. While doing planning, local interest and ownership need to be considered. When the programme is in their interest, they take initiatives to gather the resources required to implement the programmes. If not, the exercise will be in vain. Interest and ownership are linked so it is important to know how to arrange resources, and what are the follow up strategies; if we are able to clear these issues, then it will be effective; otherwise it cannot.

As mentioned above, there are various factors that influence the effectiveness of AI. The following sections present the expert participants’ perspectives on participation by local people in planning, sustainability of AI process, monitoring and evaluation, and various challenges of AI in tourism planning.

6.5.1 Experts’ perspectives on local people’s participation in planning

According to Chapagain (2004), AI emphasises local people's participation, capacity building and ownership for development through local resource mobilisation. It believes in local strengths (from human or natural resources), knowledge or skills, experiences or successes. Majority of the expert participants tended to agree that AI encourages community participation in planning and implementation of tourism programmes. The AI process creates an environment for people in the community to share their ideas and provide their input in planning. For example, Tharke, one of the participants, thinks that AI encourages local people’s participation because it values their views and knowledge:

I think AI encourages community participation. It is human nature; if you are encouraged, you will definitely come and participate. If your views are appreciated by others, you will definitely be happy to express them. On the other hand, if you are not appreciated or always treated as a poor and unintelligible person, then you never become interested. Therefore, there is high participation while using AI; without participation this is not possible.
However, there are some critical issues that affect community participation. The role of outsiders as experts in the planning process is still prevalent. The findings from the fieldwork indicate that the participation of local people in planning process was not ‘spontaneous’, as mentioned in Tosun’s (1999) typology of community participation – the highest level of participation. Tharke commented that “the role of facilitator in the planning exercise is important for local people’s participation” (as referred in Chapagain, 2009). Since there are still discrimination and different perceptions toward various social and economic groups in the society (as mentioned in Chapter 2), it is a challenging task to gather all those people in one place. Therefore, Tharke believes that a facilitator needs to have internalised the concept of AI and be able to understand the social and cultural context:

If you go to any village for any programme, mainly the people who have better socio-economic status will come to participate in the programme. Poor people do not come even if you invited them directly, this is because they think it is the business of ‘superior people’; they are discriminated against; no one listens to them, and nothing happens even if they show up. These thoughts still prevail in many communities.

Dambur also indicated that tourism was considered as a business of elite people in rural remote areas, and there was no access for the economically disadvantaged ones. The social and cultural context is one of the barriers in community participation. But based on the experience of using AI in tourism planning and implementation by TRPAP, Dambur believes that AI can be used to increase local people’s participation in the programmes:

AI can be one of the best tools for poor people's access in planning and development which was the main lesson learned from the TRPAP planning experience. In Nepalese traditional tourism, poor and marginalised groups cannot dream. There was no environment for those people to dream about tourism development in the past. But AI encouraged local people to participate in the TRPAP programme. Local people participated in the Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny stages. At the same time, AI process also improved the capacity of local people. So they understood the importance of programming and getting involved with different income generating activities such as handicraft production, portering, guiding, operating teashops and homestays etc.
‘Spontaneous participation’ as referred in Tosun’s (1999) typology can be met only when the degree of participation levels such as partnership, delegated power, and citizen control of Arnstein’s (1969) ladder are achieved. However, the role of local community is crucial to achieve the higher degree of participation. If local people are not interested and are not ready to take ownership of any programme, then any planning approach is destined to fail. Local communities do not support the planning process if the programmes are not thought beneficial to them as mentioned in Chapter 5. Kamal shared that the nature of the programme determines the participation level of the local people. If the programme addresses the need of the local people, then there will be better participation. He said, “The local community participation was quite good while using AI. However, the participation differs from place to place. If the community is going to benefit, they need to join and participate fully in the programme.”

Tosun (2006) illustrated that different interest groups expect different levels of community participation in order to achieve their own goals, and these expectations may conflict with each other. Even in the same community, people living with better economic conditions may have different interests and goals from other people. Therefore, the degree of community participation may differ from programme to programme.

Another participant, Gyalpo, expressed that people’s participation is crucial in participatory approaches, including AI. However, he thinks that the level of participation differs based on the approach used in planning: “...the nature of participation depends upon the approaches. The PRA approach involves preparing a seasonal calendar, a resource map etc to generate ideas and information and aims to identify the problems. But AI planning begins with people’s knowledge, interests, dreams, available resources, etc.”

While implementing any pro-poor programmes in rural areas, it is important to identify the beneficiaries. In this regard, experts had various views about poor people’s participation in different programmes. Gyalpo raised his concern on the concept of PPT in the context of Nepal. He commented that it is not clear as to who are poor and how to identify them. He thinks that there are different economic levels even among poor people:
People who live in geographically remote areas are comparatively poor. We understand that when we go to such communities with certain programmes, those programmes are pro-poor. All people do not have [the] same level of economic standard; there are extremes between poor and rich.

Gyalpo further explained the context of the communities in remote areas. People with better financial stability run lodges and teashops, and these people benefit more from tourism. The notion of PPT is to generate income to the poor people, but people with better economic standard among the poor people always take more benefit. Gyalpo indicated that the disadvantaged people in the society always lag behind to reap the benefit, an issue also referred to in the DFID report (1999b). According to Gyalpo, “Most of the local people who run lodges are economically better-off as compared to other people in the village. Therefore, it seems that the programmes run for pro-poor objectives mostly benefited rich people in poor communities.”

Dambur shared the lessons learned from TRPAP in the Rasuwa district that community awareness of tourism is important before implementing tourism projects in rural areas. He explained the constraints: “There were hesitations among poor people that think tourism is a business for the rich, so we had to conduct awareness programmes on tourism at the beginning.” Another participant, Mingphuti, also shared her experience with a TRPAP project. TRPAP supported economically disadvantaged people by providing skill development training and loan support to start small businesses in their village. However, she said, “Local people continued such business effectively only when the project was running.” This shows that regular follow-ups are important.

Overall, the perspectives of expert participants indicate that AI can be a useful approach to involve local people in planning processes. It encourages the people’s participation in planning with the concept of appreciating local views and strengths. However, an AI approach does not necessarily increase the people’s participation in planning. There are various influencing factors, such as political, social and cultural context, benefit of the planning, and role of facilitators.
6.5.2 Perceived sustainability in AI process

Most of the AI expert participants claimed that the process ensures the sustainability of the tourism programme at the time of the planning exercise. While developing a detailed plan at the ‘Design’ phase of the 4-D model, strategies for sustainability of the programme are discussed (Chapagain, 2004). For example, Kamal shared his experience of working with local NGOs to implement programmes in eastern Nepal: “We worked in partnership with local NGOs and empowered them to implement the programmes and handed over the responsibilities to those organisations after completion of [the] project period.” He thinks AI “involves local people in all the processes of planning” and “makes them responsible to continue the programme.” However, local residents’ view was not consistent in this case.

TRPAP developed an institutional mechanism for the sustainability of the tourism programmes (as mentioned in section 5.2.2.1). Conceptually, this mechanism was responsible for follow-up and taking initiatives for the tourism promotion and development. TRPAP project believed that the local capacity building and mechanism would create a sustainable programme. However, the mechanism was not able to fulfil expectations. Therefore, many activities initiated by the project were discontinued after completion of the period, except for a programme like the saving and credit scheme and an information centre in Junbesi.

Another AI expert, Tharke, considers that sustainability is one of the important aspects in the AI process. He said, “sustainability is a complex phenomenon and a cross cutting issue of 4-D model.” However, he thinks the application of AI in a planning process does not necessarily guarantee the sustainability of the programme. According to him, “resource identification and mobilisation by enabling local capacities are important for sustainability in the planning process.”

Ongel, who works for NTB in a sustainable tourism development unit, shared that the responsibility of project activities initiated by TRPAP was taken by DDC and NTB. He claimed that the programmes are still continuing:

There are Sustainable Tourism Development Sections in each DDC and the section is looking after most of the issues such as allocating budget and addressing the demands of local regions. At the central level, NTB is supporting the replication of materials and their mass distribution for tourism promotion. NTB also involves them in the national tourism fair every year.
However, the overall impression from the field interviews indicated that the programme could not run smoothly after the end of the project. Various opinions were given by the participants as to why the programme could not continue its projects. One of the common reasons was that the mechanism developed for sustainability of the tourism project could not work effectively due to the lack of financial resources. Mingphuti believes that the TRPAP programmes did not continue as planned because DDC did not take any initiatives to continue the programmes:

There was an understanding with DDC that they will continue and look after the tourism programmes after phasing out the project. I think DDC has not taken care of this; they don’t have both human and financial resources to work in the tourism sector.

Karma also added that the mechanism clearly defined the role and responsibilities of all stakeholders, but it did not work due to a lack of resources. The unstable political situation was another reason given by Karma. Shusila had a different view from the other participants. She thinks that NGOs were not able to create linkages from their programme to the governmental system. Since the AI approach is used mainly by NGOs in Nepal, Shusila thinks that the government programmes should incorporate the approach in planning.

### 6.5.3 Experts’ perspectives on monitoring and evaluation in AI process

Monitoring and evaluation play important roles in the success of programme implementation. The expert participants shared various perceptions and views on how they conducted the monitoring and evaluation in the AI process while implementing the projects.

Kamal explained that “monitoring and evaluation is done by repeating the 4-D cycle.” Since 4-D is a continuous process, the cycle repeats after the Destiny phase, which leads to new discoveries (Cooperrider, et al., 2008). Kamal thinks that the process not only monitors or evaluates the programme, but it also builds the capacity of the local community. The programme goal and objectives are the major indicators for monitoring and evaluation.

Dambur shared his experience on how TRPAP conducted the monitoring and evaluation process. TRPAP conducted re-APPA exercises to measure the changes. Development
wheels, also known as ‘spider webs’, were used to generate baseline information during the Discovery phase in the 4-D model. Later, the process was reviewed again during the re-APPA exercise by involving all stakeholders.

Karma shared his experience of local people’s participation in monitoring and evaluation in the AI process: “When we design a programme, monitoring and evaluation responsibilities are also assigned as a part of the planning.” He gave an example: “If we are planning for a community building in the village, then we discuss who is responsible for monitoring.” He had experience of giving the responsibility to local NGOs:

We give the responsibility to local NGO[s] to accomplish the programmes with a plan. It can be monitored through the NGO’s worksheet, recording how much work has been completed. After that we can go to the community to see the actual consequences and also consult with the local community. I found this effective.

6.5.4 Perceived challenges of AI in tourism planning
There are various challenges in using AI in tourism planning. The expert participants expressed their perspectives on the different challenges that occurred during the programme implementation in the different places. The major challenges indicated by the experts included: political instability; socio-economic stratification; illiteracy of local people; mainstreaming the concept with government plan, acceptance of new concept; role of facilitators; and lack of financial resources. Political instability, illiteracy and lack of financial resources were consistent to the challenges reported by the local residents. The expert participants believed that these challenges create barriers to community participation, and limit the overall effectiveness of the approach and sustainability of the programme.

Majority of the expert participants reported that political instability was one such challenge; for example, there were problems in travelling from one place to another due to civil war and lack of safety and security. Though some proponents of the AI claimed that the approach can be applied in any type of situation as mentioned in Jacobsgaard (2003), the findings of this study show that there were problems with implementing the programmes in the field during unstable political situation. The experience from the expert participants who were involved in TRPAP indicated that the political situation was one of the major challenges for the project. The majority of the local residents also indicated the
unstable political situation as a major challenge, mainly because of the decline in the number of tourist arrivals during that period. Therefore, the community in newly promoted destinations did not instantly benefit from tourism.

As described in section 2.2, social discrimination is still prevalent in Nepalese societies based on ethnicity and race. The Hindu stratification of discriminatory caste system is deeply rooted in society (Bhattachan, 2008). The recent murder case of a Dalit man from western Nepal has highlighted the existing social problems. He was cruelly beaten to death for using the fire from the kitchen hearth to light a cigarette. The kitchen belonged to a Thakuri household, which is considered a high caste (Sejuwal, 2011). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, discrimination based on race, ethnicity and economic condition are challenges to any participatory approach, including AI. Therefore, it is important to consider strategies to overcome these socio-economic barriers while planning for tourism development.

AI literature does not consider the level of qualification of the participants in planning. However, the field experience from the expert participants indicated that illiteracy of local people was one of the challenges in planning and implementation of the project. Because of illiteracy, the participants who were involved in the TRPAP project experienced difficulties communicating with the people and discussing the process. This view was shared by both the local and the expert participants.

Experts tend to agree that the facilitator’s role is significant in AI tourism planning, as mentioned by Panzeri et al. (2009). Therefore, the attitude and behaviour of the facilitator may influence the participation level of the community in the planning process. If the facilitator does not understand the local context and internalise the concept of AI, then the whole planning process will be undermined. Dambur thinks that the role of a facilitator in an AI exercise is challenging: “... if facilitators or planners understand the social context and tourism system, then the whole planning cycle work properly, i.e. good design follows from good discovery and dreams... If the discovery part is not conducted well, then whole system will be weak.”

Experts also indicated that the acceptance of a new concept is also a challenge (Chapagain, 2004). They agree that it is difficult to change people’s mind from problem-solving to AI concept. Kumar, an expert participant, thinks that “people who are rigid do not accept the
new innovation easily; this creates difficulties for introducing new concepts.” There is a lack of proper coordination between government agencies and different projects implemented by NGOs. Consistent with Kumar, Tharke also thinks that there is a difficulty incorporating the AI concept with government policies, as the concept is mainly used by NGOs in project implementation. He added that “programme implementation in Nepal involves too much politics and bureaucracy, and government bureaucrats do not want to hear about AI approach.”

Another participant (Mingphuti) expressed that implementation and continuation of the programme is a challenge for AI. She believes that the AI exercise can design very good programmes, but sometimes those programmes cannot be implemented due to lack of financial resources. This is similar to the local perspective with regards to the TRPAP project. In that case, the planning exercise may raise the expectations of the local people, but loses the local’s faith in the process, and may lead to frustrations. Mingphuti further expressed that “any planning approach cannot do anything if there are not enough resources to continue the programme.” Ongel has a similar view, and thinks that while doing an APPA exercise, “it generates people’s expectation, and tourism cannot fulfil all those needs due to lack of resources.” He explained that “when we conduct planning exercises using AI, local people come up with various dreams and activities, but tourism programmes cannot address all those needs. In that case local people may feel that the project could not fulfil their needs.” This is reported by both residents and experts, and seemed to be a serious issue for AI in tourism planning. Planners or facilitators should be careful to avoid raising false expectations.

6.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the findings from interviews with expert participants on AI in tourism planning and development. AI has been used in different sectors, including tourism in Nepal by various organisations since 1995. The proponents of AI claim that this approach not only generates information required for planning, but also empowers local people. Most participants noted that the resource mobilisation and local capacity building are important aspects for the sustainability of the tourism project. Based on the experience of the expert participants, three main reasons for selecting AI in tourism planning can be identified: (1) AI focuses on the community’s strengths and successes, which create hope. AI is based on the concept of ‘building on success’, which identifies the strengths and
experiences of the community, rather than discussing existing problems. However, it is not ethical for AI to raise unattainable hopes and dreams among the people, and planners should consider this risk. (2) AI builds local capacity and ownership. While using AI, it involves local people in the process which not only builds the capacity of people for development, but also develops local ownership towards the planning. (3) Donors’ interest towards new approaches. Since various donor agencies provided funding support to many NGOs in Nepal using the AI approach in project planning and implementation, it can be seen as an opportunity to attract funding from donors.

There are various differences between AI and other approaches. The major difference is the way they deal with the problems and issues in the society. Top-down planning approaches are centralised and lack local people’s participation. PRA emphasises local people participation but lacks appreciation of strengths and views of the people. The AI concept emerges as an alternative approach to problem-solving by focusing on the strengths and successes of the community.

The general impression of the participants towards TRPAP indicated that the project could not achieve the goals set. The lack of an effective exit plan for sustainability of the programme and political conflict during project implementation were regarded as major challenges. However, the participants considered that the TRPAP project was able to contribute to tourism promotion in project areas. The major outcomes were tourism infrastructure development and awareness of tourism among local people.

The expert participants think that AI can be an effective tool for tourism planning with local people’s participation. However, they equally raised the concerns about the application of this approach. Political instability, illiteracy of local people, lack of resources, difficulties in acceptance of AI concept by people, role of facilitators, and dominant role of donors in development are some of the challenges reported by participants. Beside these challenges, there were concerns with regard to the poorest people’s access to the benefits where discrimination and perception toward disadvantaged groups is still prevalent.

The next chapter presents an appraisal of the research objectives with recommendation for future research needs and concluding remarks.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section includes a reappraisal of the research objectives and a summary of the findings including pro-poor tourism development in Junbesi and Pattale, application of AI in PPT, local people’s participation in PPT planning, and effectiveness of AI in PPT planning and development. The second section provides recommendations for potential future research. Finally, the thesis is brought to a close with some concluding remarks.

7.1 Reappraisal of the research objectives

This thesis explored various aspects of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process in Pro-poor Tourism (PPT) based on experiences from Nepal. More specifically, this research aimed to assess the effectiveness of AI application in PPT planning and development, and analyse how this approach contributes to people’s participation in tourism planning. Local residents’ and expert participants’ perspectives on AI approach in tourism planning were studied through two case study sites (Junbesi and Pattale) in the Solukhumbu district. The case specific research findings are useful in analysing the AI process in PPT planning in rural settings and its contribution to local people’s participation in planning and development processes. It also provides a useful basis for planners and policy makers to understand the context in order to maximise the tourism benefits to the local communities, including the poorest people.

The specific objectives of the research were:

a) To critically review the concept of PPT planning and development;

b) To critically review the concept of AI and its application to tourism in general;

c) To evaluate the effectiveness of AI in PPT planning from the perspective of local residents, district and national level experts in Nepal; and

d) To investigate the extent to which local residents are engaged in tourism planning processes through two Nepalese community case studies with contrasting exposure to tourism development.
7.1.1 PPT in Junbesi and Pattale

Since tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world, it has potential to increase opportunities in improving the livelihood of people living in poverty for developing countries like Nepal. The current visitor arrival trends in Nepal indicate potential for more tourists in the future. Recent political developments also favour tourism which suggests the sector has the potential to contribute in improvement in the livelihood of the people of Nepal. However, it is difficult to calculate the contribution made by tourism for poverty alleviation in Nepal. The scale of tourism benefit varies across and between different economic groups. According to the Millennium Development Goals (UN, 2000) people living on less than a US dollar a day are considered extremely poor. However, the population who live in geographically remote areas are an economically marginalised group in the context of Nepal. As a consequence, people who run lodges or teashops in rural areas may not necessarily be rich, but financially, they may be better off than local farmers who are at the very bottom of the local economy. Therefore, the people from marginalised groups, who have slightly more resources to run tourism enterprises, are more likely to benefit more from tourism than those considered ‘very poor’ (DFID, 1999b). In this context, it can be fair to say that tourism has benefitted the people who have relatively more resources.

Though the PPT concept emphasises increasing tourism benefits to the poorest people, it does not necessarily contribute to poverty alleviation unless there are strategies to extend tourism benefit to the economically lowest tier of society. It is also important to consider that the majority of the population who live in remote areas have limited access to social and economic resources and have few political opportunities. The findings from this research show that the benefits of tourism are not equally distributed among local residents in Junbesi and Pattale. Lodges and teashops are two major tourism related enterprises in rural areas. Comparatively, wealthier people in both Patala and Junbesi villages are involved in lodge and teashop business. Therefore, the gap between ‘the haves’ and ‘the have nots’, indicates that tourism has afforded more benefit to better-off people in the community, than to the poorest people. This indicates that one of the key aspirations of the PPT concept was not achieved. According to Ashley, et al. (2001), the government should take the leading role in collaboration with NGOs and the private sector to promote PPT by developing effective policy and organising local communities in order to better involve them effectively in tourism.
Another important point to be considered for PPT is the number of tourists visiting a particular destination. Approximately 600,000 tourists visited Nepal in 2010, but these visitors were not evenly distributed across the country. For example, Annapurna, Sagarmatha and Chitwan in total received the major portion of tourists arrivals (MoTCA, 2010). This study suggests that developing PPT in new destination requires more efforts than the areas already developed for tourism. External supports (financial and technical) are essential to empower local communities and build their skills in order to establish, and sustain tourism as part of their livelihood options. As a way to spread the benefits of tourism more equitably, the Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Project (TRPAP) introduced new tourism attractions such as the Dudhkunda Pikey Cultural Trail, with the objective of increasing the number of tourists in the lower Solukhumbu region. However, those newly promoted destinations receive only a small number of tourists. As a result, local people have not received adequate benefits from tourism. However, there are possibilities of increasing the number of tourists on this trail, for which the promotion and development of facilities need to be emphasised. Since this trail passes through various settlements in lower Solukhumbu, tourists can experience local culture and nature intact in rural settings. Currently, as mentioned in Chapter 2, tourism is a seasonal activity for both Junbesi and Pattale communities, normally lasting six months in a year (i.e. March to May and September to November). Therefore, tourism generates supplementary income for these communities, but tourism is yet to be developed as a major economic activity to maximise local benefits.

Local residents in Junbesi and Pattale are supportive and optimistic for further development of tourism in their region. There are two main reasons why these communities remain hopeful: (1) Since 2006, the security situation in the country has improved dramatically. The number of tourists travelling along the Dudhkunda Pikey Trail and the Jiri Everest Trail could not increase during the period when Maoist rebels were active. (2) There has been a remarkable improvement in road and trail network, making these villages more accessible. The road network is increasing in major places of the lower Solukhumbu region. Pattale is already connected to a road, and there is a plan to connect Junbesi. However, the road development will have both positive and negative impacts on local tourism. Therefore, proper tourism planning is important to minimise negative impacts and maximise local benefits, including benefits for the poorest in the communities.
7.1.2 The AI process in PPT planning

AI has been used as a planning tool in Nepal since the 1990s in different sectors, including tourism. Mainly NGOs are applying this approach in communities to implement their programmes. Since the use of AI in Nepal is still at the experimental stage, the actual contribution of this approach in different fields, including tourism planning and development, is not easy to assess. The difference between AI and other approaches is the way it deals with problems. AI focuses on the communities’ strengths and successes, which tend to create hope among the local people. Some experts claim that AI is suitable in Nepalese society, as it is compatible with the local values and belief system (Chapagain, 2009; Tamang, 2002). This research reveals that the concept has potential in rural areas in PPT planning, because AI encourages poor people to participate in the process. While AI may not have made a direct contribution to poverty alleviation, it can create an environment for the people to participate in PPT planning and development processes in rural areas. However, there are various challenges in the rural communities which may have greater influence on the success or failure of any planning initiative, which are described in section 7.1.2.2. The challenges include political instability, social inequalities, difficulties in acceptance of the concept, lack of resources, and role of facilitators and donors. Though these challenges may limit the nature of community participation in PPT planning, AI is more likely to be more effective than traditional planning approaches.

7.1.2.1 Community participation

Local capacity building and empowerment through community participation is the goal of participatory approaches; without which there will be difficulties in achieving the sustainability goals of tourism development (Sofield, 2003). The level of participation may differ from programme to programme based on the nature and the benefit received by local communities. The findings of this research show that local residents report being satisfied with their participation in the project planning and implementation processes. As discussed in section 5.2.1, local people were convinced that the TRPAP project was useful for their community, and were encouraged to participate in the programmes. The local groups were formed with the membership of each household, and given the responsibilities to implement the programmes. However, my field observation and further analysis show that the groups were not independent in decision-making, and they had to follow guidelines provided by the project staff. Local residents only provided their contribution in cash or in kind, as per the requirement of the project. This indicates that the degree of community
participation in the TRPAP project could not go beyond the ‘induced participation’ in Tosun’s (1999) typology and ‘placation’ in Arnstein’s (1969) ladder. This indicates that the degree of community participation cannot be measured only on the basis of local resident’s contribution to the project and their attendance at the meetings. Although the project made efforts to build skills and capacity to empower local people to continue the project activities in the long term, it did not achieve this, as reflected in the perspectives of local people and expert participants. However, despite this finding the expert participants claim that AI is a useful approach in encouraging local people’s participation and contributed to some extent to increase community participation in tourism planning and development processes.

### 7.1.2.2 Effectiveness of AI in PPT planning

The case study findings suggest that the AI approach has both opportunities and challenges when used in PPT planning and development. Figure 10 presents the ‘Challenges’ and ‘Intended possible outcomes’ of AI application in PPT planning. The ‘Challenges’ box lists existing barriers in society that are likely to influence the effectiveness of any approach and most of these challenges are outside the scope of planning approach for tourism. In order to achieve ‘Intended possible outcomes’ of PPT planning, the AI process has to be filtered through these challenges. Hence, the effectiveness of AI in PPT planning depends on its ability to address existing challenges.

**Figure 10: Application of AI in PPT planning**
Challenges

The challenges listed above were perceived by local residents and expert participants at the time of planning and implementation of the TRPAP project in Junbesi and Pattale, with ‘political instability’ identified as one of the key challenges. The security situation was poor, and affected the safety of project staff as well as local beneficiaries. This made it difficult to travel to and work in communities, and thus limited the effectiveness of the project. Likewise, ‘socio-cultural stratification’ in Nepalese societies appeared to be another major barrier to promote participation in the planning and development processes. Discrimination based on gender, race and economic prosperity still exists in Nepal, and a high degree of community participation is unlikely to be achieved under conditions where high social inequalities exist.

AI is used mainly by NGOs, and it is yet to be mainstreamed in the Nepalese government’s policies and programmes. Many NGOs develop and implement programmes using AI, and most of them cease to exist after the termination of donor support. Their projects also lack coordination with government agencies. Since the government has not adopted AI in its planning, there are difficulties in linking NGOs’ programmes to the government’s programmes. Similarly, the findings indicate that there was a lack of human and financial resources to support programmes beyond the life of the project. Many of the activities initiated during the period when TRPAP was active could not be continued after its termination, due to lack of human and financial resources. The study also reveals that there may be a risk of raising unnecessary expectations if these projects cannot be delivered. Raising false expectations is not only unethical, but it can also contribute to local discontent and distrust towards the project and, subsequently, to failure.

The research reveals that the role of the facilitator is important in the AI process. If the facilitator is unable to understand the local context and internalise the AI concept, the whole planning process will be undermined. It also indicates that the success of the planning process is likely to depend on the skills and attitude of facilitators. Therefore, the attitude and behaviour of a facilitator and their knowledge on local context plays a crucial role in the AI planning process.

Additionally, the donor’s role can be considered as both an opportunity and a challenge in the AI approach. As noted above, various donor agencies have been supporting the project...
using the AI concept in Nepal. This can be seen as an opportunity to attract donor support. However, donor agencies may have vested interests in the project, and this may pose a challenge for the AI planning process. In this case, AI could be criticised for perpetuating donor interests, over and above local interests and concerns. Besides the challenges mentioned above, it is important to consider local interests and ownership and effective follow-up strategies. Furthermore, this research indicated that it is important to have in place mechanisms to facilitate the programmes and provide the necessary technical expertise to support the planning process.

**Intended possible outcomes**

The ultimate goal of using AI in PPT planning process is poverty reduction by identifying local strengths, increasing community participation, strengthening local capacity and building local ownership of the PPT programmes. The findings suggest that AI has some potential to tackle these challenges, more effectively than traditional problem solving approaches. Positive philosophy is considered a strength of AI’s that makes it different from traditional approaches which tend to focus on existing problems. The concept of ‘building on strengths’ in AI is more likely to initiate further development by mobilising local skills and resources. Therefore, AI is considered better suited for PPT planning and development especially in rural areas. AI creates hope for the people who are facing various problems, and has the potential to increase community participation in PPT planning and development. The case study findings also show that community participation in TRPAP project seemed to be satisfactory which contributed to building local skills and awareness in tourism development. The capacity building of local people is a key aspect of PPT development. Since AI places emphasise on the involvement of local people in the planning and implementation process, it enables development of community capacity and develops local ownership of the programme. The process empowers individuals, groups and community to conduct their own analysis of their lives and conditions. However, the case study findings show that the effort made by TRPAP project in capacity building among local residents was not sufficient. However, the local user groups formed by the project were continuing some of the activities such as the saving and credit scheme and running the information centre. This shows that the local communities can assume responsibility for continuing PPT programmes if their capacity is built at a certain level with required skills and resources. The successful attempts in building local
capacity by involving local communities in the process will ultimately contribute to achieving the ‘intended possible outcomes’ of AI in PPT planning and development.

7.2 Future research needs
This research focused on two villages where the tourist flow is small, but with contrasting exposure to tourism. It would be useful to conduct similar research in a larger geographic area such as the Everest region where tourism is well developed. This type of study will be helpful in understanding the contribution of tourism in improving the livelihood of the poorest people in the society at a regional scale.

The research indicated that the poorest people in society are likely to receive the least benefit from tourism. This requires an in-depth study on the factors that limit the access of poor people to the tourism development processes. It is also important to explore why the benefits of tourism cannot reach the poorest of the society; it is clear that future research needs to focus on how this can be improved.

NGOs are the main organisations that use the AI approach in different sectors, including tourism planning and development in Nepal. Almost all projects implemented by these organisations are funded by various donor agencies. It is important to investigate why these organisations and donors have adopted this approach in their community projects.

7.3 Concluding remarks
Although Nepal is naturally and culturally rich, it is an economically poor country, making poverty reduction one of its core development challenges for the 21st century. Tourism is a key sector in the Nepalese national economy. Nepal has the potential to promote PPT in order to contribute to poverty alleviation in rural areas where limited livelihood options are available. However, it is important to develop strategies that help ensure that any benefits of tourism extend to the lowest strata of society. Currently, the poorest people in the communities benefit least from tourism, as compared to better-off people in rural areas. The poorest people in the society also lack skills and resources to get involved in the tourism development process. Therefore, it is important to develop skills and confidence of
the poorest people to enable them to participate in the process, which will ultimately help to achieve sustainable PPT outcomes.

Since AI encourages local people to find their strengths and builds on them, the likelihood of overcoming challenges to achieve sustainable PPT outcomes is higher as compared to traditional approaches. Therefore, it can be concluded that AI might be better suited to achieve PPT outcomes in developing countries like Nepal. It is vital that the AI process needs to be cognisant of the local socio-economic context, to ensure that all potential risks are minimised, and that local people are empowered to design and deliver their own plans to pursue their dreams for sustainable and equitable tourism development.
References


Annexes

Annex 1: Research information sheet

A. Research Information sheet for experts

Faculty of Environment, Society and Design
Department of Social Sciences, Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Sport
Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand

Date:

[Name and address]

Dear [Name]

Namaste!

You are invited to participate as a subject in a project entitled “Appreciative Inquiry (AI) in Pro-Poor Tourism Planning and Development: Experiences from Nepal”.

This research is undertaken as a partial fulfilment for the Master of Tourism Management under faculty of the Environment, Society and Design of Lincoln University. This research is funded by New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) and the Faculty of Environment, Society and Design, Lincoln University.

This research aims to assess the effectiveness of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a planning tool for pro-poor tourism development at the community level. Additionally, it aims to critically assess how AI contributes to people’s participation in tourism planning and development. As a research participant, you will be interviewed and the interview will focus on your involvement of using AI approach in tourism planning and development. The entire interview should take between forty five minutes to an hour. If you are willing to participate in this research, you will need to sign the attached consent form and return it to me during the interview. The interview requires no subsequent involvement after this study, although you will be given the opportunity to read the interview transcript if you wish. With your consent, the interview will be recorded using a recording device. If you are not comfortable with the interview being recorded, short-hand notes will be taken during the interview.

The results of the project may be published in journals and conference proceedings, but you may be assured of the complete anonymity of data gathered in this investigation. Your identity will not be made public. To ensure your anonymity in the study, your name and contact details will not be used as a part of data dissemination. Transcriptions of the interview will be undertaken solely by the researcher. The consent forms and data will be kept separately in secure storage, and destroyed after six years. Only collated data will be used in written or oral presentations. No individual identifying information will be presented in public.
Your participation in this research is voluntary. You may withdraw your participation and the information you have provided for the research by informing me prior to April 30, 2010 by telephone, mail or email.

Contact details:
Address: Department of Social Sciences, Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Sport
P.O. Box # 84,
Lincoln University
Christchurch, Lincoln
New Zealand, 7647
Email: lhakpa.lama@lincolnlnuni.ac.nz
Mobile: 977-9841281915

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee (LUHEC). If you have any concerns in connection with the answers you have provided or the manner in which the project was carried out, please contact the project’s supervisors:

Thank you very much for your valuable time.

Your sincerely,

Lhakpa Tenji Lama
Master of Tourism Management (Candidate)

Contact details for supervisors:

Main Supervisor:
Stephen Espiner, PhD
Faculty of Environment, Society and Design
Lincoln University
Contact: (64) 3 325 3838 ext 8770
Email: Stephen.espiner@lincoln.ac.nz

Co-Supervisor:
Emma Stewart, PhD
Faculty of Environment, Society and Design
Lincoln University
Contact: (64) 3 325 3838 ext 8926
Email: Emma.stewart@lincoln.ac.nz
B. Research Information sheet for local residents

Faculty of Environment, Society and Design
Department of Social Sciences, Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Sport
Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand
Date:

[Name and address]

Dear [Name]

Namaste!

You are invited to participate as a subject in a project on tourism planning and development in Nepal. This research is undertaken as a partial fulfilment for the Master of Tourism Management under faculty of the Environment, Society and Design of Lincoln University. This research is funded by New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) and the Faculty of Environment, Society and Design, Lincoln University.

As a research participant, you will be interviewed and the interview will focus on your involvement in tourism planning and development in your community. The entire interview should take between forty five minutes to an hour. If you are willing to participate in this research, you will need to sign the attached consent form and return it to me during the interview. The interview requires no further involvement, although you will be given the opportunity to read the interview transcript if you wish. With your consent, the interview will be recorded using a recording device. If you are not comfortable with the interview being recorded, short-hand notes will be taken during the interview.

The results of the project may be published in journals and conference proceedings, but you may be assured of the complete anonymity of data gathered in this investigation. Your identity will not be made public. To ensure your anonymity in the study, your name and contact details will not be used as a part of data dissemination. Transcriptions of the interview will be undertaken solely by the researcher. The consent forms and data will be kept separately in secure storage, and destroyed after six years. Only collated data will be used in written or oral presentations. No individual identifying information will be presented in public.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You may withdraw your participation and the information you have provided for the research by informing me prior to April 30, 2010 by telephone, mail or email.

Contact details:

Address: Department of Social Sciences, Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Sport
P.O. Box # 84,
Lincoln University
Christchurch, Lincoln
New Zealand, 7647

Email: lhakpa.lama@lincolnlnuni.ac.nz
Mobile: 977-9841281915
This research has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee (LUHEC). If you have any concerns in connection with the answers you have provided or the manner in which the project was carried out, please contact the project’s supervisors:

Thank you very much for your valuable time.

Your sincerely,

Lhakpa Tenji Lama
Master of Tourism Management (Candidate)

Contact details for supervisors:

Main Supervisor: Stephen Espiner, PhD
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Co-Supervisor: Emma Stewart, PhD
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Annex 2: Consent form

Name of Project: Appreciative Inquiry (AI) in Pro-Poor Tourism Planning and Development: Experiences from Nepal

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis I agree to participate as a subject in the project and consent for interview to be recorded by (__) a digital recorder or (__) manual note (please tick one). I also consent to the publication of the results of the project with the understanding that anonymity will be preserved. I understand that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided before April 30, 2011. I also understand that the researcher will require my participant identification code, found at the top of the Information Sheet, if I wish to withdraw any or all of my information.

Name: __________________________

Signed: _________________________ Date: __________
Annex 3: Interview guide for local residents

Getting to know the participant
1. How long have you lived here?
2. Were you born here?
3. What have you been doing here?

Experience in tourism in general
1. What involvement do you have in tourism?
2. Why did you decide to become involved in tourism?
3. Normally, how many months per year are you involved in tourism activities?
4. What do you do during the off season of tourism?
5. Would you tell me briefly about tourism development in your area?
6. Have you experienced any changes in tourism development in your area? If so, When and Why?
7. Which places in your areas are the major attractions for tourists?
8. What do tourists visit this area for?
9. What are the major facilities for tourist in your area?

Perspectives on local tourism development
1. What do you think about contribution of tourism in your area?
2. What impacts (positive or negative) do you think tourism creates?
3. What could be done to minimize the negative impacts, and alternatively optimize the positive?
4. Currently, what are the challenges and opportunities of tourism?
5. What were the challenges and opportunities of tourism in the past?
6. In your opinion, what will be the future challenges and opportunities of tourism?
7. Who is benefitting from tourism here?

Involvement in tourism planning
1. Have you, or have local people been involved in the planning of tourism in this area?
2. Can you share with me any examples of tourism programmes where you or other local people were involved in planning?
3. If so, who was involved in planning?
4. In what ways the tourism planning was completed?
5. Were you aware of the main goals and objectives of the planning?
6. How would you like to involve in tourism planning in future?

Planning approach
1. Were you aware about the approach used in tourism planning in your area?
2. Can you tell me what the differences of recent tourism planning approach from previous approaches were?
3. Did the approach encourage you or poor people or other local people to participate in tourism planning and development and how?
4. How the poor people were identified in planning process?
5. What was your role in tourism planning and development?
6. How did other local people get involved?
7. What were the challenges during the planning?
8. Overall, how effective do you think the planning approach was?

Implementation Process
1. Who was responsible for the implementation of the programmes?
2. How were you informed about the tourism initiatives?
3. Was there resident support for the tourism programmes planned?
4. How were local people involved in the implementation of the programme?
5. What were the major achievements of the programme?
6. What were the challenges during the implementation of plan?
7. What benefits did the programme bring to this village?
8. How was the programme continued after completion?
9. Who were involved in monitoring and evaluating the programme?

Additional information about participants (if not come out during interview)
How would you describe yourself, in terms of:

- Gender
- Age group
- Occupation
- Education
- Organisation (if any)
Annex 4: Interview guide for district and national level experts

Getting to know the participants

1. How long have you been involved with this organisation?
2. What are the objectives of your organisation?
3. What is your role in this organisation? For how long?

General information on Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

1. Would you briefly tell me about your involvement in tourism planning, and specifically AI?
2. What makes AI different from other approaches?
3. How did you know about AI?
4. In what sectors have you been using AI?
5. How long have you been using AI in planning?
6. Why did you choose AI as planning tool?
7. What are some of the benefits of using AI?
8. Is AI applicable in any type of situation? Would you give some examples?

AI and tourism planning

1. Would you tell me about other tourism planning approaches used?
2. How do these approaches compare to the AI approach?
3. How long have you been using AI as a planning tool in tourism?
4. Can you tell me about how AI functions in planning at community level?
5. In what ways does AI allow for the participation and involvement of local people in tourism planning and development?
6. Can you give some examples of tourism planning and development programme that have used AI approach?
7. What were the goals and objectives of the programme?
8. What are the challenges and opportunities of using AI as a planning tool?

Effectiveness of AI approach

1. In what ways do you think AI is an effective planning tool for achieving the goals of pro-poor tourism?
2. How does AI ensure the sustainability of the programmes in the communities?
3. How does AI contribute to the participation of local people, including people with low access to resources, in tourism planning and development processes?

4. To what extent are ‘poor’ people involved in the implementation process?

5. Can you tell me about monitoring and evaluation processes used by AI? Who is responsible for this?

6. What is your opinion about the programmes implemented in two case study locations (Junbesi and Patale)?

7. In what ways local people involved in the process?

8. Could the process be improved, in what ways?

Additional information about participants (if not come out during interview)

How would you describe yourself, in terms of:

- Gender
- Age group
- Education