

RESEARCH / INVESTIGACIÓN

Diagnosis of the internal elements of the tourist system in the urban parish of Zaruma, Ecuador

Diagnóstico de los elementos internos del sistema turístico en la parroquia urbana de Zaruma, Ecuador

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Resumen: La parroquia urbana del cantón Zaruma contiene en su mayoría toda la oferta de atractivos culturales – patrimoniales de la ciudad, destacando entre uno de ellos el centro histórico, siendo el que atrae la mayor afluencia turística motivada por conocer los atractivos que se ubican de forma contigua al mismo, esta área urbana abarca las facilidades turísticas requeridas para la ejecución del turismo. Razón por la cual el objetivo principal del estudio fue realizar un análisis del Sistema Turístico considerando sus componentes internos en base a los nueve criterios de valoración, propuestos en la guía metodológica para la jerarquización de atractivos y espacios turísticos del Ecuador, con la finalidad de verificar cómo se encuentra el dinamismo de los componentes internos en función a la actividad turística de la parroquia. Para el presente estudio se empleó una metodología basada en un método descriptivo con un enfoque de observación directa. Además, se empleó la guía metodológica de jerarquización de atractivos y generación de espacios turísticos, propuesta por el Ministerio de Turismo del Ecuador; y como objeto de estudio se plantearon los componentes internos del Sistema Turístico, los cuales fueron: gobernanza, infraestructura, oferta, demanda y comunidad receptora. Como resultados, se determinó que en la parroquia existen debilidades en ciertos componentes del Sistema que deberían ser considerados por parte de la Gobernanza de la localidad, con el propósito de gestionar la dinámica entre los elementos internos, que beneficie al fortalecimiento del turismo en el lugar.

Palabras clave: Gobernanza, infraestructura, oferta, demanda, comunidad receptora.

Abstract: The urban parish of the canton Zaruma contains mostly, the entire offer of cultural - heritage attractions of the city, highlighting among them the historical center, being the one that attracts the largest tourist influx motivated by knowing the attractions that are located contiguous to it. At the same time, this urban area encompasses the tourist facilities required for the execution of tourism. This is the reason why the main objective of the study was to perform an analysis of the Tourism System considering its internal components based on the nine evaluation criteria, proposed in the methodological guide for the hierarchy of attractions and tourist spaces of Ecuador. This is aimed to verify how is the dynamism of the internal components depending on the tourist activity of the parish. For the present study, a methodology based on a descriptive method with a direct observation approach was used. In addition, the methodological guide of hierarchy of attractions and generation of tourist spaces was proposed, proposed by the Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador; and as an object of study the internal components of the Tourist System were raised, which were: governance, infrastructure, supply, demand and receiving community. As a result, it was determined that in the parish there are weaknesses in certain components of the system that should be considered by the Governance of the locality, with the purpose of managing the dynamics between the internal elements, which benefits the strengthening of tourism in the place.

KeyWords: Governance, infrastructure, supply, demand, receiving community.

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INTRODUCTION

Zaruma is a city that is located in south eastern Ecuador. It is located at 1,200 MASL and its surface is of 270,571 hectares. It belongs to El Oro Province, with an approximate population of 9,677 inhabitants. This city has a great cultural richness, reason why it was declared as Cultural Heritage of Ecuador in 1990; though in 1998 was considered to be eligible as Cultural Heritage of Humanity at UNESCO (Cornejo et al., 2012).

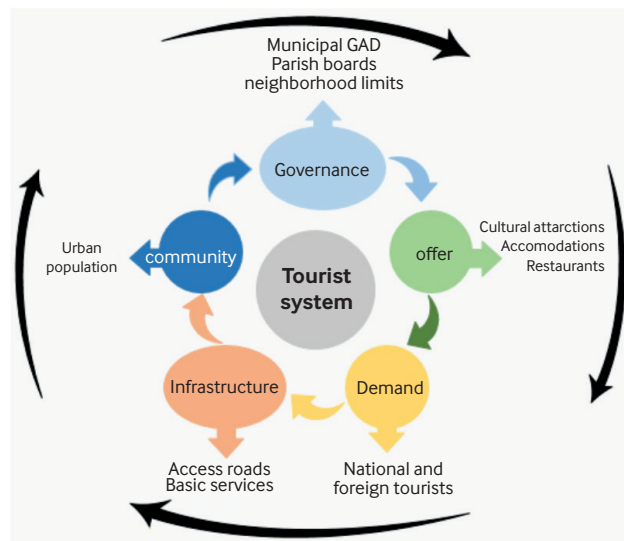
For this reason, the urban parish of Zaruma has various tourist attractions, mostly cultural and heritage, suitable to receive visitors and meet the needs of its visitors. In addition, in this place, the culture rooted of its population can be known, since it is reflected in its costumes, traditions and the vernacular-urbanistic- architecture of its heritage homes.

On the other hand, "around tourism, a network of relationships has been formed, and therefore, a system has been created (Boullon, 2006, p. 31). This is known as Tourist System, responsible of describing and analyzing the tourist activity of a territory, considering it as a broad set of interrelated activities and actors that without having such complex peculiarities, is composed of different elements both internal and externa,; and the importance of the study lies in the need to know how are they interacting to manage the tourist development of the locality.

Under this context, the problem of the present study reflects the absence of a diagnosis of the tourist system, which entails having as main objective: to analyze the internal elements of the Tourist System of the urban parish of the city of Zaruma, in order to identify the barriers that intervene or tourism conditions in the urban parish.

THEORETICAL BASE

Figure 1: Internal elements of the tourist system.



Source: prepared by the authors (Boullon, 2006).

Governance: It is responsible for the regulation of it, making reference to all entities both public and private that have as function, the development of tourism, optimization and change when necessary the operation of each of the components that integrate the tourist system, to facilitate production and sale of the services that integrate the tourist product (Díaz, 2013).

Infraestructure: It refers to the set of works and services that act as the basis for the development of all economic activities and consequently, be used for the development of a tourist destination. It is made up of basic services, road system, transport, complementary services (education, health centers, among others). Security services, recreational areas and leisure areas; as well as accommodation, food and beverage businesses, guidance services and tourist information (Quesada, 2010).

Offer: Set of goods and services available to tourists, facilitating the commercialization of the tourist product to consumers, under certain market conditions, which are characterized by the overall market price and demand (Morillo, 2011).

Demand: It is represented by tourists who individually or collectively are motivated to acquire the tourist facilities of the destination to be visited, in order to cover their needs. Demand can be of two types: internal demand, which is the movement of tourists inside their own country, and international demand, which is referred to the tourists who move to another country (Flores & De la O Barroso, 2012). Receiving community: Set of people who share various cultural elements with each other, in a certain geographical space. These elements can be: language, religion, clothing, costumes and traditions. In addition, they provide the necessary services for the satisfaction of the visitors, becoming a factor of great importance in the development of the tourist activity (Monterrubio, 2009).

METHODOLOGY

For carrying out the present research, a methodology based on a descriptive method was used, using secondary and primary sources. In addition, a direct observation approach was also used through an in situ visit to the locality. The study area is comprised of the urban parish of the Zaruma canton and as study object, the internal elements of the tourist system were delimited.

Likewise, the methodology of hierarchy of attractions and generation of tourist spaces of Ecuador was used, and the tourist attractions were evaluated based on nine criteria. This allows to diagnose the reality of the territory in function of the internal elements of the tourist system, included between governance, infrastructure, supply, demand and receiving community; in order to discover strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats of the abovementioned components, considering the use of a FODA matrix as a support tool.

The way in which the nine evaluation criteria have been identified based on the internal elements of the tourism system are detailed as follows:

Table 1: Relation of the tourist system with the evaluation criteria.

Internal elements of the tourist system	Evaluation criteria of the hierarchy methodology of tourist attractions	Weighting value of the criteria
Governance	Hygiene and tourist security	14
	Policies and regulations	10
	.state of conservation and integration of the site/environment	14
	Dissemination of tourist attraction	7
Infrastructure	Accessibility and connectivity	18
Supply	Tourist plan/services	18
	Activities practiced in the attraction	9
Demand	Visitor registry and influx	5
Receiving community	Human resources	5
Total		100

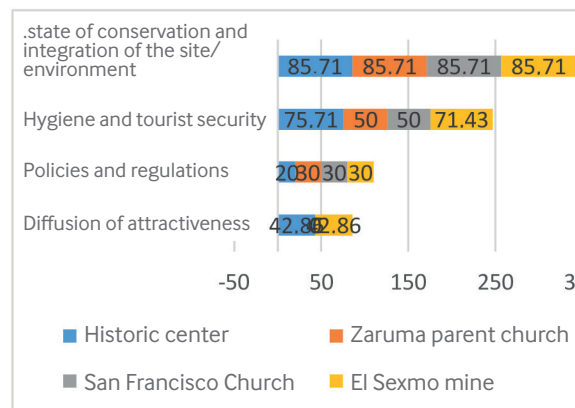
Source: own

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, a default weighting of 70% was considered, establishing whether an internal component of the system reflects a strength. Otherwise, this value will be considered as a weakness.

GOVERNANCE

Figure 2: Governance



Governance is an indispensable element in the development of tourism due to its function of controlling the efficiency of the tourist system, through the interrelation of its elements. This component can be made up by entities of the public or private sector, which facilitate the production and sale of the services involved in the tourist product (Grandío, 2005). In the urban parish of Zamura, the governance is mainly composed of the Decentralized Autonomous Government and currently faces a problem that affects its cultural patrimony, such as the sinkholes produced by the activity of illegal mining. However, with the support of the competent authorities, this problem is being regulated, whereas long-term solutions are sought. The results of this study indicate that the institutions that seek a well-being for the parish and at the same time allow that the tourist activity have a better development correspond to the Decentralized Autonomous Government, the National Police of Ecuador, health centers, and the Fire Department.

As for the criteria whose competence is in charge of the Governance, it is determined that the state of conservation and integration of the site/environment within the urban parish is a strength. This has been determined because its attractions represented by churches, historical center and "El Sexmo" mine have a percentage value that is above the estimated value to be considered as such. This is favorable because the conservation is the administration of the human use to produce benefits with a sustainable approach for current generations and, at the same time, maintain the possibilities of meeting the needs of future generations (Troncoso & Lois, 2004). For this reason, preserving the tourist sites of a territory helps to enhance tourism and through that activity, the receiving community will benefit economically from the influx of tourists.

The criterion of hygiene and tourist security stands out with the historic Center, having 75.71% and "El Sexmo" mine with 71.43%. This represents the tourist potential for the urban parish, whereas for the remaining attractions, this constitutes a weakness. It is mentioned that tourist security has an integral scope, due to the fact that this activity expresses both respect and guarantee of security associated to freedom of movement of the visitor, who characterizes the meeting of the actors involved in the tourist space (Ministerio de Turismo, 2017). Thus, it is mentioned that tourist security in the parish is due to the protection of the phy-

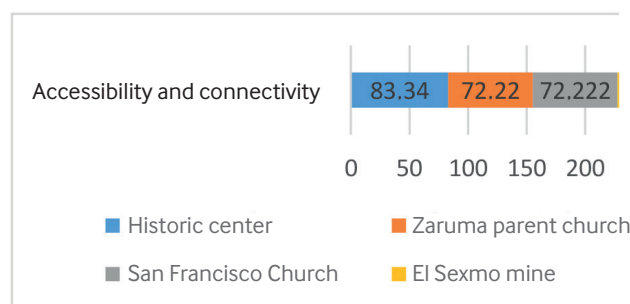
sical and psychological integrity of the visitor, service providers and the receiving community. Regarding hygiene, it is necessary that the sites of tourist interest have collection and waste deposits to take care of the state of conservation of the attractions. It was possible to verify that this service is provided in the area by its governance.

In the "Policies and Regulations" criterion, its attractions have a weighting between 20% and 30%, which should be improved because in tourism they refer to the actions that are exerted by the public sector from the set of administrations and institutions that integrate it and that have a relevant effect on the public activity (Organización Mundial del Turismo, 2008). Therefore, in the competent authorities of Zaruma canton, whose actions are not visible in the tourism sector according to the findings of this study, there is an absence of a territorial tourist management, despite the fact that the parish has a planning tool for the development and territorial planning called PDOT.

When talking about the "Diffusion of the Attraction" it is exhibited as a weakness because two of the attractions maintain a percentage of 42.86%, caused by the lack of tourism promotion by the authorities in charge. According to Mendes et al. (2013), the dissemination of a destination supports the local tourist organizations to market tourism services, mobilizing the local economy and making viable the development of the locality through the development of the locality. This is achieved together with the context. Dissemination should not be an isolated activity with tourism, but to work together to become a site in a competitive destination, according to the type of market desired.

INFRASTRUCTURE

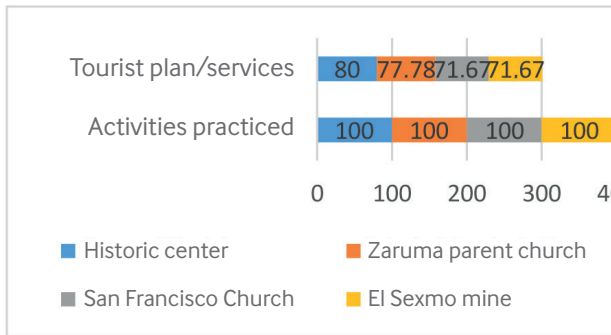
Figure 3: Infrastructure.



When referring to the criterion of accessibility and connectivity, a strength for the urban parish is reflected. Locating the historic center with 83.34% and a value of 72.22% for the churches and “El Sexmo” mine. This highlights the fact that in terms of accessibility, the road system generates benefits in both social and economic aspects, in different axes such as tourism. Thus, there is a better displacement towards destinations brings with it the advantages to do it (Muñoz & Torres, 2010). Therefore, in the urban parish, its accessibility is of first order, it has the necessary transport services, as well as the inclusive conditioning in the central square of the historic center.

OFFER

Figure 4: Offer



For the Tourist Plan/Services criterion, the historic center has 80%, the Parent Church 77.78%, San Francisco Church and “El Sexmo Mine with an equal percentage of 71.67% were considered as a strength. This is

due to the fact that they are located in the urban area and in this area, there is the greatest presence of services related to tourism, such as services of food and beverages and those complementary to the increasing tourist activity. Arrivals, trips and economic flows have increase as a result of the tourist influx (Palacios, 2002) and that the site has with the necessary services for the development of tourist activity make it competitive to receive visitors and ensure that their stay in the place is nice, certifying a next visit.

In the activities that are practiced in the attraction, all destinations have 100%, representing a strength for the urban parish, because the activities that are practiced generate items. As a product of the motivations of tourists, not only for visiting the attraction, but also for performing activities outside the everyday (Narváez & Fernández, 2010), activities in function of the tourism modality can be carried out in the urban parish. Cultural tourism: visiting the different colonial houses, visiting the museum within the historic center, knowing archeological remains and the history of the city and at “El Sexmo” mine to understand the gold extraction process, mineral that is part of its economic activity.

Tourist attractions

For the analysis of tourist attractions, assessment criteria were established, that allowed quantitative measurements of the reality of the offer, obtaining the following values:

Table 2: Results of the technical evaluation.

Assessment criteria	Pond	Historic center		Parent Church		San Francisco Church		El Sexmo Mine	
		Results	% Pond	Results	Weighed %	Results	Weighed %	Results	Weighed %
Accessibility and connectivity	18	15	83,34	13	72,22	13	72,22	13	72,22
Tourist plant/ services	18	14,4	80	14	77,78	12,9	71,67	12,9	71,67
.state of conservation	14	12	85,71	12	85,71	12	85,71	12	85,71

Hygiene and tourist security	14	10,6	75,71	7	50	7	50	10	71,43
Policies and regulations	10	2	20	3	30	3	30	3	30
Activities practiced in the attraction	9	9	100	9	100	9	100	9	100
Dissemination of the attraction	7	3	42,86	0	0	0	0	3	42,86
Type of visitor and influx	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	40
Human resources	5	2	40	0	0	0	0	2	40
TOTAL	100	63	58,62	56,9	45,51	56,9	45,51	56,9	45,51

Source: own

Table 3 shows the type, subtype and hierarchical level in which the tourist attractions of the urban parish of Zaruma are found, according to parameters considered in the Methodological Guide for the Hierarchy of Attractions and Generation of Tourist Spaces of Ecuador (Ministerio de Turismo, 2017).

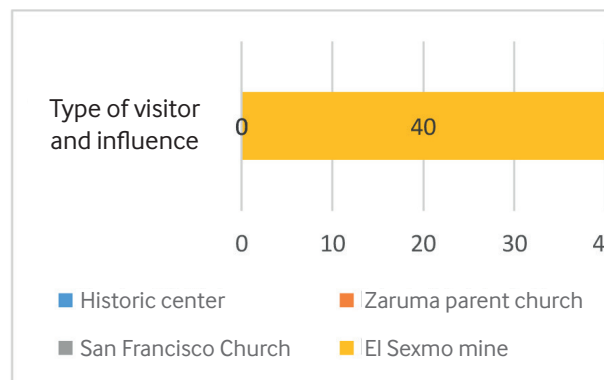
Table 3: Tourist attractions.

Name	Type	Subtype	Range	Hierarchy
Historic Center	Architecture	Cultural infrastructure	51 - 75	III
“El Sexmo” Mine	Architecture	Cultural infrastructure	26 - 50	II
Parent Church	Architecture	Cultural infrastructure	26 - 50	II
San Francisco Church	Architecture	Cultural infrastructure	26 - 50	II

Source: own, Methodological Guide for Hierarchy of Tourist Attractions.

Demand

Figure 5: Demand

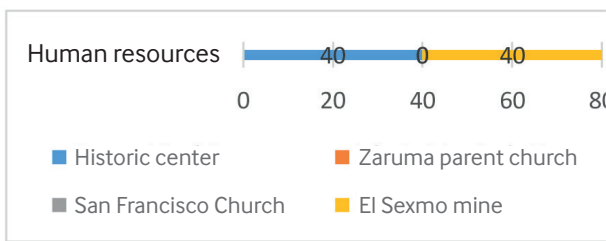


For the criterion “type of visitor and influx”, an average of 40% is obtained. This turns out to be a weakness for the urban parish, because a visitor registry is not kept or no digital tool is used in order to have statistical data. Only a conventional (physical) record is used, the same as a record but no information is analyzed. The other attractions studied do not use a management tool and according to the visitors, this tool is necessary to have a statistical record about the

influx of tourists, considering the tourist influx that visit the attraction. The tourist influx is considered as “the number of people who are currently participating in the tourist activity” (Crosby & Moreda, 1996, p. 12). It should be noted that the urban attractions of the parish have a sufficient tourist demand attracted by its patrimonial goods and its modality of cultural tourism.

Receiving community

Figure 6: Receiving committee



For the criterion “human resources”, the historic center and “El Sexmo” mine reflect 40%, unlike the other attractions that are represented by 0%. However, the values obtained show this criterion as a weakness for the urban area. Human resource is a fundamental factor in Tourism and it allows the development of tourist management through individuals who have skills and abilities that can meet the needs of tourists in terms of tourist services (Acosta et al., 2012). In the urban parish, it is possible to find people who provide information about the historic center and in the mine, there are assistants that provide the guidelines to enter the self-guided tour.

FODA ANALYSIS

Through the analysis of criteria assessment in the internal components of the tourist system in function of the tourist potential of the Zaruma urban parish, a SWOT analysis could be established.

Table 4: SWOT matrix of the Zaruma urban parish.

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
	Zaruma is considered Cultural Heritage of Ecuador.	Landslides by illegal mining
	The parish has attractions to develop, mostly in cultural – patrimonial tourism.	Absence of a territorial tourism development management plan by the authorities in charge of the parish.
	Adequate state of conservation of tourist attractions.	Low tourist signage in the tourist attractions of the urban area.
	It presents a variety of tourist services.	Little tourist security in the attractions.
	It has first-order access roads to its attractions.	Limited advertising dissemination of tourist attractions.
	It has all the basic services.	Absence of visitor registry in most attractions.
	Empowerment of culture by being part of its receiving community.	Limited staff trained for the development of tourist management in most attractions.
OPPORTUNITIES	F + O	D + O
Zaruma can be recognized as Cultural Heritage of Humanity.	Adapt the first-order access roads with the implementation of tourist signage for a better orientation of visitors towards the potential.	Implementation of a tourist management plan by the authorities of Zaruma, with the purpose of having the city recognized as Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
Increase of the development of cultural – patrimonial tourism.	Encourage the interest of the receiving committee for the entrepreneurship of	Increased tourist security to increase the influx of domestic and foreign visitors.

Promotion by travel agencies and tour operators.	craft centers, exhibiting objects about its culture.	Implement visitor records in tourist attractions to obtain data that reflect the high season in which the mode of cultural tourism – heritage takes place.
Increase of foreign tourist influx.	Restoration of attractions to be positioned in the tourist market due to its cultural - patrimonial richness.	Introduction of trained staff to the attractions to provide a better tourist experience.
Interest by the authorities in implementing tourist signage in the urban area.	Increase in the provision of the tourist services to arouse the interest of the promotion on potential by agencies and tour operators.	
Implementation of craft centers.		
Positioning of the parish in the tourist market.		

AMENAZAS

F + A

D + A

Loss of the recognition as a nominee for Cultural Heritage of Humanity.	Strengthening of tourist competences and customer service.	
Political and economic instability.	Design of mobile applications to be used as support tool for self-guided tours of the visitors through tourist attractions.	
Deterioration of attractions by tourists.		Control of illegal mining in the urban area, so the city does not lose the nomination for Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
Political and economic instability.	Work together with society to provide tourists with the necessary knowledge about the potential of the urban area.	Implementation of an online registry of visitors in the potential to add a technological plus in the development of tourism.
Decrease in national and international tourist influx.	Update and correctly manage the official website of the Municipality of Zaruma, where the potential of the urban area is highlighted in a detailed and orderly manner.	Valuation of urban attractions to avoid their deterioration and the interest for conservation by visitors and community.
Disinterest of promotion by travel agencies and tour operators.		Increase in tourist diffusion of the potential through different media, especially through social networks.
Not being positioned in the tourist market.		
Lack of trained staff in function based on quality in the provision of tourist services.		

Elaborado por: Autores.

CONCLUSIONS

In the results of the analysis of the internal components of the tourist system, strengths and weaknesses are evidenced, being the governance the organism that promotes, coordinates and regulates tourist activity. This parish is represented by the Decentralized Autonomous Government, presenting its greatest strength in the state of conservation of its attractions; product of the denomination obtained as a heritage and the empowered work of its community to preserve it. Among its weaknesses, the following can be mentioned; the lack of diffusion in digital media to promote cultural attractions and achieve greater demand.

On the other hand, there are policies and regulations because the GAD lacks a tourism development plan that indicates activities of projects to be developed in order to boost tourism activity through the formulation of objectives and strategies aimed to sustainability of the area. In terms of tourist security, the lack of tourist signage is evidenced, so that visitors are oriented towards the attractions of the urban parish.

The infrastructure is constituted by accessibility and connectivity, understanding accessibility as the infrastructure

that serves as a support for the transport system, together with other complementary works such as illumination and signaling. Therefore, in the urban parish this parameter is placed as a strength, given that it presents first-order access roads and sufficient transport services. In addition, it should be noted that an attraction has con the conditions of an inclusive tourism.

The offer is presented as a strength, that is, in the tourist plant/services is referred to the different facilities that allow the development of tourism, such as lodging, food and beverage businesses, tour operators and guidance services. So, in the urban area there are the aforementioned services, properly equipped to receive tourists. There are also the activities practiced in the attraction, which include a series of services in which the tourist is a participative agent. Here, it is evidenced that in the attractions studied. All the activities that can be carried out in the parish are self-guided, so they are tours to observe the different patrimonial goods of the area. The difference is indicated by "El Sexmo" mine in which first a guide provides information about the attraction and then it is proceeded to take the tour.

The demand is determined as a weakness for the parish, because unlike all its tourist attractions, only "El Sexmo" has a visitor registry, but he information is not used to obtain statistical data that will serve as a basis for the knowledge about the influx of visitors in a certain period and if them are mostly national or foreign tourists.

Finally, the receiving community is a weakness for the parish, because only two of the attractions have only one person as human resource, providing value to the offer of services, providing information about the sites. However, they are not specialized in tourism, because their knowledge is due to the fact that they are local residents.

It was possible to show that there are weaknesses depen-

ding on the tourist activity, so more work should be performed for a better development of tourism and consolidate it as a dynamic activity for social and economic benefit. This result can be achieved with joint work that involves the community, service providers and the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the locality.

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