



2023 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title: Pedagogical Tourism Project in Schools of Apodi/RN, Brazil.

Destination, Country: Apodi/RN, Brazil

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In the category: ☐ Destination Management ☒ Environment & Climate ☐ Thriving Communities
☐ Nature & Scenery ☐ Culture & Tradition ☐ Business & Marketing

The Story in a picture:

Visit of Neval Machado Barros School to the Indigenous Museum of Apodi/RN



Summary:

The proposal of the Pedagogical Tourism project is to promote environmental awareness among students through pedagogical practices in tourism, providing a direct interaction with the theme of tourism in schools, as well as working on Environmental Education in a continuous and permanent manner, as stipulated by the PNEA - National Policy for Environmental Education (law 9795/1999). Additionally, it aims to stimulate Environmental Education as a cross-cutting theme through a comprehensive set of actions, as it cannot be addressed in isolation. Sensitization provides the locals with knowledge and a sense of belonging to the tourist attractions in the area.



Good Practice Story:

Destination description

Brief background of the destination.

Apodi is a municipality located in the Western region of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil, with a territorial extension of 1,602.477 square kilometers, being the second largest in the state. Its population is estimated at 36,118 inhabitants (IBGE, 2022). Prior to the colonization initiated by the Spanish in the Mission of São João do Apodi in 1499, the territory was inhabited by indigenous people from the Tapuias Paiacus village. The district of Apodi was created in 1766 and elevated to the status of city in 1833 (APODI, 2017). The municipality is bathed by the Apodi/Mossoró River, the main river of the Apodi/Mossoró Basin, which drives the development of economic activities, mainly agriculture and livestock farming. The territory of the municipality is formed by the regions of Pedra, Vale, Chapada, and Areia. In the Pedra region, we have tourist attractions such as the Santa Cruz Dam, the fishermen's colony, and the Casarão do Sítio Ameno. In the Vale region, we have rice production, pottery and straw crafts, fruit pulp production in Sítio Rio Novo, the Casa de Farinha in Sítio Carpina, and the Nova Malhada Cachaçaria. In the Chapada region, we have the Lajedo de Soledade, the Soledade Museum, the Soledade Church, the Mirante dos Padroeiro, and the vineyard of Agrícola Cruzeiro da Serra. In the Areia region, we have the Apodi Casa de Farinha, honey production, milk, cashew, and derivatives production in Sítio Córrego, and the Córrego Art and Culture Fair. In addition to these, there are also the following tourist attractions in the urban area: the Matriz Church, the Raimunda Dantas Mansion, the Vila Lourdes Mansion, the Lagoa Boardwalk, the Lagoa Balneary, the Luiza Cantofa Indigenous Museum, the Casa da Cultura, the Public Market, the Open-air Market, and the Apodiense Cultural and Sports Association.

Issues faced

Problems/issues solved with the Good Practice Story.

Situated in the region of the Brazilian Semi-Arid, the municipality, despite facing challenges due to irregular rainfall, with an average annual precipitation index equal to or less than 800 mm and a Thornthwaite Aridity Index (Evapotranspiration – evaporation and transpiration on a vegetated surface) equal to or less than 0.50; the daily percentage of water deficit equal to or greater than 60%, considering all days of the year. One of the chosen factors to promote economic, social, environmental, and cultural sustainability is the strengthening of local tourism through its environment and climate, culture and tradition, and its prosperous communities that already rely on the preservation of the environment and culture. Recognizing the relevance of the biodiversity in the municipality's territory, which contains multiple tourist attractions, one of the main difficulties encountered in offering tourism services in the destination is the lack of awareness among the locals about their natural and cultural environments that can be offered as tourist products. It is worth noting that the majority of the population is not aware of these attractions due to the lack of visits to these places. Consequently, the municipal schools themselves did not adopt pedagogical practices of visiting environmental, historical, economic, and social themes in the curriculum, leading to a lack of knowledge about the natural and cultural beauty, resulting in a lack of belonging among students and teachers. This fact is evidenced by the low visitation flow of schools in the municipality to Lajedo de Soledade and the lack of environmental education practices in the municipal education network. Another factor that hindered local tourism development was the lack of integration between the municipal government, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

Methods, steps, and tools applied

Solutions implemented to address the sustainability problems or issues.

To address the issue of locals' lack of awareness about tourist attractions, Councilman Adailton José Targino proposed Bill 229/2022, creating the Week of Pedagogical Tourism in the municipal education system with the aim of promoting extracurricular activities for students to have access to the cultural, artistic, and tourist heritage in Apodi. This project became Municipal Law 1884/2022 on August 15, 2022.

This law was discussed in the technical chambers of the Municipal Tourism Council – COMTUR, and based on these discussions, the Pedagogical Tourism Week Project was developed in conjunction with the 2023 Environmental Week, with direct support from the Secretariats of Education, Tourism, Agriculture, Water Resources, Environment, and Fisheries.

Another action that strengthened the project was the distribution of the educational book "Apodi, Cidade da Gente" by the municipality of Apodi to be used in the municipal education system in the early grades (1st to 9th year of elementary school) in subjects such as science, geography, history, Portuguese, mathematics, among others, allowing for interdisciplinary work. The project was presented to the Municipal Department of Education in meetings attended by the Secretary, pedagogical team, principals, and teachers, all stakeholders in the education field, as well as the technical team of the Local Economic Development Program – DEL and representatives from COMTUR. The proposal is to execute the project as a tool to enable visits to the locations described in the book. The project underwent modifications to align with the curriculum structure of the grade levels and can be used by students of any grade, gradually adapted to the students' ages. The stakeholders involved in the project implementation decided to carry it out during the Environmental Week, celebrated from June 5th to 15th, 2023. A visitation schedule to the tourist attractions was created based on the students' ages.

The chosen itinerary for the students' visitation was developed in agreement between the Municipal Department of Education, the Municipal Department of Tourism through COMTUR, and the Municipal Department of Agriculture, Water Resources, Environment, and Fisheries. The itinerary was defined according to the ages of the visiting students, which ranged from 7 to 10 years, and was as follows:

- Visitation to the Forest Replacement Program within the premises of the Municipal Department of Agriculture, Water Resources, Environment, and Fisheries
- Walking trails among the seedlings of the Forest Replacement Program
- Planting seedlings symbolizing the visit of each school's students in the area of the Forest Replacement Program
- Distribution of native plants from the Caatinga Biome to the students
- City tour through the historical center of Apodi
- Walk along the boardwalk of Apodi Lagoon
- Visit to the facilities of the Luiza Cantofa Indigenous Museum, including the exterior since it is yet to be inaugurated
- Visit to the Balneário da Lagoa

The schools that participated in this event were: Lindaura Silva Municipal School (June 5th, 2023) with 15 students; Isabel Aurélia Torres Municipal School (June 6th, 2023) with 22 students; Francisco Targino da Costa Municipal School (June 7th, 2023) with 19 students; 12 de Outubro Municipal School (June 12th, 2023) with 15 students; Francisco Alcivan Pinto Municipal School (June 13th, 2023) with 15 students; Veríssimo Gama School (June 14th, 2023) with 11 students; and Neval Machado Barros Municipal School (June 15th, 2023) with 16 students, totaling an audience of 113 students and 35 members of the pedagogical team and teachers from 7 schools.

The Department of Tourism through COMTUR and the Municipal Department of Education intend to ensure the project's execution in all grades of elementary education and suggest its implementation in schools within the State and private education networks.

Key success factors

Critical elements that led to successfully solving the issues.

The integrated work among the various stakeholders involved in the project, including the executive branch, COMTUR, civil society organizations, and tourism industry companies, was fundamental to the project's operationalization. The inclusion of the educational book "Apodi, Cidade da Gente" in the pedagogical planning of municipal schools was of paramount importance for the project's acceptance by the Municipal Department of Education. It facilitated visits to local tourist attractions, while highlighting the natural and cultural resources of the destination, thereby increasing the sense of belonging among the local population. This practice strengthened the National Policy on Environmental Education – PNEA. The integration of environmental, historical, cultural, economic, and social themes into the planning of municipal departments, based on a proposal for sustainable development in the municipality, was crucial for the project's success. The project encompassed the following Sustainable Development Goals – Agenda 2030: Goal 3 – Good Health and

Well-being, Goal 4 – Quality Education, Goal 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, and Goal 15 – Life on Land.

Lessons learned

Challenges faced while implementing the Good Practice and their solutions.

The need for engagement of local actors through participatory management involving the municipal government, civil society, and businesses was one of the lessons that left a lasting impact on everyone involved in the project. Another relevant point was the participatory planning as a way to gather the local actors to think strategically about the area. This was clearly evidenced by the involvement of local leaders such as the mayor, council members, municipal departments, and representatives from civil society and business entities. Additionally, generating interest among educators regarding the importance of coordinating different departments for the project's execution, considering the tourism potential that Apodi presents. In this context, the project achieved a higher level of interaction between the public administration and local tourism stakeholders represented by members of COMTUR (private sector and community), based on participatory planning, which was crucial for promoting sustainability in the destination. Another challenge was to effectively broaden the debate on environmental issues through the National Policy on Environmental Education (PNEA) in the municipality's schools.

The visits of students and teachers to the tourist attractions increased awareness about the importance of environmental and historical preservation in the municipality, improving the participants' level of environmental consciousness. It awakened in them a sense of belonging, creating social, economic, and environmental ties with the municipality.

Achievements and Results

Direct and indirect results of the Good Practice.

The main achievement was the socio-environmental awareness of the students through visits to local tourist attractions, which generated a greater sense of belonging among the participants. Another result obtained was the strengthening of the teaching and learning process through field trips, facilitating dynamic learning in subjects such as science, geography, and history based on the local reality. The engagement among the key actors in implementing the project exceeded expectations. The rediscovery of the natural beauty associated with the tourist attractions generated a sense of pride and ownership among the students, who were previously unaware of tourism in their own city. As an indirect achievement, it is hoped that students from the municipal school system will awaken to the tourism potential and the opportunities generated by the activity. Additionally, there is the possibility of promoting local tourism and gaining greater visibility for the destination of Apodi through social media, marketing, and other means.

Tips for other destinations

Your suggestions or recommendations for other destinations facing the same issues or implementing similar solutions

One suggestion would be to organize the Municipal Tourism Council to promote the involvement of schools in educational tourism through its technical committees. Another point would be to implement the project as a way to coordinate the development of tourism activities with other areas for the sustainable development of the destination, integrating the tourism industry to promote environmental awareness, social mobility between cities, and foster a sense of belonging among the local population. It is important to encourage partnerships between the public sector, civil society, and economic agents through participatory planning. Additionally, the implementation of actions aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can contribute to the overall development of the municipality.

Recognitions and Additional references

Recognitions and awards the Good Practice received and supporting evidence.

Brazilian semiarid region: <https://www.gov.br/insa/pt-br/semiario-brasileiro>

DEL Turismo participates in the Apodi Environmental Week:
https://www.rn.senac.br/noticias/DEL_Turismo_participa_de_Semana_do_Meio_Ambiente_de_Apodi

<https://fecomerciorn.com.br/noticias/del-turismo-participa-de-semana-do-meio-ambiente-em-apodi/>

Apodi Environmental Week:

<https://www.gazetadorn.com.br/noticia/semana-do-meio-ambiente-sera-realizada-a-partir-do-dia-05-de-junho-em-apodi>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LR7195gciXE>

Law that created the Pedagogical Tourism Week in the education network in the city of Apodi:

<https://apodi.rn.gov.br/leis.php?id=2389>

https://trello.com/1/cards/64999dba8d475ed7a7e67789/attachments/6499a0c7af4d47d0bfab59ba/download/SEMANA_DO_TURISMO_PEDAG%C3%93GICO_-_LEI_1884_2022.pdf

Textbook: "Apodi, City of the People":

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CrByVE2O6Cw/?igshid=ZmZhNmZiZDJmOA%3D%3D>

Project: Pedagogical Tourism in Schools:

https://trello.com/1/cards/64999f317b425260c1227356/attachments/64999f59fca64f6a2bbd6b12/download/Projeto_Turismo_Pedag%C3%B3gico_-_ODS_-_OK.pdf

Programming for the Apodi Environmental Week:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cs1dwhDu4zb/?igshid=ZmZhNmZiZDJmOA>

Meeting with the team of the Municipal Secretariat of Education and Culture of Apodi:

https://www.instagram.com/p/Cq_FWWEOKmx/?igshid=ZmZhNmZiZDJmOA

Meeting of the Tourism Committee at the Municipal Council of Apodi:

<https://www.apodi.rn.leg.br/institucional/noticias/reuniao-da-comissao-de-turismo-07-03-2023?searchterm=Turismo>