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Leveraging social resources for sustainable tourism development in Na Hang, Tuyen Quang, Vietnam

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Abstract:

This study examines how social resources are mobilised for sustainable tourism development in Na Hang, Tuyen Quang, Vietnam. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research draws on 16 semi-structured interviews conducted between July and August 2026 with community representatives, state management representatives, tourism businesses and experts. Interview notes were analysed to identify recurring themes related to resource mobilisation, stakeholder coordination, community participation and sustainability. The findings identify four interconnected forms of social resources: local knowledge and capabilities, social networks, organisational and coordination capacity, and institutional connections. Their potential contribution to tourism development depends on access to opportunities, coordination among stakeholders, clear responsibilities and sustained cooperation. The study also distinguishes participation in tourism activities from influence over decision-making. By connecting social resources with mobilisation mechanisms and contextual conditions, it offers an analytical perspective on sustainable tourism development without claiming causal relationships or directly measured sustainability outcomes. The findings provide practical insights for strengthening coordination and community involvement in Na Hang.

Keywords: Social resource mobilisation; Sustainable tourism; Community participation; Stakeholder collaboration; Na Hang.

1. Introduction

Sustainable tourism development increasingly depends on the capacity of destinations to mobilise local resources, coordinate stakeholder interests and ensure that tourism benefits contribute to long-term community well-being. While natural landscapes and cultural heritage provide the foundations for destination attractiveness, their contribution to sustainable development is shaped by the social relationships, institutional arrangements and collective capacities through which these assets are managed and utilised. Social resources are particularly important in destinations where tourism development is closely connected with local livelihoods, community participation and the conservation of environmental and cultural values. Jones (2005) demonstrates the significance of social capital in community-based ecotourism, highlighting the relevance of relationships and collective capacity to the organisation of tourism activities. From this perspective, the challenge for destination management lies in creating conditions under which existing social resources can be mobilised effectively and translated into tangible benefits for local communities.

Na Hang, in Tuyen Quang Province, northern Vietnam, provides a relevant setting in which to examine this challenge. The area possesses distinctive natural landscapes and cultural assets that offer opportunities for nature-based tourism and community-based tourism. However, the presence of tourism resources does not automatically ensure sustainable development. Realising their potential requires coordination among local authorities, community organisations, tourism businesses, residents and other relevant actors. These stakeholders may possess different forms of resources, including local knowledge, social networks, organisational capacity, professional expertise, financial contributions and access to institutional support. Their willingness and ability to work together influence how tourism initiatives are

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developed, how responsibilities are distributed and how the benefits and costs of tourism are experienced. Consequently, the central concern is not simply the availability of resources, but the processes through which they are identified, connected and mobilised to support shared development objectives.

This issue is particularly pertinent in community-oriented tourism settings, where participation can be constrained by unequal access to decision-making, limited organisational capacity and institutional barriers. Tosun (2000) identifies structural and contextual limitations that can restrict meaningful community participation in tourism development, cautioning against assuming that local involvement will occur automatically. Similarly, Wondirad et al. (2020) emphasise stakeholder collaboration as a significant consideration in sustainable ecotourism development, particularly in developing-country contexts. These insights provide a basis for examining the conditions under which social resources can contribute to sustainable tourism in Na Hang. Relevant questions concern the forms of resources available within local communities and stakeholder networks, the mechanisms through which these resources are mobilised, and the barriers that may prevent their effective use. Addressing these questions requires attention to the relationships between community participation, institutional coordination and the practical organisation of tourism development.

Despite growing recognition of the importance of community participation and stakeholder collaboration, the practical challenge of connecting diverse social resources within a specific destination context warrants further investigation. For Na Hang, a context-sensitive examination can help clarify how local relationships, community capabilities and cooperation among relevant actors contribute to tourism development, while identifying opportunities to strengthen coordination and collective action. Such an approach also shifts attention from treating communities as passive recipients of tourism benefits towards recognising their potential role in shaping development priorities and contributing to destination management.

Accordingly, this study examines how social resources can be mobilised to support sustainable tourism development in Na Hang, Tuyen Quang Province. It seeks to identify the principal forms of social resources available to local tourism stakeholders, analyse the mechanisms and conditions affecting their mobilisation, and propose contextually appropriate measures to strengthen their contribution to sustainable tourism. By connecting the analysis of social resources with the practical requirements of destination governance and community participation, the study aims to provide insights relevant to local authorities, community organisations and tourism practitioners. Its intended contribution is a more grounded understanding of how social resources can be coordinated and activated to support tourism development that is environmentally responsible, culturally respectful and beneficial to local communities.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Resources as a Foundation for Sustainable Tourism Development

Sustainable tourism development depends not only on the availability of natural and cultural attractions but also on the capacity of local communities and institutions to organise, mobilise and use resources collectively. Within this perspective, social resources can be understood as the relationships, knowledge, collective capabilities, organisational connections and institutional arrangements that enable individuals and groups to undertake coordinated action. Unlike physical or financial resources, social resources are embedded in social relationships and become valuable through interaction, cooperation and collective use.

Social capital provides an important theoretical foundation for understanding this dimension of tourism development. Jones (2005), in examining community-based ecotourism, demonstrates the significance of social capital in supporting collective action and local resource management. Zhao et al. (2011) further connect social capital with tourism entrepreneurship, highlighting the relevance of social relationships to entrepreneurial activity. Liu et al. (2014) examine how social capital can encourage residents' pro-environmental behaviour in community-based ecotourism. Taken together, these studies suggest that social relationships can support tourism-related cooperation, local enterprise and environmental responsibility.

Nevertheless, social capital and social resources should not be treated as interchangeable concepts. Social capital primarily concerns the resources and advantages associated with social relationships, networks and the norms that facilitate cooperation. Social resources, as used in this study, constitute a broader analytical category that also encompasses community knowledge, practical capabilities, organisational connections and access to collective decision-making. This distinction is important because the existence of social relationships does not automatically

mean that communities possess the organisational capacity or institutional access required to translate those relationships into meaningful development outcomes.

The relationship between social resources and sustainable tourism is also not necessarily positive or straightforward. Jones (2005) highlights the potential fragility of social capital and the possibility that its contribution to environmental management may be undermined under certain conditions. This suggests that strong community ties alone cannot guarantee sustainable outcomes. Their contribution depends on how relationships are organised, whose interests they serve and whether collective capacities can be connected to effective resource management.

From a broader sustainability perspective, tourism development must consider economic benefits alongside environmental protection and sociocultural integrity (Swarbrooke, 1999). Community-based tourism research similarly emphasises the importance of strengthening local capacities and ensuring that communities can participate meaningfully in tourism-related activities (Tolkach & King, 2015). Social resources therefore matter not simply because they exist within a destination, but because they may enable local actors to access opportunities, coordinate activities and respond to the demands of sustainable tourism development.

Accordingly, this study approaches social resources as a foundation for collective action rather than as an independent guarantee of sustainability. The analytical emphasis is placed on the resources available within local social relationships and institutions, together with the mechanisms and conditions through which these resources can be mobilised.

2.2. Community Participation in Tourism Development

Community participation is a central issue in sustainable tourism because residents experience the consequences of tourism development and may contribute local knowledge, cultural practices, labour and organisational capabilities. However, participation is not a uniform process. It can range from receiving information and undertaking assigned tasks to influencing decisions, controlling resources and sharing responsibility for tourism management.

Tosun (2000) provides a critical account of the limitations of community participation in tourism development in developing countries. The study identifies operational, structural and cultural constraints that may prevent communities from exercising meaningful influence. This perspective challenges the assumption that the presence of participatory activities necessarily indicates an inclusive development process. Participation may be formally encouraged while remaining limited by institutional arrangements, unequal access to decision-making or sociocultural conditions.

Sebele (2010), through research on a community-based tourism venture in Botswana, examines both the benefits and challenges associated with community-based tourism. The study illustrates the importance of considering the practical circumstances under which communities engage in tourism and obtain benefits from it. Similarly, Wang et al. (2010), examining minority community participation in tourism in the Kanas Tuva villages of Xinjiang, China, draw attention to participation within a particular cultural and social context. These studies collectively indicate that community participation needs to be examined in relation to local circumstances rather than treated as a universal process with uniform outcomes.

Lee (2013) adds another dimension by examining factors influencing community residents' support for sustainable tourism development. This line of research is relevant because residents' attitudes and support are associated with their experiences of tourism and their perceptions of its implications. Nevertheless, support for tourism and participation in tourism governance are analytically distinct. Residents may support tourism without having substantial influence over decisions, while active participation does not necessarily mean that the distribution of benefits is equitable.

A critical implication emerges from these studies: community participation should be evaluated not only through the presence of activities but also through the extent to which residents can contribute knowledge, influence decisions, access opportunities and participate in collective responsibilities. Participation can provide a mechanism for mobilising social resources, but its effectiveness depends on whether community contributions are recognised and incorporated into tourism planning and implementation.

For Na Hang, this perspective directs attention towards the practical forms of local engagement, including the involvement of residents in tourism-related activities, the use of local knowledge and cultural capabilities, and the

opportunities available to communities to influence decisions. It also requires consideration of barriers that may restrict participation or prevent local contributions from being translated into sustained benefits.

2.3. Stakeholder Collaboration and Tourism Governance

While community participation focuses on the position and influence of residents, stakeholder collaboration concerns the relationships and coordination mechanisms among the different actors involved in tourism development. These actors may include local authorities, community organisations, residents, tourism businesses and other institutions. Their interests, responsibilities and resources are often interdependent, making coordination important for planning, implementation and the management of shared resources.

Bramwell and Sharman (1999) examine collaboration in local tourism policymaking and establish a basis for understanding cooperation as a governance process rather than merely a collection of individual activities. Collaboration can create opportunities for stakeholders to exchange information, negotiate priorities and coordinate decisions. However, the existence of collaborative arrangements does not necessarily ensure that all stakeholders have equal influence or that collective decisions reflect community interests.

Jamal and Stronza (2009) develop the discussion of collaboration in the context of protected areas, linking stakeholder relationships, institutional structuring and sustainability. Their work highlights the importance of examining how collaboration is organised and how relationships among stakeholders affect the management of tourism-related resources. Aas et al. (2005), in their study of stakeholder collaboration and heritage management, further demonstrate the relevance of collaboration to the management of heritage resources. These perspectives are particularly pertinent to destinations where tourism depends on resources whose protection and use require coordination among multiple actors.

Byrd (2007) applies stakeholder theory to sustainable tourism development, emphasising the roles of stakeholders in the development process. However, identifying stakeholders and acknowledging their roles are not sufficient to explain how collaboration operates in practice. It is also necessary to consider the distribution of responsibilities, access to information, decision-making authority and opportunities to contribute resources.

Wondirad et al. (2020) explicitly identify stakeholder collaboration as a major factor in sustainable ecotourism development in developing countries. Their work reinforces the importance of collaboration while drawing attention to the relationship between stakeholder engagement and sustainable destination management. Read alongside Bramwell and Sharman (1999), Jamal and Stronza (2009), and Aas et al. (2005), this research suggests that collaboration should be understood as an ongoing process involving coordination, negotiation and the organisation of collective action.

Nevertheless, collaboration and community participation should not be conflated. A destination may have coordination mechanisms among public authorities and tourism businesses without providing residents with meaningful influence. Conversely, communities may contribute substantially to tourism activities while remaining weakly connected to wider decision-making and resource allocation processes. Consequently, an analysis of social resource mobilisation needs to examine both the extent of community participation and the quality of collaboration among stakeholders.

In Na Hang, stakeholder collaboration is therefore relevant to understanding how local knowledge, community capabilities, institutional connections and tourism-related opportunities can be coordinated. The key analytical concern is not simply whether stakeholders interact, but how their relationships facilitate or constrain the mobilisation of resources for sustainable tourism development.

2.4. Resource Mobilisation, Local Capacity and Sustainable Tourism Outcomes

The preceding perspectives establish that social relationships, community participation and stakeholder collaboration are relevant to tourism development. However, these elements do not fully explain how resources become practical contributions to destination development. Resource mobilisation provides an additional analytical perspective by directing attention to the processes through which existing resources are accessed, coordinated and applied to collective objectives.

Social networks and relationships may facilitate the exchange of information, the development of trust and access to opportunities (Jones, 2005; Zhao et al., 2011). Community knowledge and capabilities may support the interpretation and use of local cultural and environmental resources. Organisational and institutional connections may help link

community initiatives with wider planning and management processes. These resources, however, require opportunities for interaction and coordination if they are to contribute to collective action.

Research on social capital and environmental behaviour illustrates one possible pathway through which social relationships can support tourism sustainability. Liu et al. (2014) examine the role of social capital in encouraging residents' pro-environmental behaviours in community-based ecotourism. Their study highlights the relevance of social relationships to environmental responsibility, although such relationships should not be assumed to produce identical outcomes across different destinations. The contribution of social resources depends on local circumstances and on the ways in which collective action is organised.

The relationship between resource mobilisation and local capacity is also important. Tolkach and King (2015) discuss why and how community-based tourism can be strengthened in a resource-based island nation. Their work directs attention towards the conditions required to support community-based tourism rather than treating community involvement as sufficient in itself. Similarly, Zhao et al. (2011) demonstrate the relevance of social capital to tourism entrepreneurship, suggesting that social relationships can be considered in relation to local economic activity and enterprise.

However, the existence of resources and the capacity to mobilise them are different analytical issues. A community may possess extensive local knowledge and strong interpersonal relationships but have limited access to tourism markets, institutional support or decision-making processes. Likewise, collaboration among organisations may be established without effectively incorporating community capabilities. Resource mobilisation therefore involves examining the relationship between available resources, opportunities for their use and the capacities required to sustain collective action.

The outcomes of mobilisation should also be assessed through a multidimensional understanding of sustainable tourism. Swarbrooke (1999) provides a broad foundation for considering the management of tourism in relation to sustainability, while Tolkach and King (2015) emphasise the strengthening of community-based tourism. Relevant outcomes for this study include opportunities for local economic participation, environmental responsibility, the maintenance of cultural integrity and community well-being. These dimensions are interconnected but should not be assumed to improve simultaneously or automatically as tourism develops.

This distinction is particularly important when evaluating the contribution of social resources. The number of community activities, the presence of stakeholder partnerships or the existence of local organisations cannot, by themselves, demonstrate that tourism development is sustainable. Analysis must consider whether mobilisation enables meaningful participation, improves coordination, supports local capacities and contributes to outcomes consistent with sustainability objectives.

Accordingly, this study examines resource mobilisation as a process connecting the availability of social resources with collective action and potential sustainable tourism outcomes. It considers community participation and stakeholder collaboration as key mobilisation mechanisms, while recognising that institutional arrangements, power relations, organisational capacity and sociocultural conditions may enable or constrain their operation. This approach provides a basis for examining how social resources can be mobilised more effectively in Na Hang rather than presuming that their presence will necessarily generate positive outcomes.

2.5. Critical Synthesis, Research Gap and Analytical Framework

The reviewed literature provides complementary explanations of the relationship between social resources and sustainable tourism development. Research on social capital demonstrates the relevance of social relationships to collective action, tourism entrepreneurship and environmental behaviour (Jones, 2005; Liu et al., 2014; Zhao et al., 2011). Research on community participation highlights the importance of local involvement while revealing operational, structural and cultural constraints that may limit its effectiveness (Sebele, 2010; Tosun, 2000; Wang et al., 2010). Research on stakeholder collaboration explains the importance of coordination among actors and the institutional arrangements through which tourism resources are managed (Aas et al., 2005; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Jamal & Stronza, 2009; Wondirad et al., 2020).

Despite these contributions, the perspectives address different aspects of the development process and should not be treated as interchangeable. Social capital explains how relationships may provide resources for collective action, but it does not, on its own, establish whether communities have meaningful influence over tourism decisions. Community

participation draws attention to local involvement and decision-making, but participation alone does not explain how resources are coordinated across stakeholder groups. Stakeholder collaboration addresses inter-organisational relationships, yet collaboration does not necessarily ensure that community knowledge and interests are adequately represented. The challenge is therefore to connect these perspectives in an analytical approach that explains not only what resources are available, but also how they are mobilised and under what conditions they contribute to sustainable tourism development.

A further distinction concerns the relationship between mobilisation mechanisms and development outcomes. The literature suggests that social relationships, community participation and collaboration can support tourism-related action, but their effects depend on the surrounding institutional and social context. Consequently, sustainable tourism should not be treated as an automatic consequence of resource availability or stakeholder interaction. An analytical framework needs to account for both enabling and constraining conditions and to examine the extent to which collective action contributes to economic, environmental and sociocultural objectives.

For Na Hang, the relevant research gap is the need for a context-sensitive account of how social resources are identified, mobilised and coordinated in support of sustainable tourism development. Rather than assuming that the presence of community networks or stakeholder partnerships is sufficient, the study investigates the mechanisms through which local relationships, knowledge, capabilities and organisational connections can be translated into practical contributions. It also considers the conditions that may restrict mobilisation, including unequal participation, institutional limitations and constraints on coordination. The study thus brings together perspectives on social capital, community participation, stakeholder collaboration and sustainable tourism management within a single analytical framework.

Theoretical perspectives informing the study: The study does not adopt any single theory as a complete explanation of social resource mobilisation. Instead, it draws on complementary perspectives, each of which addresses a distinct analytical dimension.

Table 1. Theoretical perspectives and their application in the study

Theoretical perspective	Key literature	Main contribution inherited	Application to the study
Social capital and social relationships	Jones (2005); Liu et al. (2014); Zhao et al. (2011)	Explains how relationships, networks and collective capacities can support cooperation, entrepreneurship and environmental responsibility.	Identifies social networks, trust-based relationships, community knowledge and collective capabilities relevant to tourism.
Community participation	Tosun (2000); Sebele (2010); Wang et al. (2010); Lee (2013)	Explains different forms of community involvement and the structural, operational and sociocultural constraints affecting participation.	Examines how residents contribute to tourism activities, influence decisions and access opportunities, as well as barriers to meaningful involvement.
Stakeholder collaboration and governance	Bramwell and Sharman (1999); Aas et al. (2005); Jamal and Stronza (2009); Byrd (2007); Wondirad et al. (2020)	Explains how stakeholder relationships, coordination and institutional arrangements shape collective tourism management.	Examines coordination among local authorities, communities, community organisations and tourism businesses, including issues of inclusion and decision-making.
Sustainable tourism management and	Swarbrooke (1999); Tolkach and King (2015); Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility and	Provides a sustainability-oriented perspective on tourism management and the	Assesses the potential contribution of resource mobilisation to local economic opportunities, environmental

community capacity	Caribbean Tourism Organization (n.d.)	practical strengthening of community-based tourism.	responsibility, cultural integrity and community well-being.

Source: Author's synthesis based on the literature reviewed.

Proposed analytical framework: Based on the synthesis, the study conceptualises social resource mobilisation as an analytical process linking available social resources with collective action and their potential contribution to sustainable tourism development. The framework comprises four connected components. First, social resources constitute the starting point and include social networks and relationships, community knowledge and capabilities, and organisational and institutional connections. Second, mobilisation mechanisms concern how these resources are activated through community participation, stakeholder collaboration, access to opportunities and coordination. Third, enabling and constraining conditions influence how mobilisation operates. These conditions include institutional arrangements, power relations and inclusion, organisational capacity and the local sociocultural context. They are considered contextual influences rather than a separate stage in a linear process. Fourth, potential contributions to sustainable tourism development include local economic opportunities and benefits, environmental responsibility, cultural integrity and community well-being.

The framework is intended as an analytical guide rather than a predetermined causal model. It does not assume that all social resources are equally accessible, that participation is necessarily influential or that collaboration always produces sustainable outcomes. Instead, it directs empirical attention to the relationships among resources, mobilisation mechanisms, contextual conditions and perceived or observable contributions to tourism development. Applied to Na Hang, the framework supports an investigation of which social resources are available, how different stakeholders mobilise and coordinate them, what conditions facilitate or constrain this process, and how mobilisation can be strengthened to support more inclusive and sustainable tourism development. It also provides a coherent basis for organising the empirical findings and developing recommendations grounded in the local context.

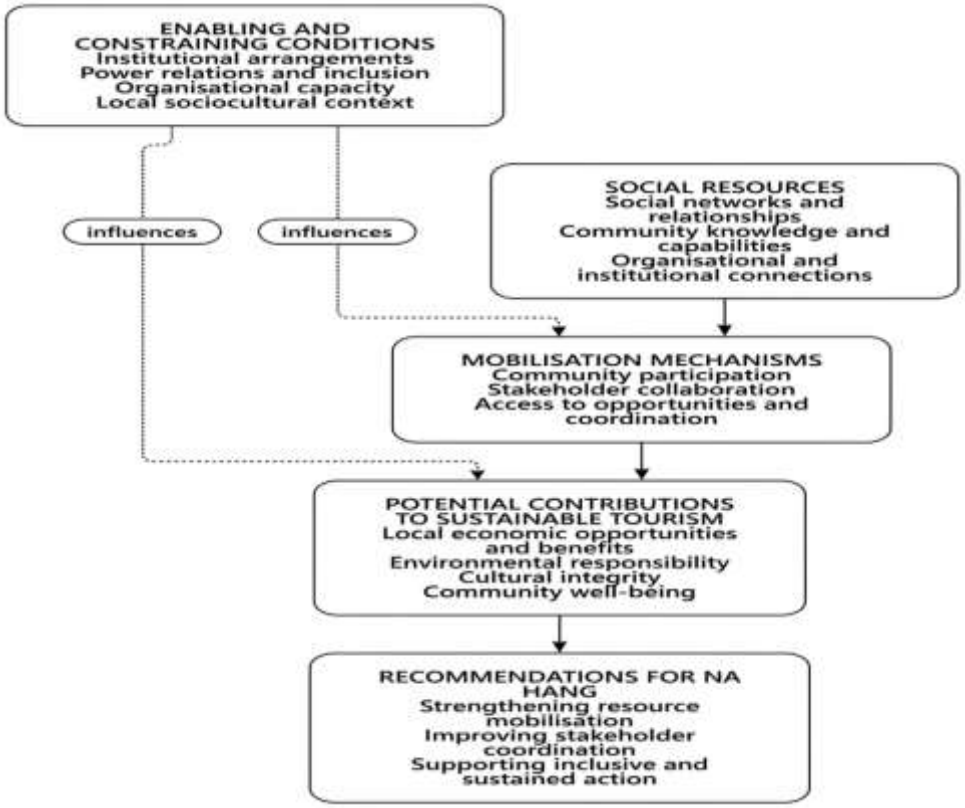

Figure 1. Analytical Framework for Mobilising Social Resources for Sustainable Tourism Development in Na Hang

Source: Author's synthesis based on Jones (2005), Tosun (2000), Bramwell and Sharman (1999), Jamal and Stronza (2009), Wondirad et al. (2020), and Swarbrooke (1999).

3. Case and Methodology

3.1. Case Study Context

This study focuses on Na Hang, Tuyen Quang, Vietnam, to examine how social resources can be mobilised to support sustainable tourism development. The case provides a context for exploring interactions among local communities, state management authorities and tourism businesses, particularly in relation to community participation, stakeholder collaboration and the use of local knowledge and capabilities.

Rather than focusing solely on tourism potential, the study examines the social relationships and organisational processes through which local resources can be accessed, coordinated and translated into collective action. Na Hang is treated as a context-specific case for developing an in-depth understanding of these processes, rather than as a statistically representative example of tourism destinations in Vietnam.

3.2. Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative research design to explore the perspectives and experiences of stakeholders involved in or knowledgeable about tourism development in Na Hang. This approach was appropriate because the research sought to understand how social resources were identified, mobilised and coordinated, as well as the conditions that facilitated or constrained these processes.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 16 participants, comprising community representatives, state management representatives, tourism businesses and experts. The semi-structured format provided a common set of research themes while allowing participants to explain their experiences and perspectives in their own terms.

The interview questions were informed by the analytical framework developed from the literature review. The main areas of inquiry concerned: (1) social resources available within the local tourism context, including social relationships, local knowledge and community capabilities; (2) community participation and stakeholder collaboration; (3) institutional, organisational and sociocultural conditions affecting resource mobilisation; and (4) the perceived contributions of social resource mobilisation to sustainable tourism development. These areas guided the interviews without restricting participants to predetermined answers.

3.3. Participants and Data Collection

Data were collected between July and August 2026. Participants were selected purposively according to their roles, experience or professional knowledge relevant to tourism development in Na Hang. The selection aimed to capture perspectives from different stakeholder groups, particularly those connected with community participation, tourism management, business operations and the mobilisation of local resources.

The study involved 16 participants, all of whom took part in semi-structured interviews. The sample comprised seven community representatives, three state management representatives, four tourism business representatives and two experts.

Table 2. Participant composition and interview focus

Participant group	Number	Main interview focus
Community representatives	7	Local knowledge, social relationships, participation in tourism, and perceived benefits or constraints.
State management representatives	3	Tourism management, institutional arrangements and coordination among stakeholders.
Tourism businesses	4	Business–community relationships, stakeholder collaboration and access to tourism-related resources.
Experts	2	Professional perspectives on social resource mobilisation and sustainable tourism development.
Total	**16**	

Source: Author's fieldwork, July–August 2026.

The semi-structured interviews explored participants' experiences and assessments of the social resources available in Na Hang, the ways in which these resources were mobilised, the roles of different stakeholders and the factors affecting collaboration. Participants were also invited to discuss the perceived implications of resource mobilisation for sustainable tourism and identify areas requiring improvement.

Interviews were conducted in Vietnamese to allow participants to express their views in the language most familiar to them. Data were documented through written notes taken during the interviews and organised for subsequent analysis. No audio recordings were made. The analysis therefore relied on the written interview notes rather than audio recordings or verbatim transcripts.

Before each interview, participants were informed of the research purpose and the intended use of the information provided. All participants voluntarily agreed to participate and consented to the use and publication of their interview responses in the research findings. To protect confidentiality, participants were identified by individual codes rather than personal names in the research records and reporting. Their identities were not disclosed in the article.

3.4. Data Analysis

The interview notes were analysed through a thematic process involving the review, grouping and comparison of recurring themes. The purpose was to identify common patterns, differences in stakeholder perspectives and relationships between social resource mobilisation and sustainable tourism development.

First, the written notes were reviewed to identify information relevant to the research objectives. Second, recurring ideas and issues were grouped according to their substantive similarities, including social relationships, community knowledge and capabilities, community participation, stakeholder collaboration, institutional support and barriers to resource mobilisation. Third, the emerging themes were compared across the four participant groups to identify shared concerns, differences in perspective and issues that required contextual interpretation. Finally, the themes were interpreted in relation to the analytical framework established in the literature review.

The analysis was guided by the concepts of social resources, community participation, stakeholder collaboration, enabling and constraining conditions, and sustainable tourism outcomes. These concepts provided an organising structure for reviewing the interview notes, while allowing additional issues raised by participants to be considered where relevant. The process involved qualitative interpretation and comparison of recurring themes rather than formal coding procedures or specialised qualitative analysis software.

Comparisons across participant groups helped clarify how social resource mobilisation was understood from different positions within the local tourism context. Community representatives contributed perspectives on local knowledge, relationships and participation; state management representatives provided insights into institutional arrangements and coordination; tourism businesses described practical aspects of collaboration and resource access; and experts offered additional professional perspectives. These accounts were considered together to develop a contextual understanding of how social resources could be mobilised and what conditions might influence their contribution to sustainable tourism development in Na Hang.

3.5. Research Quality and Ethical Considerations

The study sought to develop a balanced understanding of social resource mobilisation by incorporating perspectives from four participant groups. Comparing the interview notes across these groups helped identify common themes as well as differences that might reflect participants' distinct roles, responsibilities and experiences. The use of a shared set of interview themes also maintained consistency across data collection while allowing participants to express their individual perspectives.

The interpretation was guided by the analytical framework developed from the literature review. The framework helped connect the research objectives, interview topics and findings, while the comparison of recurring themes enabled the analysis to consider both common experiences and context-specific differences. Given the qualitative design and the use of written interview notes, the findings were interpreted cautiously and in relation to the information provided by participants.

Participation was voluntary. All 16 participants agreed to take part in the interviews and consented to the use and publication of their responses in the research findings. Confidentiality was maintained by assigning individual codes

to participants and excluding their personal names from the reporting. The findings were presented in a way that sought to minimise the risk of identifying individual participants through the information reported.

The study has several limitations. The purposive sample was intended to provide in-depth insights rather than statistical representativeness, and the perspectives collected may not cover every stakeholder group or experience in Na Hang. In addition, because the data were documented through written notes rather than audio recordings and verbatim transcripts, some nuances of participants' original expressions may not have been fully captured. The analysis consequently focused on recurring themes and substantive meanings recorded in the notes. The findings provide a context-specific qualitative interpretation of social resource mobilisation and should not be understood as establishing causal relationships or universal conclusions.

4. Findings

4.1. Social Resources and Their Mobilisation in Tourism Development in Na Hang

Analysis of the 16 interviews identified four interrelated forms of social resources relevant to tourism development in Na Hang: local knowledge and capabilities, social relationships and networks, organisational and coordination capacity, and organisational and institutional connections. The interview notes indicate that the contribution of these resources depends on how they are accessed, connected and incorporated into tourism activities. Knowledge of local culture, food, customs and places provides potential content for tourism experiences; social networks facilitate contact between relevant actors; coordination capacity supports the negotiation of practical arrangements; and organisational connections can help clarify responsibilities and sustain cooperation. The findings therefore direct attention towards the processes through which social resources are mobilised, alongside their availability within the local context.

Table 3. Forms of Social Resources and Their Significance for Tourism Development in Na Hang

Forms of social resources	Expressions in the interview data	Evidence codes	Significance for tourism development
Local knowledge and capabilities	Knowledge of local culture, food, customs, places and everyday practices	C1, C3, C4, C6, B1, B2	Provides locally grounded content for the development and delivery of tourism experiences
Social relationships and networks	Familiar relationships facilitate information exchange, access to assistance and connections with tourism activities	C2, C4, C5, C7, B3, B4, E1	Can connect community members with businesses and activity organisers, while shaping access to participation opportunities
Organisational and coordination capacity	The ability to agree on tasks, schedules, costs, service requirements and responsibilities	C5, C6, SM1, SM2, B1, B2, B4	Helps translate dispersed resources into coordinated activities that can be implemented
Organisational and institutional connections	Management contact points, information-sharing arrangements, the allocation of responsibilities and coordination among stakeholders	C1, C2, C6, SM1, SM2, SM3, B3, E1, E2	Can facilitate access to opportunities, activity coordination and the clarification of responsibilities

Source: Authors' analysis of the interview notes, 2026

The interview material suggests that local knowledge becomes a usable tourism resource through its connection with opportunities for organising and delivering visitor experiences. Accounts associated with C1, C3 and C4 indicate that community members possess knowledge of local customs, food and places, although opportunities to introduce these aspects of local life to visitors depend partly on the availability of organisers and opportunities to conduct activities. The evidence therefore points to a gap between knowledge embedded in everyday community life and its incorporation into organised tourism experiences.

The accounts associated with B1 and B2 further indicate that the use of local knowledge in tourism products involves practical considerations concerning service delivery. Knowledge holders and tourism businesses may approach the

same resource from different operational positions: community members possess contextual knowledge, while businesses must consider visitor expectations, service requirements and the feasibility of delivery. Mobilising local knowledge consequently involves decisions about the content to be presented, the people involved in its interpretation and the arrangements through which it is incorporated into a tourism experience.

These processes have implications for community participation and cultural representation. The presence of local knowledge establishes a potential basis for locally grounded tourism experiences, although the interview material does not, by itself, establish the extent to which knowledge holders influence product development or decisions about cultural interpretation. Their role may vary according to how activities are organised and how responsibilities are allocated. The relationship between local knowledge and tourism development therefore warrants attention to the position of knowledge holders within the process of selecting, interpreting and presenting cultural practices. This consideration is particularly relevant to sustainable tourism, where the use of cultural resources needs to remain attentive to local meanings and the circumstances in which cultural practices are represented.

Social relationships and networks shape the circulation of information and access to opportunities. The accounts associated with C2 and C7 suggest that familiar relationships facilitate communication about work and participation, while people without links to relevant organisers may have difficulty identifying how to become involved. The business-related accounts associated with B3 and B4 also indicate the practical value of interpersonal connections in identifying potential collaborators and linking local services with tourism activities.

These findings suggest that social networks perform an important connecting function during resource mobilisation. Existing relationships can facilitate initial contact, reduce the effort involved in finding suitable collaborators and support the exchange of information between community members and tourism businesses. At the same time, access to information may depend partly on an individual's position within established networks. People who are connected to relevant organisers may learn about opportunities more readily than those with fewer such connections. The potential consequence is variation in access to participation, even among individuals who may possess relevant knowledge or express a willingness to contribute.

The available evidence supports the identification of this potential mechanism, rather than a conclusion that particular groups in Na Hang are systematically excluded. The interview notes do not establish the prevalence of unequal access or the extent to which existing communication arrangements address it. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that the contribution of social networks to tourism development depends partly on how information circulates beyond established personal connections. Accessible communication channels and clearly communicated participation arrangements may help broaden access to opportunities while retaining the value of informal relationships in initiating cooperation.

Access to a network, however, does not by itself establish that cooperation can be implemented. Organisational and coordination capacity influences the extent to which initial connections can be converted into workable tourism activities. The accounts associated with B1, B2 and B3 identify the need to agree on schedules, costs, service requirements and responsibilities. Those associated with C5 and C6 indicate that community members' willingness to participate is related to the clarity of the work involved, the time required and the benefits anticipated.

Taken together, these accounts point to several stages in the mobilisation process: relevant resources must be identified, opportunities for contact must be established, and practical arrangements must be negotiated before activities can be delivered. A community member may possess relevant knowledge and be willing to participate, yet remain unable to contribute to a particular activity when information about its timing, requirements or responsibilities is unclear. Similarly, a business may know of a potential local service provider but still need to establish whether the service can meet agreed operational requirements.

Coordination therefore involves aligning the expectations and practical constraints of different stakeholders. Community members may be concerned with the time required, the nature of the work and the benefits associated with participation. Businesses may place greater emphasis on reliability, service quality and the ability to meet visitor requirements. Cooperation depends partly on the capacity to negotiate arrangements that accommodate these considerations. This interpretation locates coordination within the process of resource mobilisation, rather than treating it as an administrative matter separate from the use of local resources.

The interview notes associated with C5 and C6 also draw attention to the distinction between willingness to participate and sustained involvement. Willingness may support initial engagement, although continuity can be affected by the

regularity of activities and the clarity of arrangements. Where community members are approached mainly for isolated occasions, their involvement may remain intermittent. The available notes do not establish the specific reasons why individuals continue or discontinue participation across different situations. They nevertheless indicate that the continuity of participation merits consideration alongside the initial mobilisation of community resources.

Organisational and institutional connections provide a further means of linking individual relationships and operational coordination. The accounts associated with SM1 and SM2 emphasise the importance of identifiable contact points, information exchange and responsibility for following up on agreed activities. The expert perspectives represented by E1 and E2 similarly direct attention towards the processes through which knowledge, relationships and organisational capabilities are connected and applied. The account associated with SM3 raises the related issue of assigning responsibility for environmental and cultural protection.

These observations suggest that resource mobilisation may depend on arrangements extending beyond individual relationships or agreements between two parties. Activities involving community members, tourism businesses and management bodies can require information to circulate across stakeholder groups, responsibilities to be understood and agreed tasks to be followed through. Organisational connections can provide channels through which these functions are coordinated. Where responsibility for communication and follow-up remains unclear, the continuity of cooperation may be more difficult to maintain, even when relevant resources and initial contacts are available.

The findings also suggest that the organisational dimension of mobilisation extends to the responsibilities associated with sustainable tourism. The interview notes refer to the need to protect local landscapes, present cultural practices appropriately and avoid forms of cultural presentation that give insufficient consideration to their local significance. These concerns indicate that sustainability-related objectives require practical arrangements through which responsibilities can be communicated and implemented. The interview material does not establish how consistently such arrangements currently operate across tourism activities in Na Hang; it identifies responsibility and coordination as relevant dimensions for further analysis.

Institutional connections also need to be considered in relation to participation and decision-making. Clear contact points and defined responsibilities may facilitate the organisation of activities, although their presence does not establish how far community members influence decisions concerning tourism products, cultural representation or the distribution of benefits. These questions concern the quality of participation and the allocation of decision-making authority. They are therefore analytically distinct from the existence of coordination arrangements and require examination of the relationships between stakeholder groups.

Taken together, the four forms of social resources reveal an interconnected process of mobilisation. Local knowledge provides potential content for tourism experiences; social networks facilitate contact and the circulation of information; coordination capacity supports the negotiation of practical arrangements; and organisational and institutional connections can help align responsibilities across stakeholders. The interview findings suggest that difficulties at one stage may constrain the use of resources available at another. For example, locally held knowledge may remain outside organised tourism activities where opportunities for contact are limited, while established relationships may fail to produce sustained cooperation when operational arrangements remain unclear.

The central finding is therefore that the mobilisation of social resources in Na Hang depends on the connections between locally available resources, access to participation opportunities, the capacity to coordinate practical activities and arrangements for maintaining cooperation. The analysis shifts the focus from the identification of social resources to the processes through which they may contribute to tourism development. It also establishes a basis for examining how different stakeholders participate in these processes, how their priorities shape cooperation, and how opportunities and decision-making roles are distributed. These issues are addressed in the following section.

4.2. Organising and Sustaining Collective Action

The interview findings indicate that collective action in tourism development depends on the capacity to connect potential contributors, negotiate the conditions of cooperation and organise activities around shared operational arrangements. The accounts point to a process in which access to relevant networks creates opportunities for contact, coordination enables stakeholders to establish workable agreements, and organisational arrangements support implementation and follow-up. Each stage presents distinct requirements, and progress at one stage does not necessarily ensure continuity at the next.

The analytical focus therefore shifts from the availability of social resources to the mechanisms through which stakeholders bring those resources into collective use. In the context of Na Hang, the interview notes identify three closely related concerns: access to participation opportunities, the negotiation of practical conditions for cooperation, and the organisation of responsibilities over time. These concerns are evident across the accounts of community representatives, tourism businesses, state management representatives and experts, although the issues emphasised differ according to their respective positions.

Table 4. Stakeholder Roles and Mechanisms of Social Resource Mobilisation

Stakeholder group	Role indicated in the interview data	Mobilisation mechanism	Main coordination issue	Evidence codes
Community representatives	Contribute local knowledge, capabilities and labour; decide whether and how to participate in activities	Engagement through available networks and agreement on participation conditions	Access to information, clarity of tasks, time commitments and anticipated benefits	C2, C5, C6, C7
Tourism businesses	Identify potential local contributors and incorporate local services or knowledge into tourism activities	Contact, negotiation and agreement on operational requirements	Scheduling, costs, service quality, reliability and allocation of responsibilities	B1, B2, B3, B4
State management representatives	Facilitate coordination, information exchange and clarification of responsibilities among relevant actors	Identification of contact points and arrangements for coordination and follow-up	Continuity of communication and clarity of responsibility	SM1, SM2, SM3
Experts	Examine how resources are connected, who participates in decisions and how benefits and responsibilities are addressed	Analysis of resource mobilisation, participation and the organisation of collective action	Access to opportunities, decision-making roles and benefit distribution	E1, E2

Source: Authors' analysis of the interview notes, 2026

The mechanism of collective action: The interview findings can be synthesised into a conditional process of collective action. The process begins with access to networks, proceeds through the establishment of contact and negotiation of cooperation, and depends on organisational arrangements for implementation and continuity. The mechanism is presented in Figure 2.

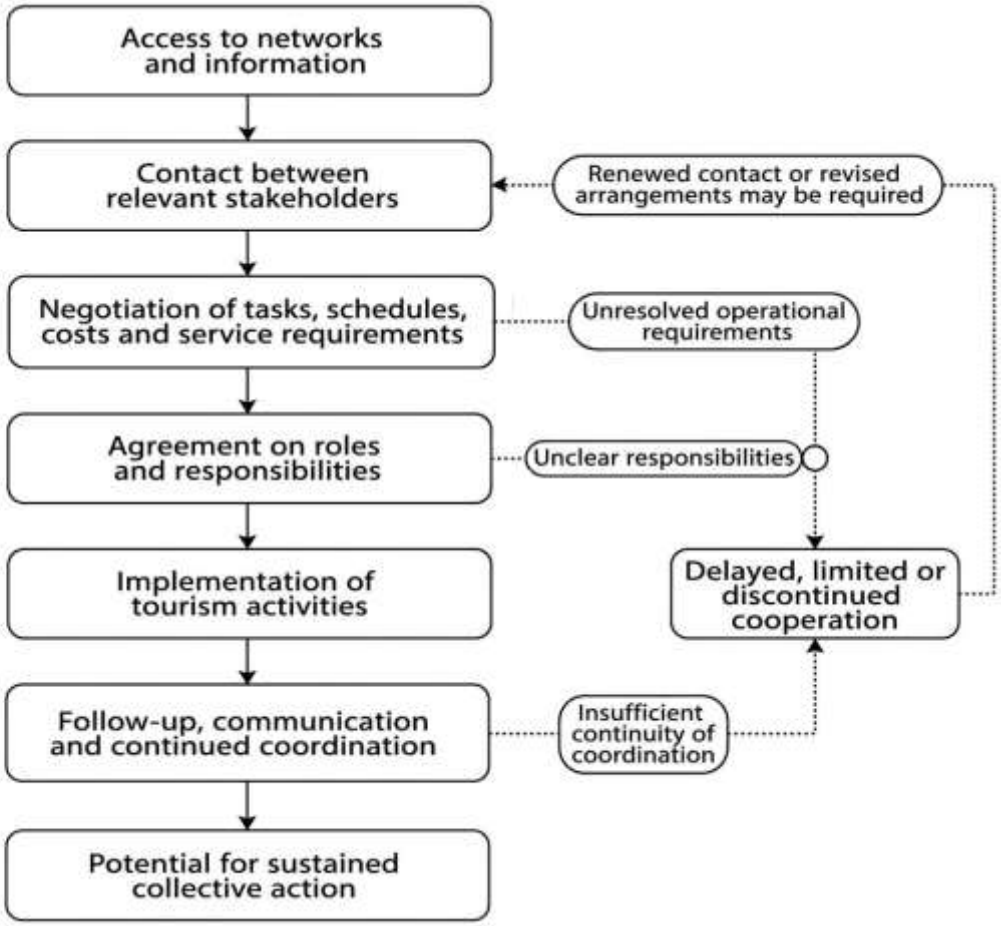

Figure 2. Analytical mechanism of social resource mobilisation through collective action

Note: Figure 2 presents an analytical interpretation of the interview findings rather than a statistically tested or universally applicable causal sequence. The pathways indicate mechanisms and possible interruptions identified or suggested by the interview material.

The first mechanism concerns access to networks and the formation of initial contact. The accounts associated with C2 and C7 suggest that familiar relationships facilitate information exchange and help community members identify potential routes into tourism activities. Such relationships can lower the practical barriers to initial engagement by making it easier to identify relevant people and communicate willingness to participate. Their usefulness, however, depends partly on whether information reaches potential contributors beyond established personal connections. Access to a network can open a route to participation, although the interview notes do not establish that all willing or capable community members have equivalent access to such routes.

The second mechanism concerns negotiating the terms of cooperation. The business accounts associated with B1, B2 and B3 indicate that initial contact needs to be followed by agreement on practical requirements, including timing, costs, service expectations and responsibilities. These matters shape whether a proposed collaboration can be incorporated into actual tourism operations. Community members and businesses may approach an activity with different constraints and priorities: the former may need clarity about the work and time involved, while the latter may need confidence in service delivery and reliability. Negotiation provides a means of aligning these requirements before resources are committed to an activity.

The evidence suggests that the quality of these arrangements matters to the feasibility of cooperation. General willingness to collaborate offers limited operational guidance where the scope of work, expected costs or responsibility for delivery remains uncertain. Conversely, sufficiently clear agreements can provide a practical basis for coordinating contributions. The findings do not establish that formal contracts are necessary in every case; the relevant requirement is that participants understand the arrangements governing their involvement and the responsibilities they have accepted.

The third mechanism concerns organising implementation and maintaining coordination. The accounts associated with SM1 and SM2 draw attention to the role of identifiable contact points, information exchange and responsibility for following up on activities. These functions connect individual agreements with the wider coordination required when several stakeholders contribute to a tourism activity. Without clear arrangements for communication and follow-up, coordination may depend heavily on personal initiative and the availability of particular individuals. This can make cooperation more difficult to sustain across activities or over time.

The relationship between implementation and continuity is particularly relevant to the distinction between occasional participation and sustained collective action. The accounts associated with C5 and C6 indicate that community members' willingness to participate is linked to the clarity of tasks, time commitments and anticipated benefits. Participation in a single activity therefore provides limited evidence of an enduring collaborative arrangement. Continuity also depends on whether suitable opportunities recur, participants can plan their involvement, and responsibilities remain sufficiently clear across successive activities.

The available evidence supports treating continuity as a distinct analytical issue, although it does not establish the frequency of repeated collaboration in Na Hang or the specific conditions under which individual participants withdraw. The central implication is that mobilisation should be assessed across the organisation and follow-up of activities, rather than inferred solely from initial contact or expressions of willingness. Repeated cooperation requires arrangements that remain workable for the stakeholders involved.

The expert accounts associated with E1 and E2 extend this analysis by directing attention towards the organisation of collective action and the distribution of decision-making roles. The practical coordination of a tourism activity can establish who performs particular tasks, while leaving broader questions about who selects the activity, determines its terms or receives its benefits unresolved. These dimensions need to be distinguished analytically. Operational agreement concerns the feasibility of cooperation; meaningful participation also concerns the extent to which stakeholders can influence decisions affecting their involvement. The interview notes raise this issue for further examination but do not provide sufficient evidence to determine the degree of community influence across tourism activities in Na Hang.

Taken together, the findings indicate that collective action rests on the interaction of network access, negotiated agreements and organisational continuity. Networks help establish contact; negotiation translates initial contact into workable arrangements; and coordination mechanisms support implementation and follow-up. Weaknesses at any of these points may interrupt the mobilisation process, although the available evidence does not establish that every interruption produces the same outcome. The process should therefore be understood as contingent on the circumstances of each collaboration rather than as a fixed sequence that guarantees successful tourism development.

For Na Hang, this interpretation places the emphasis on the organisation of cooperation among community members, tourism businesses and relevant management actors. The existence of local resources and stakeholder relationships provides a basis for collective action, while the practical arrangements governing participation influence how that potential is realised. Sustainable mobilisation consequently requires attention to the accessibility of opportunities, the clarity of negotiated responsibilities and the continuity of coordination. The following section examines how differences in stakeholder priorities, participation and access to opportunities shape this process.

4.3. Enabling and Constraining Conditions for Sustainable Tourism Development

The interview findings identify three conditions that shape the sustainability implications of social resource mobilisation in Na Hang: access to tourism opportunities and decision-making, the alignment of business requirements with community participation, and the treatment of cultural and environmental responsibilities. These conditions concern how tourism development is organised and whose interests are accommodated. They also distinguish the mobilisation of social resources from the broader question of whether their use supports sustainable outcomes.

Access to opportunities and decision-making

The accounts associated with C2 and C7 suggest that access to tourism opportunities may depend partly on established personal relationships. Such networks facilitate information exchange, but reliance on them can make opportunities less visible to people without direct links to organisers. The analytical issue is therefore not simply whether social networks exist, but how access through these networks is distributed. The interview notes indicate a possible constraint on participation; they do not establish the extent or systematic nature of exclusion in Na Hang.

A related distinction concerns access to economic opportunities and influence over decisions. The expert accounts (E1 and E2) draw attention to who determines the terms of participation, who can access benefits and what role community members have in shaping tourism activities. These questions matter because participation in service delivery does not, in itself, demonstrate influence over the decisions governing that service. Community members may contribute local knowledge or labour while having limited involvement in determining how an activity is designed or presented. The available evidence raises this distinction but does not establish that such a pattern characterises tourism development across the destination.

The findings consequently point to the distribution of participation opportunities and decision-making influence as relevant conditions for sustainability. Economic returns alone would provide an incomplete basis for assessing community participation; the terms under which people enter tourism activities and exercise influence also require consideration. However, the interview material contains no systematic evidence on income distribution, decision-making authority or differences in participation outcomes. Claims about established inequalities would therefore exceed the evidence.

Reconciling business requirements with community interests

The business accounts associated with B1, B2 and B3 identify operational requirements concerning service quality, timing, costs and reliability. These requirements are integral to delivering tourism services, but they need to be considered alongside the capacities and circumstances of local contributors. The resulting tension is practical: arrangements that meet business expectations may be difficult for community members to sustain when the time, work or responsibilities involved are insufficiently clear or poorly matched to their circumstances.

This tension should not be interpreted as an inherent conflict between commercial activity and community interests. The data instead suggest that the conditions under which cooperation takes place matter to the feasibility of participation. Business requirements can provide a basis for organising reliable services, while inflexible or inadequately negotiated requirements may narrow the range of people able to contribute. The interview notes do not document specific cases of exclusion caused by business practices, so this remains a potential constraint identified through the comparison of stakeholder priorities rather than a demonstrated outcome.

For sustainable tourism development, the relevant consideration is whether operational expectations accommodate local circumstances while maintaining service standards. This requires attention to the terms of participation, including the work expected, time commitments, costs and allocation of responsibilities. The evidence does not establish which arrangements would be most effective, but it shows why the compatibility of business operations and community participation deserves consideration when assessing the sustainability of local tourism initiatives.

Cultural integrity and environmental responsibility

The accounts associated with C3, C6 and SM3 raise concerns about landscape protection, appropriate cultural representation and the presentation of cultural practices. These concerns introduce a substantive limit to the use of local resources: cultural knowledge and environmental assets cannot be evaluated solely in terms of their usefulness for tourism provision. Their mobilisation also involves decisions about what is presented to visitors, how it is represented and who is responsible for safeguarding the values involved.

The interview material suggests that conservation commitments need to be considered in relation to actual practices and responsibilities. Cultural integrity, for example, depends in part on whether the presentation of local practices is considered appropriate by those connected to them. Environmental responsibility similarly requires clarity about the obligations associated with tourism activities in local landscapes. The notes identify these concerns, but they do not document specific conservation rules, monitoring procedures or instances of environmental damage and cultural misrepresentation. It would therefore be unwarranted to conclude that existing protection arrangements are ineffective or that tourism has already undermined local values.

The analytical implication is that the sustainability of tourism cannot be inferred from the incorporation of local culture and nature into visitor experiences. Attention must also be given to the conditions governing their use and protection. This shifts the assessment from the presence of cultural and environmental resources to the responsibilities attached to tourism activities and the extent to which those responsibilities are addressed in practice.

Synthesis

The findings indicate that sustainable tourism development in Na Hang needs to be assessed in relation to three substantive conditions: *who can access opportunities and influence decisions; how business requirements are reconciled with community circumstances; and how cultural and environmental responsibilities are addressed*. Each condition concerns the distribution of opportunities, the terms of participation or the limits governing resource use. Together, they provide a basis for examining whether social resource mobilisation can support tourism development that remains responsive to local interests and values.

These are analytically grounded conditions, not verified measures of sustainability outcomes. The interview data do not establish the extent of unequal access, the actual distribution of economic benefits, the effectiveness of conservation practices or the level of trust among stakeholders. Further evidence would be needed to assess these outcomes directly. Within these limits, the findings show that the sustainability of tourism development depends on more than the availability and mobilisation of social resources: it also requires scrutiny of the interests served, the influence available to local participants and the responsibilities governing the use of cultural and environmental assets.

4.4. Synthesis of Findings

The findings from Na Hang indicate that the contribution of social resources to sustainable tourism development depends on how they are mobilised through relationships, coordination arrangements and opportunities for stakeholder participation. The empirical evidence points to a distinction between the availability of social resources and their practical conversion into collective tourism activities. Local knowledge, established relationships and organisational connections may provide the basis for tourism development, but their contribution remains conditional on whether stakeholders can access opportunities, agree on operational arrangements and sustain cooperation. The case therefore directs analytical attention towards the processes connecting social resources with collective action rather than treating resource availability as evidence of effective mobilisation.

First, the findings suggest that different forms of social resources are complementary rather than independently sufficient. Local knowledge and capabilities can provide culturally grounded content for tourism experiences, while social networks may connect residents with businesses and activity organisers. Organisational capacity helps stakeholders negotiate tasks, schedules, costs and service requirements, and institutional connections can support information exchange and coordination. These functions are interdependent: local knowledge may remain underused when opportunities for participation are unclear, while existing relationships may not lead to organised activities when responsibilities and operational arrangements remain unresolved. The accounts concerning local knowledge, network access and coordination difficulties illustrate how the practical value of one resource can depend on the availability of others (C1–C4, C7, SM1, SM2, E1, E2). The implication is not that every tourism activity requires an identical combination of resources, but that resource mobilisation needs to be examined in terms of how relevant capacities and relationships are connected in particular circumstances.

Second, mobilisation emerges as a process of negotiation among stakeholders whose responsibilities and priorities differ. Community members consider the conditions under which they can participate, whereas businesses must attend to service quality, timing, costs and reliability. State management representatives emphasise coordination and continuity of communication, while expert perspectives draw attention to decision-making influence and benefit distribution (C5, C6, SM1–SM3, B1–B3, E1, E2). These perspectives reveal different dimensions of the same organisational problem: resources must be assembled into activities that stakeholders can realistically undertake and maintain. The evidence does not demonstrate an inherent conflict between commercial operations and community interests. Rather, it suggests that cooperation depends partly on whether expectations, capacities and responsibilities can be reconciled. Contact between stakeholders is therefore an enabling condition, not sufficient evidence that effective collective action has been established.

Third, the findings distinguish participation in tourism activities from influence over their organisation. Residents may contribute knowledge, labour or services without necessarily determining how an activity is designed, how cultural practices are presented or how opportunities and benefits are allocated. Interview accounts concerning access through personal networks raise the possibility that people with fewer connections to organisers may have less access to participation opportunities (C2, C7). Expert perspectives further highlight the importance of examining who influences decisions and how benefits are distributed (E1, E2). These findings do not establish systematic exclusion, unequal income distribution or a destination-wide imbalance of power. They do, however, identify access and decision-making influence as important dimensions for evaluating the quality of community participation. The analytical issue is not

simply whether residents are involved, but also the terms on which they participate and the extent to which they can shape the activities to which they contribute.

Fourth, the sustainability implications of mobilisation depend on how cultural and environmental responsibilities are addressed. Local cultural knowledge and the landscape can provide a basis for tourism experiences rooted in the characteristics of Na Hang. Nevertheless, the inclusion of cultural and environmental assets in tourism does not, by itself, demonstrate that those assets are being protected or represented appropriately. Interview notes refer to landscape protection and the need for care in presenting local cultural practices, but provide insufficient detail to establish the effectiveness of specific protection, monitoring or accountability arrangements (C3, C6, SM3). This distinction matters because resource mobilisation and sustainable outcomes are analytically separate. The former concerns how resources are brought into tourism activities; the latter also requires attention to how their use is governed and what consequences follow. The available evidence identifies cultural integrity and environmental responsibility as relevant concerns, but does not establish measurable improvements in conservation or community wellbeing.

Taken together, the case suggests that the mobilisation of social resources can be understood through four interrelated analytical dimensions: the complementarity of resources, the organisation of stakeholder cooperation, the distribution of participation and decision-making opportunities, and the arrangements governing cultural and environmental responsibilities. These dimensions connect the findings across Sections 4.1–4.3 without implying a fixed or universally applicable sequence. Resource complementarity concerns whether relevant capacities and connections can be brought together; coordination concerns whether stakeholders can translate those connections into workable activities; participation concerns who can access and influence those activities; and sustainability concerns how the resulting use of local resources is governed. Weaknesses in any of these dimensions may limit the contribution that social resources can make, although the present data do not permit the magnitude or consequences of such limitations to be measured.

Table 5 consolidates this empirical explanation by linking the principal findings to the mechanisms and conditions identified in the interviews. Its purpose is analytical rather than predictive: it specifies how social resource mobilisation may be understood in the Na Hang case and distinguishes these interpretations from outcomes that would require further evidence.

Table 5. An empirical synthesis of social resource mobilisation and its sustainability implications in Na Hang

Analytical dimension	Empirical indication	Mobilisation mechanism	Critical condition or constraint	Implication for sustainable tourism
Resource complementarity	Local knowledge, personal networks and coordination needs appear across accounts concerning tourism participation (C1–C4, C7, SM1, SM2, E1, E2).	Connecting local capabilities with relationships, organisers and practical arrangements.	Resources may remain disconnected when access to opportunities or coordination is unclear.	Assess how local capacities are connected and put to use, rather than assuming that their presence ensures a tourism contribution.
Negotiated collective action	Businesses identify operational requirements, while community and management representatives highlight participation and coordination conditions (C5, C6, SM1–SM3, B1–B3).	Negotiating tasks, timing, costs, service expectations and responsibilities among stakeholders.	Cooperation may be difficult to sustain when expectations and local capacities are poorly aligned or responsibilities remain unclear.	Examine whether tourism activities can be organised in ways that accommodate operational standards and community circumstances.

Access and decision-making influence	Personal networks shape access to information and opportunities; expert accounts raise questions about who influences decisions and receives benefits (C2, C7, E1, E2).	Connecting residents to opportunities and enabling them to participate in shaping activities.	Access may depend on existing connections; participation in tasks does not establish influence over decisions.	Evaluate the terms of participation and opportunities for community influence, not merely the presence of local involvement.
Continuity of participation and cooperation	Willingness to participate is associated with clear tasks, timing and expected benefits; isolated mobilisation may not lead to continued involvement (C5, C6).	Maintaining communication, clarifying arrangements and following up on agreed activities.	Initial willingness or contact does not establish sustained cooperation.	Distinguish occasional involvement from arrangements capable of supporting continued participation.
Cultural integrity and environmental responsibility	Interview notes identify landscape protection and appropriate cultural representation as concerns (C3, C6, SM3).	Incorporating protection responsibilities into the organisation and delivery of tourism activities.	The available notes do not establish the existence or effectiveness of specific monitoring and accountability arrangements.	Assess the governance of cultural and environmental resources alongside their use in tourism experiences.

Source: Authors' synthesis of interview notes, 2026

The synthesis highlights a central interpretation of the Na Hang case: *social resources acquire practical significance through the arrangements that connect them to collective action, while their contribution to sustainable tourism remains dependent on the conditions governing participation, coordination and resource use*. This interpretation does not establish a causal model or demonstrate that the identified conditions have produced particular sustainability outcomes. Instead, it provides an empirically grounded basis for the Discussion section to examine the contribution of the case to scholarship on social resources, collective action and sustainable tourism development, while retaining the contextual and methodological limits of the evidence.

5. Discussion

5.1. From Social Resource Availability to Resource Mobilisation

The findings extend the discussion of social resources in sustainable tourism by distinguishing resource availability from the capacity to mobilise resources for collective action. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of social capital and stakeholder relationships in tourism development (Jones, 2005; Zhao et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2014). The Na Hang case suggests that these resources should not be considered sufficient in themselves. Their potential depends on how local knowledge, social networks, coordination capacity and institutional connections are brought together in practice.

This interpretation shifts attention from identifying available resources to examining the arrangements through which they become accessible and usable. It also provides a context-sensitive perspective on social resource mobilisation without assuming that the same arrangements will produce similar outcomes across destinations.

5.2. Community Participation and Stakeholder Collaboration

The findings reinforce the distinction between community participation and stakeholder collaboration. Participation concerns residents' opportunities to engage in tourism activities and influence decisions, whereas collaboration

involves coordination among actors with different responsibilities and priorities. These processes are related but not interchangeable (Tosun, 2000; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Jamal & Stronza, 2009).

In Na Hang, the analytical significance lies in examining not only whether stakeholders are connected, but also how participation is organised and whether community members can contribute to decisions. This distinction complements previous research on participatory tourism governance (Aas et al., 2005; Byrd, 2007). However, the evidence does not establish systematic exclusion or demonstrate the extent of community influence across tourism activities.

5.3. Resource Mobilisation and the Conditions for Sustainability

Resource mobilisation should not be equated with sustainable tourism outcomes. As previous studies suggest, tourism sustainability requires attention to social, cultural, economic and environmental considerations (Swarbrooke, 1999; Tolkach & King, 2015). The Na Hang case highlights the importance of examining the responsibilities and arrangements that accompany the use of local resources, particularly cultural knowledge and the natural environment.

Because this study does not directly measure changes in livelihoods, environmental conditions, cultural integrity or community well-being, it cannot establish the effectiveness of resource mobilisation in achieving sustainability. Its contribution is instead to identify the organisational and participatory conditions that warrant further investigation.

5.4. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The study contributes a context-specific analytical perspective that connects social resources with mobilisation mechanisms, enabling and constraining conditions, and the potential contributions of tourism to sustainability. Rather than presenting a causal model, it offers a framework for examining why available resources may or may not translate into coordinated collective action.

For tourism development in Na Hang, the findings point to the importance of accessible information, clear responsibilities, sustained coordination and meaningful community involvement in decisions concerning tourism activities and local cultural resources. These implications are analytical recommendations, not interventions whose effectiveness has been empirically tested. Further research could examine how such arrangements operate over time and how they relate to directly observed sustainability outcomes.

6. Conclusion

This study examined how social resources can be mobilised for sustainable tourism development in Na Hang, Tuyen Quang, Vietnam. Based on a qualitative case study involving 16 semi-structured interviews with community representatives, state management representatives, tourism businesses and experts, the findings show that the availability of local knowledge, social networks and organisational connections does not automatically translate into coordinated tourism activities. Their potential depends on access to opportunities, coordination among stakeholders, continuity of cooperation and the arrangements through which community members participate in decisions.

The study contributes a context-specific perspective by connecting social resource mobilisation with community participation, stakeholder collaboration and the conditions for sustainability. It highlights the importance of examining not only what resources are available, but also how they are connected, organised and governed. For Na Hang, the findings suggest that improving information access, clarifying responsibilities and strengthening coordination may help create more inclusive and consistent opportunities for local participation. Attention to cultural integrity and environmental responsibility is also necessary when local resources are incorporated into tourism activities.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The study draws on a purposive sample of 16 participants and interview notes rather than audio-recorded transcripts. Its findings therefore provide contextual insights rather than statistically representative conclusions. Moreover, the study does not directly measure tourism-related economic, environmental, cultural or community well-being outcomes. Future research could extend the analysis to other destinations, examine resource mobilisation over time and investigate how different forms of participation relate to measurable sustainability outcomes.

Overall, this study positions social resource mobilisation as an important analytical perspective for understanding the conditions under which local resources may contribute to sustainable tourism development. Its central implication is that sustainability requires attention not only to the resources a destination possesses, but also to the relationships, organisational arrangements and participatory processes through which those resources are used.

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