



Innovation for sustainability through co-creation by small and medium-sized tourism enterprises (SMEs): Socio-cultural sustainability benefits to rural destinations

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ABSTRACT

Small and medium-sized tourism enterprises (SMEs) are the dominant industry players in rural destinations. This study investigates how they can contribute to socio-cultural sustainability benefits of rural destination communities by engaging in co-creation in innovation for sustainability (IFS). The rural destinations of Vega and Røros were selected as qualitative empirical cases to investigate 14 tourism SMEs' co-creation in IFS practices. The findings indicate that due to contextual elements of rurality (e.g. local embeddedness, strong personal relations, and trust), tourism SMEs co-create in IFS with various local stakeholders, and contribute to the socio-cultural benefits of rural destinations' sustainability through local sourcing, education, resource synergies, inclusion, and quality of life. This study contributes to the literature on sustainable rural destination development and the role of tourism SMEs, as well as expands the understanding of IFS and the benefits of co-creation.

1. Introduction

Tourism plays a significant role in the development of destinations, particularly in rural areas. Understanding tourism's contributions to sustainable rural destination development is critical to determine whether rural tourism is beneficial (Liu, Chiang, & Ko, 2023). Most tourism literature focuses on rural tourism as an important element of the regional economy (Liu et al., 2023) or environmental responsibility (Su, Wall, Wang, & Jin, 2019). While sustainable rural tourism must be economically feasible and environmentally responsible, socio-cultural capital is an inseparable aspect of sustainability that should receive similar attention in research and practice (Kosanović, Glažar, Stamenković, Folić, & Fikfak, 2018). However, socio-cultural sustainability benefits are difficult to achieve or measure; thus, they have received limited scholarly attention in otherwise extensive destination development literature (Adams, Jeanrenaud, Bessant, Overy, & Denyer, 2012; Crotts, Magnini, & Calvert, 2022; Cunha, Kastenholtz, & Carneiro, 2020).

Due to their size, special relational dynamics, and attachment to a place, rural tourism small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are often considered 'cultural brokers' that provide opportunities for immersion in local society and culture, playing a crucial role in the socio-cultural sustainability of rural destinations (Cunha et al., 2020;

Kastenholtz & Sparrer, 2009). However, there is limited application of sustainability in daily business actions. Moreover, limited data are available on SMEs' sustainability performance (Bos-Brouwers, 2009; Carlisle, Kunc, Jones, & Tiffin, 2013). The lack of available information may be due to the belief that rural SMEs may lack the resources to address sustainability challenges, which often require complex and innovative solutions (Hansen & Große-Dunker, 2013; Schot & Geels, 2008).

This study uses the innovation for sustainability (IFS) concept, which is both a process and an outcome of innovation activities that increase all three sustainability dimensions: economic, environmental, and socio-cultural (Bocken, Ritala, Albareda, & Verburg, 2019). Such innovation is challenging and requires integrated approaches, broad partnerships, and co-creation with diverse societal stakeholders such as public organisations, NGOs, and intermediaries (Adams et al., 2012; Bocken et al., 2019). The co-creation approach is increasingly recognised as an essential tool for innovation. However, few studies have examined the potential benefits of adopting co-creation practices and strategies (Tanev et al., 2011). For instance, existing research acknowledges that co-creation in innovation could be a valuable tool for addressing sustainability challenges; however, knowledge of such innovation strategies is limited (Kruger, Caiado, França, & Quelhas, 2018). The lack of theoretical and empirical studies examining the integration of co-

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creation, innovation, and sustainability in different contextual settings (e.g. SMEs) and industries (e.g. tourism) suggests the need for further research (Tuan, Rajendran, Rowley, & Dinh, 2019).

Here, this study investigates the role of tourism SMEs in sustainable rural destination development and benefits of the co-creation approach in IFS. The research question is as follows: How can co-creation in IFS by tourism SMEs contribute to the socio-cultural sustainability benefits of rural destinations?

To answer this question, a qualitative approach is used to examine 14 tourism SMEs' co-creation practices in IFS in two Norwegian rural destinations. This study contributes to several streams of literature. First, it expands the literature on sustainable rural destination development by drawing on a nuanced understanding of rural destinations' socio-cultural sustainability and the role of tourism SMEs. Second, this study contributes to the IFS literature by illustrating that co-creation is an important tool innovating parties can use for IFS. Finally, from practical and policy perspectives, this study increases the understanding of why and how local stakeholders use co-creation practices in IFS to guide their sustainability journeys.

The structure of the remaining article is as follows: Section 2 presents the conceptual framework, followed by the methodology in Section 3 and findings in Section 4. The discussion in Section 5 offers both theoretical and practical implications. Finally, Section 6 presents the study's limitations and future research directions.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Socio-cultural sustainability of rural destinations

Rural areas with unique landscapes and inimitable socio-cultural capital are becoming major tourist attractions because of their appeal to post-modern tourists seeking 'unique' experiences (Schiller & Salazar, 2013). According to Mwesiuno, Halfdanarson, and Shlopak (2022), as tourists' interest shifts from mass tourism to personalised tourism, rural destinations can benefit the most because they provide offerings that satisfy the increased demand for authentic experiences, interaction with the local community, and locally produced goods and services. Unlike urban tourism, rural tourism can provide integration into an idealised environment, offering an escape from urban stressors such as pollution, noise, and artificial and congested living contexts (Kastenholz, Carneiro, Marques, & Lima, 2012). During the COVID-19 pandemic, rural tourism became a popular alternative to urban tourism, with increased demand for natural parks, forests, and rural areas (Juschten & Hössinger, 2020; Liu et al., 2023; Mwesiuno et al., 2022).

The pursuit of authenticity (e.g. cultural and social identities, traditions, memories, intangible connections, local peculiarities, and rural landscapes) has led communities, local, regional, and national governments, and the private sector to respond to new tourism demands in complex ways (Garau, 2015). Besides common rural challenges (e.g. out-migration, over-aging, brain drain, and environmental degradation), rural tourism poses additional socio-cultural challenges, such as changes in the norms and values of society, and the commercialisation of culture. This can lead to cultural degeneration, diffusion, and change; adverse effects on local traditions and language; and the destruction of traditional sectors (Mwesiuno et al., 2022).

Furthermore, tourism in rural areas often impedes residents' daily activities because of overcrowding and congestion at attractions, in public spaces, and on public transport, adding to the pressures on existing infrastructure and services. This often creates increased tension, conflict, and misunderstanding between residents and tourists, thereby frequently causing local annoyance. Seasonality is another challenge. During the peak season, the host community, its infrastructure, and the environment can be under tremendous pressure. In contrast, the low season can mean facility closures and service interruptions (Karlisdóttir, 2021). This process of adapting and adjusting to the seasons, and tourists' attitudes and values can induce changes in services, activities, or

cultural sites. This can reduce their authenticity, and local and regional embeddedness (Akova & Atsız, 2019). Furthermore, seasonal tourism involves temporary employment typically characterised by a lower-skilled or unskilled workforce, a lack of competencies and knowledge, and lower pay. This compounds the common challenges of rural out-migration, brain drain, difficulty in engaging youth in tourism-related careers, and the struggle to maintain local social capital.

While some challenges are subtle in the short term, they can lead to gradual, long-term changes in society's structure, values, beliefs, and cultural practices. This can endanger the survival of local communities (Brunt & Courtney, 1999). Thus, rural tourism which uses rural traditions and socio-cultural resources as attractive factors to compete in the market may produce high territorial impacts that could gradually affect the essence of a place (Zafran & Kaufmann, 2022).

Despite the importance of socio-cultural sustainability for destination development, the tourism industry often emphasises short-term economic sustainability impacts, and treats the needs and values of visitors (non-local people) and the industry as the primary goals in sustainable destination development (Saarinen, 2013; Wakil, Sun, & Chan, 2021). Similarly, Liu et al. (2023) found that local tourism policymakers in rural destinations regard economic benefits as the most important indicator for sustainable destination development, followed by environmental and socio-cultural benefits, which are considered less important. Although tourism plays a significantly positive role in economic and environmental destination development, the need to balance all three sustainability outcomes is a critical challenge recognised by practitioners and tourism scholars. Actions by public and civic institutions as well as tourism industry players are essential for achieving this balance (Mwesiuno et al., 2022; Zahari, Esa, Rajadurai, Azizan, & Muhamad Tamyez, 2020).

2.2. Sustainable rural destinations and the role of tourism SMEs

The tourism industry, especially in rural areas, is characterised by SMEs or micro-family businesses. Most definitions of SMEs rely on indicators such as the number of employees in the business, location, assets, turnover, management style, or market share. SMEs are usually divided into micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises; however, the distinction between these three segments varies depending on the national definitions of enterprises (Beckmann, Garkisch, & Zeyen, 2023). For example, in Norway, most tourism service providers employ fewer than ten people; thus, most tourism businesses are considered micro- and small-sized enterprises (Statistics Norway, 2020).

Sustainable destination development requires facilitating and implementing sustainability principles to ensure optimal use of resources while protecting and enhancing them (Mwesiuno et al., 2022). Regardless of size, tourism SMEs play an essential role in sustainable destination development via new investments, creation of local jobs and income, and perception of unique endogenous resources. SMEs are key developers of local supply chains, enhancing economic activities at the regional level and strengthening the mechanisms of competition, specialisation, risk-taking, productivity, and social functions (Dayour, Adongo, & Kimbu, 2020; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000; Vanhove, 2012).

Small rural tourism businesses also contribute to rural destinations and communities where economic alternatives are scarce and maintaining a minimum population base is highly valuable (Cunha et al., 2020). According to Greenberg, Farja, and Gimmon (2018), small businesses operating in rural regions away from urban centres or big cities have different attributes (e.g. local ties, and social and cultural embeddedness) and development activities than businesses in urban locations. The business practices of SMEs and their owner-managers often reveal a sincere concern about place and community, local people, and local resources. All these factors are important aspects of rural sustainable destination development (Berlemann & Jahn, 2016; Cunha et al., 2020; Greenberg et al., 2018). This local concern not only contributes to economic benefits in terms of job and income generation but

also local socio-cultural community dynamics that help keep rural communities alive (e.g. maintaining traditional cultures and connected activities such as local food and handicrafts).

Rural tourism SMEs can help address tourism-related socio-cultural challenges, such as the threat to local culture, the disappearance of authenticity, or a decrease in the quality of authentic offerings. This is because these SMEs are small and offer specialised tourism products, often incorporating local resources, which can help them in providing more offerings and experiences with a focus on quality, authenticity, and locality (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2021). SMEs can also help address the seasonality issue by limiting the number of visitors and prioritising quality over quantity during the high season; meanwhile, in the low season, they can find solutions for operational challenges, such as new sales channels, or creating new or joint offerings by collaborating with others (Karlsdóttir, 2021). By working together, SMEs can share their expertise and knowledge, maintain local workplaces, and increase local competence.

However, doing this is not easy. The complex interactions between the firm's economic sustainability and a destination's socio-cultural sustainability often cause challenges for SMEs and requires an adaptive process that involves innovative thinking and doing (Silvestre & Țircă, 2019).

Although they have a willingness to innovate, rural SMEs are generally less innovative than their urban counterparts due to remoteness, associated costs, lack of resources, and various situational and contextual factors that pose barriers to success (Bjerke & Johansson, 2015). Such barriers often shift SMEs' focus to solving short-term operational challenges rather than considering long-term sustainability contributions. According to Komppula (2014), many owner-managers of tourism SMEs lack the skills, expertise, or resources for innovation, and do not recognise or care about the long-term sustainability consequences of their actions. Interest in sustainability has increased among SMEs; however, legislation, compliance, and customer demand are the main drivers for undertaking sustainable practices. Often, SMEs engage in 'compensating actions' to offset negative impacts through small changes without altering their established (unsustainable) ways of doing business (Shevchenko, Lévesque, & Pagell, 2016; Ukko, Saunila, Rantala, & Havukainen, 2019). Many sustainability issues do not have simple solutions; hence, firms must find novel ways to shift existing practices to sustainable alternatives.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the sustainability of tourism in rural areas will only be successful if a comprehensive inclusive planning strategy is adopted and implemented based on a multi-action and multi-stakeholder participatory approach (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2020). SMEs have fewer capabilities than large firms; thus, the former often have to develop innovations through relationships with others (Ngugi, Johnsen, & Erdélyi, 2010). However, the current innovation ecosystem often means that SMEs develop ideas in isolation; consequently, they may be unaware of synergies with other stakeholders and unable to benefit from the wisdom of collective intelligence (Erbguth et al., 2022). According to Ukko et al. (2019), external knowledge and novel approaches to open innovation can help SMEs adapt to market changes and help their sustainability journey.

2.3. IFS and co-creation

Innovation is becoming increasingly important for solving sustainability issues, including environmental, societal, and cultural challenges. Smith et al. (2010, p. 437) argue that 'the challenge for innovation no longer rests solely in economic potential, but also in the societal changes induced by innovative activity and the consequences of this for environmental, social, and cultural sustainability'. Current literature lacks a single established concept that combines innovation and sustainability. Common terms include sustainable innovation (Schot & Geels, 2008), eco-innovation (Kneipp, Gomes, Bichueti, Frizzo, &

Perlin, 2019), sustainability-oriented innovation (Hansen & Große-Dunker, 2013), responsible innovation (Stilgoe, Owen, & Macnaghten, 2013), and IFS (Bocken et al., 2019).

This study uses IFS as an umbrella concept, defining it as 'the intentional introduction of (radically) new or (incrementally) improved products and services or entire systems, which, based on traceable comparative analysis lead to economic, environmental, and (or) socio-cultural benefits that surpass those of the prior products, services, or systems' (Bocken et al., 2019, p. 6). IFS is gaining importance as a valuable tool for strengthening preparedness, coordinating responses across multiple sectors, and mitigating critical sustainability challenges (Erbguth et al., 2022).

Approaches to IFS range from weak to strong focuses on sustainability. A weak focus considers one sustainability dimension (e.g. economic or environmental), whereas a medium focus considers several dimensions simultaneously. Finally, a strong focus implies a holistic approach that attempts to capture all three sustainability dimensions: economic, environmental, and socio-cultural (Inigo, Albareda, & Ritala, 2017). A holistic approach to sustainability is the most complex and challenging to achieve, particularly while balancing the clearer economic sustainability benefits with sociocultural sustainability benefits which are more difficult to define, measure, and attain (Erbguth et al., 2022). The goal of this approach is not to maximise a single dimension. Rather, holistic sustainability equally emphasises all three sustainability dimensions, and requires compromise, inclusion, broad partnerships, inter-organisational knowledge, collaboration, and co-creation (Bocken et al., 2019; Silvestre & Țircă, 2019).

Traditionally, companies have developed new products and services through 'closed processes'; however, these processes have been 'opened' through research and practice based on 'open innovation', a process that combines external and internal competencies in the innovation process (Chesbrough & Crowther, 2006; Tanev et al., 2011; Vargo, Maglio, & Akaka, 2008). The open innovation literature (Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Payne, Storbacka, & Frow, 2007) acknowledges the importance of external stakeholder involvement in the innovation process. More recently, scholars have emphasised the involvement of stakeholders other than previously dominant producers and their customers through 'co-creation in innovation' (Loureiro, Romero, & Bilro, 2020; Moons, Daems, & Van de Velde, 2021). Co-creation in innovation is a process in which the involvement of diverse stakeholder types (e.g. public organisations, local communities, intermediaries, and NGOs) as active participants in the design and development of products, services, and experiences can produce equally valued outcomes that comply with stakeholders' needs and desires (Goodman, Korsunova, & Halme, 2017; Singh, Brown, Chelekis, Apostolidis, & Dey, 2022). However, the knowledge on different types of stakeholders' involvement, and the outcomes and benefits of co-created innovations is limited (Fledderus, Brandsen, & Honingh, 2014; Voorberg, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2014).

Similarly, IFS research (Arnold, 2017; Bocken et al., 2019) acknowledges that co-creation could be a valuable tool for the creation of 'sustainable value, which is an integration of the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural dimensions of sustainability. However, merging co-creation and IFS requires further research (Kruger et al., 2018). Moreover, most studies on co-creation in innovation within the tourism industry has focused on large organisations and economic benefits for the firm and customers, with little information on socio-cultural sustainability benefits for the wider society or the role of other tourism stakeholders, such as SMEs (Tuan et al., 2019; Turner & Shockley, 2014). Further, it is unclear how co-creation in innovation in tourism could contribute to sustainability and serve as a relevant mechanism for sustainable destination development. Additional research is required to identify the key factors for success and the ability to align co-creation in innovation with sustainability at the local level (Kruger et al., 2018).

3. Methodology

This study employed a multi-case study approach to explore how tourism SMEs can contribute to sustainable rural destination development through co-creation in IFS. The multi-case approach is useful for exploring and developing theoretical models in locally bound contexts (Stake, 2006). It is a suitable research strategy when the proposed research topic is exploratory and involves novel and contemporary phenomena. This study does not compare the cases but aims to build a strong theoretical contribution and an in-depth understanding of the studied phenomenon. The hermeneutic strategy is used, where the researcher seeks to interpret and understand lived experiences (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010) searching for meaning, analyses, critiques, and negotiations between theory and data.

This study employed purposive or theoretical sampling to identify and select cases with characteristics that fit the study's needs and the research question (Silverman, 2006). Two Norwegian destinations, Vega and Røros, were selected because both are remote destinations with a tourism sector mostly operated by SMEs. The selection was also motivated by proximity and accessibility (because data were gathered during the COVID-19 pandemic), and the rurality context (which provides additional nuances such as strong local ties, social and cultural embeddedness, and local social dynamics). Furthermore, both destinations participated in the 'Sustainable Destination' certification program*. This illustrates that various entities and stakeholders in the community are familiar with the concept of sustainability, have developed relevant projects, and have some degree of understanding of the sustainability challenges in their particular community. The criteria for case selection included destinations (1) which were in Norway, (2) which were rural, and (3) which participated in the 'Sustainable Destination' certification program.¹

3.1. Case descriptions

Vega is a rural municipality situated on the coastline of Nordland County in Norway with approximately 1200 residents. The municipality was included in UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2004 for its eider duck care and eiderdown harvesting. Vega's current challenges include population decline and aging, and the disappearance of traditional sectors such as farming and fisheries. However, tourism is becoming a key sector of Vega's economy. A significant increase in tourism numbers in recent years has brought opportunities and challenges for Vega as a destination. Its tourism industry is primarily operated by tourism SMEs that provide activities such as kayaking, biking, camping, hiking, guided nature and culture tours, fishing, sailing, farm experiences, arts and crafts, and food experiences. Vega participated in the 'Sustainable Destination' certification program in Norway (Visit Vega, 2021).

Vega currently faces several tourism-related sustainability challenges. One challenge is unbalanced tourism seasonality; over-tourism in the summer months strains existing local infrastructure and disturbs local nature and ways of life. In the off-season, Vega faces challenges related to the lack of local workplaces and activities for the youth. Consequently, its population continues to decrease over time, making it less socially sustainable. Besides, younger generation is less involved in traditional crafts and customs and lacks inclusive cultural education. Together, this poses a threat to the survival of local culture.

Røros is situated in a rural mountain region in Trøndelag County with approximately 5600 inhabitants. The former mining town was included on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1980 for its mining history, original town layout, and wooden houses. Today, Røros is known as the

'local food capital of Norway' due to the town's organic food traditions. Tourism has become a key industry in Røros as well, with approximately one million visitors annually (Destination Røros, 2021). Local tourism SMEs provide activities such as guided culture and nature tours, food experiences, events, festivals, nature safaris, and dog sledding. The indigenous Sámi culture is prevalent, with more than 20 Sámi families residing in Røros, and actively working in reindeer husbandry and providing some indigenous cultural experiences for tourists.

Røros also participated in the Norwegian 'Sustainable Destination' certification program and won two awards for sustainable tourism in Norway in 2011 and 2012. However, Røros is currently experiencing sustainability challenges due to over-tourism, which places pressure on the local infrastructure and social well-being of the local community. Additional challenges include increased noise, traffic, and prices, as well as a lack of dialogue between the tourism industry, local organisations, and residents. Furthermore, the lack of involvement of the Sámi population in public policy and tourism development-related decision-making processes has increased social and cultural biases.

3.2. Data collection

The research team collected data as part of a larger study that included interviews with different stakeholders in the community (e.g. destination management organisations (DMOs), municipalities, culture management organisations, NGOs, local citizens, and SMEs). This study draws on empirical data collected from for-profit tourism SMEs through semi-structured interviews and observations. Here, the term 'SME' refers to a firm with a certain size based on the number of employees; in Norway, small enterprises have 1–19 employees, and medium-sized enterprises have up to 250 employees (OECD, 2018).

Fieldwork was conducted at both destinations in June and August 2021. Observations and meetings with local community members enabled a deeper understanding of the physical, cultural, and social contexts. Insights were obtained on organisations' stakeholder networks, and the specific sustainability challenges faced by the destination community. Observations and informal conversations took place during 7- (Vega) and 3-day (Røros) stays, during which researchers developed an understanding of local expressions of values, the use of tacit knowledge, and interactions between organisations and the community.

A total of 14 SMEs, 7 each in Vega and Røros providing food, culture, and nature tourism activities were selected for analysis based on accessibility and willingness to participate. Managers and/or owners (usually the same individuals in SMEs) were interviewed at each destination for a total of 14 semi-interviews that lasted 55 to 95 min (see Table 1). All interviews were audio recorded, and relevant sections were transcribed with the permission of all informants, who were assured of

Table 1
Types and number of informants.

Case	Type of SME	SME code	Duration	Type of informant	Number of informants
Vega	Culture-based	VCB1.1	80 min	Owner	3
	Nature-based	VNB1.1	70 min	Owner	1
		VNB1.2	72 min	Owner	1
		VNB1.3	90 min	Owner	1
Røros	Food-based	VNB1.4	92 min	Owner	1
		VFB1.1	55 min	Owner	1
		VFB1.2	88 min	Owner	1
		RCB1.1	72 min	Manager	1
	Culture-based	RCB1.2	70 min	Manager	2
		RNB1.1	65 min	Owner	1
	Nature-based	RNB1.2	60 min	Manager	1
		RFB1.1	60 min	Manager	1
	food-based	RFB1.2	62 min	Manager	2
		RFB1.3	77 min	Owner	1
Total		14 interviews	16.8 h		18 informants

¹ "Sustainable Destination" is a Norwegian national labelling scheme for travel destinations and a tool for the sustainable development of businesses and destinations related to the environment, local community, cultural heritage, and economy (Visit Norway, 2021).

anonymity. These interviews explored preset themes while allowing informants to speak freely about the topics addressed by the interviewer. An interview guide was developed based on existing literature on IFS, co-creation, tourism SMEs, and sustainable destination development (Appendix A).

The pre-set themes included information about the organisation, the informant’s background and role in the organisation, the tourism activities that they provide, sustainability issues at the organisation and destination, innovation activities to address these issues, and the co-creation in innovation practices with others.

3.3. Data analysis

The data were systematically coded and analysed based on Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton (2013) proposed strategy of organising raw data into concepts, followed by theme development. This analytical approach demanded awareness of researcher bias, which may influence interpretation, while simultaneously being open to the data.

First, the selected data were carefully read and interpreted with a focus on the research question and subthemes to reveal meaningful patterns. These findings were used to build the first analytical table, which included each interview in a separate row and covered topics such as the different focuses of co-creation in IFS, co-created outcomes (i.e.

products, services, and processes), types of stakeholders involved (i.e. external and internal), contextual enabling factors (e.g. rurality and local place), and socio-cultural sustainability benefits. Second, the data were analysed using a theoretical framework drawn from the socio-cultural sustainability literature. After extracting common themes from the analysis, the identified socio-cultural benefits were grouped into five categories. Saturation was reached when the author could no longer develop new codes or themes (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Finally, to ensure validity, the preliminary and final results of the study were presented to a scientific audience through workshops, seminars, conferences, and discussions with research colleagues. Substantial feedback and comments were received. Several data sources were triangulated, including interviews and observations (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011).

4. Findings

To contextualise the findings, the overall co-creation process in IFS across both cases is briefly described. This is followed by a deep dive into the identified sociocultural benefits for rural destination communities resulting from co-creation in IFS. The main categories and sub-categories, participating SMEs, stakeholders involved, main influencing contextual factors of rurality, and examples of co-created IFS and

Table 2
Socio-cultural sustainability benefits, participants, main influencing factors, and examples of co-created IFS and co-creation activities.

Main categories of socio-cultural benefits	Subcategories of socio-cultural benefits	SMEs	Stakeholders	Main contextual factors	Examples of co-created IFS	Examples of co-creation in IFS
Local sourcing	Supporting local businesses Supporting local workforce Supporting local cultures Promoting local cultures	VNB1.2., VNB1.3., VNB1.4., VFB1.1., VFB1.2., RCB1.1., RNB1.1., RFB1.1., RFB1.2., RFB1.3.	Local businesses Family members Public organisations Culture management organisations External professionals	Local knowledge of existing resources. Personal relations. Long family traditions. Informal communication. Trust.	New menu based on local produce. A new product based on family traditions. New local apprentice program.	Co-sourcing from/to other local businesses. Hiring locals through co-created programs. Practicing/helping local traditional crafts through co-creation. Incorporating local cultural elements into co-created offerings.
Education	Educating the local community about industry and cultural knowledge Engaging with and passing on industry and cultural knowledge to youth	VCB1.1., VNB1.2., VNB1.3., VNB1.4., VFB1.2., RCB1.1., RCB1.2., RNB1.1., RNB1.2., RFB1.2., RFB1.3.	Local citizens Local youth organisations Local public organisations Local businesses	Personal care about the young generation. Desire to pass on local cultural knowledge. Desire to educate society about local cultures.	New educational program for locals free of charge. New cultural workshop for youth.	Inviting citizens to co-create, participate, and learn about tourism offerings and local culture. Co-creating activities for youth to learn about tourism offerings. Co-creating cultural educational activities for youth.
Resource synergies	Promoting and helping others Sharing industry knowledge Sharing cultural knowledge	VNB1.1., VNB1.2., VFB1.2., RCB1.2., RNB1.2., RFB1.1.	Local businesses External professionals Culture management organisation Informal industry network	Trust in sharing knowledge. Personal relations. Willingness to help each other as a community. Resource constraints.	New tourism offering that several firms created and now share. Informal learning trips abroad.	Cross-selling practices, new joint offerings with other firms. Openly sharing best business practices and co-creating industry solutions. Co-creating solutions to share local cultural knowledge with local businesses.
Inclusion	Promoting diversity Empowering local community Including indigenous cultures	VNB1.1., VFB1.2., RCB1.1., RNB1.1., RNB1.2., RFB1.3.	Ethnic minority representatives Local public organisations Local citizens	Strong local ties. Caring about the members of the local community. Personal respect for indigenous minority groups.	Hiring older citizens to help provide tourism experiences. New activity for socially disadvantaged children. Joint offerings with members of the indigenous community	Employing socially disadvantaged community members through co-created programs/initiatives. Giving various community members a voice through co-created initiatives. Supporting ethnic minority groups through co-creation.
Quality of life	Improving local infrastructure Expanding leisure and cultural activities	VCB1.1., VNB1.1., VNB1.2., VNB1.4., VFB1.2., RCB1.2., RNB1.2., RFB1.2.	Municipality Local public organisations Local businesses	Caring about local infrastructure. Desire to give back to the local community.	A new offering free of charge for all. Sharing own facilities with locals.	Investing in openly available community infrastructure. Creating/supporting local leisure and cultural activities.

co-creation activities are presented in [Table 2](#).

4.1. Co-creation in IFS

Tourism SMEs in both Vega and Røros co-create in IFS with various societal stakeholders, who are often external ones and include suppliers, competitors, social groups, government bodies, and local citizens. Family members and employees are also sources of knowledge, and often participate in the co-creation processes. Certain contextual factors of rurality (e.g. strong local ties, personal relationships, and trust among community members) enable SMEs to engage with various stakeholders in co-creation in IFS through informal, personal, and spontaneous communication (e.g. informal meetings, leisure events, phone calls, and coffee breaks).

Furthermore, co-creation in IFS is often understood from a local perspective, related to product or process improvement, and is incremental rather than radical, often involving small changes in current practices. One informant described IFS as follows:

What does it mean to innovate for sustainability? Our industry in itself is not sustainable as we have tourists flying in from across the world, leaving a huge footprint on the environment. So, we all just do small things to improve the quality of life in our community. For instance, we, together with this welfare organisation, X, created a free education program for socially disadvantaged kids in our community. (Informant RNB1.1.)

This illustrates that IFS' understanding in rural destination communities is practical, connected to the local place, and often includes personal care and the desire to give back to the community.

Motivation for co-creation in IFS is often derived from resource shortages (e.g., time, money, and knowledge), and an understanding that only by sharing practices and working together can SMEs innovate and contribute to sustainable tourism practices as well as solutions for negative consequences of the tourism industry. Several informants explained:

Seasonality is really a big issue for us. The biggest challenge is losing good employees, who often leave in the off-season. Therefore, we, together with external investors and other local businesses, try to create more seasonally balanced tourism activities in the area (VNB1.3.)

We often see that tourists do not fully understand the importance of protecting our heritage and often misbehave regarding community values and important sites. Therefore, we, together with this management organisation X and other industry players, have co-created educational leaflets about how to behave at our destination, nature sites, and what behavior and values are expected from the visitors. (Informant VNB1.4.)

While most informants had positive attitudes and experiences, some challenges emerged from the co-creation of IFS activities. These include local tensions and disagreements related to negative past experiences, conflicts within industry organisations, feelings of favouritism, and a 'do it myself' mindset, as illustrated by one informant:

I'm not sure, but sometimes I feel like you have the group and you have the inner circle. And sometimes only the inner circle can get in. Maybe I am being sensitive. (Informant VFB1.2.)

These challenges can contribute to additional socio-cultural sustainability issues in rural destination communities, such as exclusion, conflicts, distrust, and disunity. This can make it difficult to achieve positive socio-cultural sustainability outcomes. Owing to the interconnectedness of practices, and close community relations and interactions, such issues may result in extra challenges in other sustainability dimensions, local sustainability practices, or future collaboration and co-creation activities.

Nonetheless, many SMEs that practice co-creation in IFS contribute to sustainability benefits for rural destination communities. Although not all SMEs contributed to all socio-cultural benefits due to differences in organisational structure, size (ranging from micro to small and medium), and tourism activities offered, the majority contributed to two or more socio-cultural sustainability benefits in each destination. Because the pillars of sustainability are closely interrelated, many SMEs contributed to all three sustainability dimensions through co-creation in IFS. Although not all co-creation practices resulted in solely positive outcomes, given the scope of this study, socio-cultural sustainability benefits are prioritised and discussed in more detail in the following section.

4.2. Socio-cultural sustainability benefits

The main categories of socio-cultural sustainability benefits identified were local sourcing, education, resource synergies, inclusion, and quality of life. These illustrate that co-creation in IFS by rural SMEs contributes to socio-cultural benefits not only for businesses and their stakeholders, but also for the rural destination community and its sustainable development.

4.2.1. Local sourcing

In both destinations, tourism SMEs engaged with other local businesses to co-create in IFS. Local sourcing was a prominent theme. One informant stated:

This year, we have created a new menu with an external chef, involving local producers to create new food experiences that connect to the story of the X community. (Informant RCB1.1.)

Local sourcing is grounded in the local knowledge of existing resources, and the desire to share and engage with the local community. One socio-cultural benefit of local sourcing is that it contributes to the local business environment by supporting local firms. One informant illustrated this benefit, noting that they sell most of their products to local businesses, with little remaining for others. These practices help local businesses sustain their operations, maintain their skills and expertise, and support other service providers in rural communities. This is often difficult, given the seasonality and frequent overdependency on the tourism industry. By supporting local businesses, one can also support the local workforce as local businesses are important job providers in rural destinations. SMEs often prefer to hire locals rather than someone from outside the community, thereby retaining local talent in rural areas.

Incorporating the locality aspect into tourism offerings also supports local cultures. This is important for sustaining rural traditions, tacit knowledge, and existing crafts which may go extinct, or are usually affected by commercialisation and tourists' demands. Supporting local cultures is also connected with contextual factors in small rural areas, where long-lasting family traditions and vast socio-cultural capital play an important role. One informant noted:

I, together with X, try out different things. For example, we used my grandmother's recipe to create a new product using local produce.... (Informant VFB1.2.)

Such practices also promote the local culture because offerings with local characteristics foster the pride of the local people, while visitors can learn something new about the local culture. Thus, local sourcing helps preserve and promote local traditions that are important for raising cultural awareness among visitors and are essential for the survival of rural cultures.

4.2.2. Education

The practice of co-creation in IFS generates educational benefits that contribute to the sustainability of local communities. For example, some SMEs invited locals to participate in the co-creation of new offerings,

thereby increasing citizens' knowledge of locally available tourism offerings. Co-creation in IFS also contributes to passing industry knowledge on to future generations, thereby increasing youth interest in the tourism industry. Informants also mentioned that co-creating together and transferring local knowledge to the younger generation is important for sustaining existing local cultural practices in rural destinations:

This is the biggest youth and children [activity] in Norway. 75% of the people involved are under 25 years old. Because it is really important to give youth such activities and pass on knowledge. (Informant RCB1.1.)

Several enterprises incorporated local cultural elements into their offerings to educate locals and visitors about the local culture:

With colleagues, we created what we call [product], which we can put in different places in this town in trying to visualize the culture and history of Y. Because it is not easy to find places to reach out to visitors where you can actually show and educate them about this sensitive part of the local culture. So, we think it is quite necessary. (Informant RCB1.2.)

The owner-managers' personal interests often influence such practices and are beneficial for enhancing rural cultural capital. If it is not acknowledged and exposed through education, rural cultural capital may disappear. Furthermore, it helps educate visitors about the local heritage, values, and behavior, thus increasing awareness and preventing misinterpretations and misunderstandings between the host community and tourists.

4.2.3. Resource synergies

SMEs contribute to socio-cultural benefits related to resource synergies by co-creating with other local organisations to support and help one another in new or better ways. For example, the interviewed organisations developed new collaborative processes when receiving customers (e.g. recommending visits to other local businesses), thus helping promote others.

If I don't have a place on X, I refer people to other businesses, my competitors, because my goal is not only profit but to get people to come to our destination. (Informant VNB1.4.)

SMEs also co-created new joint offerings with other local businesses, which eventually became part of their activity packages (e.g. new snacks for tours, locally made souvenirs, and other tourism activities). Such practices promote trust, add credibility, and generate momentum. They are often based on rural contextual elements such as resource constraints, personal relationships, and willingness to help each other. They also help address seasonality and competence issues in tourism, as SMEs can now find joint solutions to the challenges of different seasons and complement each other's limited knowledge and skills.

Another important socio-cultural benefit of resource synergies is sharing industry knowledge with other industry players (e.g. regarding required safety and security systems, or new rules and legislation). Sharing industry knowledge helps rural businesses meet quality standards in today's marketplace, such as durability and reliability. By making such knowledge openly available, SMEs promote open, supportive, and inclusive rural destination communities. Furthermore, they help each other survive in a highly competitive industry characterised by limited resources, a lack of competencies, and high failure rates.

Some co-created IFS' also incorporate sharing cultural knowledge that helps local organisations learn about local cultural capital, diversify their offerings, and preserve local rural heritage. One informant noted:

Due to COVID, we created an online course on the Canvas platform in cooperation with a lifelong learning organisation. We try to attract all the members of the tourism community so they can learn about the culture of X because often tourism businesses do not have time,

resources, or knowledge due to the nature of the industry and their small size (Informant RCB1.2.)

4.2.4. Inclusion

Inclusion is another important benefit of the co-created IFS that emerged prominently. Several organisations highlighted the socio-cultural benefits of inclusion, such as the promotion of diversity. One informant noted:

We have [employee] working for us through creating this practice with the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration. They didn't think X was ever going to work. Now, we are considering making it our common practice. (Informant VFB1.2.)

Inclusion practices are grounded in local social embeddedness and the personal care of community members. The aim is to ensure that everyone has access to the same opportunities and treatment and to prevent discrimination and abuse. Inclusion also includes the empowerment of the local community. Strong local ties and the desire to include disadvantaged groups are important for the sustainability of social capital in rural areas. Informants stated:

X [activity] is for everyone. It means that we create opportunities for volunteers who do not work or are not in an ordinary education because they cannot do that because of either physical or mental disabilities. We also include immigrants, find the best solutions for them, and give them a voice. (Informant RCB1.1.)

X, with organisation Y, focuses, for the most part, on being an available tourism attraction for people with different disabilities, especially physical handicaps. So, there are a lot of places here that are specially created and adapted to wheelchair users, for example. (Informant RNB1.2.)

Interviewees highlighted that they included ethnic minority cultures by co-creating with members of indigenous minority groups. Owner-managers have personal respect for their culture. This not only promotes the visibility of the indigenous group, which is often lacking in the tourism industry, but also provides them with the fundamental right to participate in community life. Thus, the inclusion of indigenous minority groups contributes to the cultural sustainability of rural destinations by ensuring that valuable and unique cultural capital is practiced, promoted, and preserved.

4.2.5. Quality of life

Informants identified the socio-cultural sustainability benefits for the quality of life of the local community, including local infrastructure improvements:

We built X with the help of the local municipality and Y. And now we allow it to be used by others. Children, for example. (Informant VCB1.1.)

Providing and supporting accessible local infrastructure can unlock the potential of an area, especially a rural one, by enabling residents to access new opportunities and increase the viability of new activities. It can also help protect and promote local infrastructure, which frequently faces disturbances or degradation caused by tourism activities. For instance, based on the owner-manager's attachment to a place and personal desire to give back to the local community, a co-created IFS contributes to expanding leisure and cultural activities in the local area. This aspect of socio-cultural sustainability is particularly important for rural destinations, which often face a shortage of such activities. One informant noted:

We had, before Christmas, created a course for local children. I think it is important for us to show them the possibility of doing other things. It's alternative things to do. Not only football... (Informant VCB1.1.)

5. Discussion

This empirical study has several theoretical and practical contributions.

5.1. Theoretical contributions

This study examines how tourism SMEs can contribute to sustainable rural destination development (Arnold, 2017; Komppula, 2014; Shevchenko et al., 2016). The findings illustrate that in the rural context, tourism SMEs are interested in and motivated to innovate not only for their benefit but also to contribute to the wider destination community. This motivation stems from the particular characteristics of the rural context, such as local embeddedness, strong local ties, caring for the social and cultural well-being of the community, and the willingness to help one another. Furthermore, rural tourism SMEs are open to co-creation in the innovation process due to their personal relations, informal communication, and trust, and invite community stakeholders to participate (e.g. public organisations, industry players, culture management organisations, external professionals, local citizens, and family members). Inviting diverse stakeholder types requires tourism SMEs to compromise and incorporate different needs, views, and perspectives into the co-creation in IFS practices. Limited resources often constrain innovation activity and lead to small changes in existing practices that are not radical. However, SMEs can access additional resources and knowledge by co-creating with diverse stakeholders. Indeed, the findings provide empirical support for the role of tourism SMEs in combining co-creation in innovation activities with sustainability outcomes (Tuan et al., 2019; Turner & Shockley, 2014).

Furthermore, this study fills a research gap on rural tourism SMEs and their ability to contribute to socio-cultural sustainability benefits besides short-term economic self-gains (Komppula, 2014; Kosanović et al., 2018; Ukko et al., 2019). This study identified five socio-cultural sustainability benefits of SMEs' co-creation in IFS via interviews: local sourcing, education, resource synergies, social inclusion, and quality of life. This analysis provides a nuanced understanding of how SMEs can contribute to the socio-cultural dimension of sustainability and potential benefits for the local community. Next, each identified socio-cultural sustainability benefit is discussed in the context of the existing literature.

Local sourcing emerges as one main socio-cultural sustainability benefit of co-creation in IFS by rural SMEs. This finding is contrary to prior research, which shows that local sourcing is primarily an instrument for economic and environmental firm sustainability (e.g. the eco-saving performance of a product, Su et al., 2019; or eco-labelling benefits for sales, Font, English, Gkritzali, & Tian, 2021). In contrast, this study demonstrates that local sourcing benefits rural destination communities by supporting local labour, sustaining local expertise, and promoting local socio-cultural resources.

Prior research on co-creation in innovation has highlighted the firm-centric economic sustainability benefits of learning, education, and knowledge exchange, especially when creating new or improving existing offerings (Yen, Thi, & Li, 2021). This study demonstrates that by co-creating in IFS with various communal stakeholders, SMEs can contribute broader socio-cultural educational benefits, such as passing on industry knowledge, educating the local community about the industry and cultural heritage, and engaging youth in educational activities.

Another benefit is resource synergy. Studies typically focus on the economic benefits for industry players, such that firms can exploit complementarities and improve their (joint) performance by co-creating with others (Font et al., 2021). This study confirms that improving joint performance or offerings is beneficial in the highly competitive tourism industry. This helps SMEs diversify and stay operational while simultaneously sharing industry knowledge and skills which they often lack. Resource synergies can also provide long-term sociocultural benefits, such as building trust and credibility among community members, and

helping preserve and sustain local cultural capital.

Inclusion is another identified benefit of co-creation in IFS. Indeed, the accessible tourism literature observes that public organisations and the private sector co-create accessible infrastructure for disabled visitors (Darcy, Cameron, & Pegg, 2010). This study confirms that accessible tourism infrastructure is an important benefit of the co-creation in IFS by tourism SMEs. SMEs also contribute to the broader socio-cultural benefits of inclusion, such as the promotion of diversity, inclusion of ethnic minority groups, and empowerment of disadvantaged community members.

Finally, access to local infrastructure is crucial for improving the quality of life in rural areas (Boncinelli, Pagnotta, Riccioli, & Casini, 2015). This study further emphasises the importance of local infrastructure and role of SMEs in enhancing socio-cultural activities, thus increasing occupational opportunities for residents, especially the youth.

In summary, rural tourism SMEs can help realize the identified socio-cultural sustainability benefits through co-creation in IFS while involving different stakeholders and shifting the focus from just economic and environmental sustainability to also include socio-cultural sustainability benefits. Such benefits are vital for the survival of rural destination communities and their socio-cultural capital. Specifically, these benefits not only help tackle tourism-related socio-cultural issues but also address the long-term sustainability challenges faced by local communities, such as depopulation, youth out-migration, diminishing social and cultural vitality, dearth of appropriate infrastructure, lack of social and cultural inclusion, and disappearance of cultural heritage.

In addition, this study contributes to the IFS literature by empirically illustrating that co-creation is an important tool for achieving IFS. Specifically, co-creation can help achieve IFS when different types of stakeholders are involved (e.g. industry, public sector, and civic society). This provides further supporting evidence on the benefits of multi-stakeholder involvement in co-creation in innovation (Loureiro et al., 2020; Moons et al., 2021) while simultaneously advancing current knowledge on the types of stakeholders and how to involve them (Fledderus et al., 2014). Furthermore, this study extends existing knowledge on co-creation in IFS and its benefits (Voorberg et al., 2014) by illustrating that such practices can positively impact not only economic and environmental sustainability, but also socio-cultural sustainability. Thus, co-creation can contribute to achieving a more holistic approach to IFS (Arnold, 2017; Bocken et al., 2019; Kosanović et al., 2018). The analysis also expands the knowledge of co-creation in IFS to different contexts, such as SMEs, the tourism industry, and rural destination development. Specifically, co-creation in IFS can be practiced by organisations of different sizes, representing different industries, situated in different locales, and aiming for different levels of change (e.g. firms, networks, or destination communities).

5.2. Practical contributions

The findings provide valuable insights into the practice of co-creation in IFS, which can be used to support sustainable development in destination communities. Policymakers can use these insights to develop regulations and guidelines that facilitate co-creation in IFS activities by building and supporting local infrastructure and tools. Establishing meeting places, promoting stakeholder involvement, and providing the necessary financial and human resources can encourage cocreation among community stakeholders. Furthermore, public organisations can help foster confidence and trust among community members by mitigating conflicts, avoiding favouritism, and promoting partnerships that support co-creation in IFS for sustainable development.

Next, various stakeholders in rural areas, including the private sector, need to understand the benefits of co-creation in IFS. Encouraging private firms to adopt co-creation practices can help address the sustainability challenges of the local communities in which these firms

operate. For instance, to prevent the depletion of local resources, preserve cultural knowledge, and reduce dependence on seasonal tourism, businesses can, for example, source local produce from nearby farms, collaborate with local craftsmen to create new offerings such as souvenirs, and purchase supplies from local businesses throughout the year.

Furthermore, co-creation in IFS can help tackle the lack of educational opportunities in rural areas by engaging community members, especially the youth, in the co-creation of tourism offerings or through co-created activities, such as local culture courses. These initiatives can also raise awareness of the local cultural heritage and foster interest in tourism-related careers. Sharing resources and knowledge between local businesses is another way to overcome sustainability challenges, such as the lack of skills and expertise in rural areas. By developing joint offerings, sharing technological advancements in the industry, or co-creating marketing solutions such as recommendation visits, businesses can establish trust and credibility among industry stakeholders, and help address competency gaps in the industry.

Finally, to promote social and cultural diversity in rural areas and greater social equality, companies should take measures to ensure inclusivity and avoid excluding minority groups or those who are disadvantaged, such as people with disabilities or indigenous communities. For instance, investments can be made in accessible tourism infrastructure that caters to the needs of people with disabilities, and by incorporating indigenous knowledge while developing new or improving current tourism offerings. In addition, by co-creating in IFS, private firms can help improve the quality of life in local communities. For example, they can create new cultural spaces that are openly accessible to community members, thereby providing more opportunities for leisure and cultural activities, such as spaces used for youth theatre. This is especially important in rural areas which often lack such activities and where such infrastructure can play an important role in addressing issues such as youth outmigration.

In summary, recognising the benefits of co-creation in IFS can encourage various stakeholders, such as the private sector, to prioritise

partnerships and actively engage with diverse community members in co-creation efforts. This not only enables them to achieve their sustainability objectives but also promotes the sustainability of local communities.

6. Limitations and future research

One limitation of this study was the geographical context. Both cases are situated in Norway; thus, the generalisability of the results to other destinations and locales is limited. Future studies should focus on alternative tourist destinations in different geographical and cultural contexts. Moreover, both destinations have World Heritage status. Hence, they may have access to special and unique resources that might be lacking in other rural destinations, thus limiting the generalisability of the results.

Additionally, this study only focuses on the benefits of co-creation in IFS from the perspective of SMEs. Future studies can also investigate the possible negative consequences and co-creation in IFS from the perspective of other community stakeholders (e.g. NGOs or public institutions/organisations). Scholars can also identify enablers of and constraints for co-creation in IFS to provide a deeper understanding of the necessary or limiting conditions.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None.

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Appendix A

Main themes	Detailed questions
Introduction	<p>Can you please tell us about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your organisation and your role in it - Own background (education, work, and interests of relevance to the topic) - Employees: number, background <p>The central topics that we will talk about are the following. Could you first give an introduction of how you understand the meaning of the following terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainability - Innovation/development - Collaboration/co-creation
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which types of services, experiences, and activities does your firm/organisation provide? - What are the main markets and sectors? - What are your customer segments and target groups? - What type of resources are essential for your firm to deliver its services/experiences? - Which stakeholders are key in delivering your services/experiences? - What type of stakeholders are affected by the activities of your firm/organisation?
Sustainability	<p>Above, you briefly introduced how you understand the concept of sustainability; we would like to further explore the concept:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the main sustainability challenges for your firm/organisation? - Do you have any activities to address such challenges? - If yes, please give examples of sustainable practices by your firm/organisation. - Why these practices? - What type of regulations, in terms of sustainability, does your firm/organisation need to comply with? - The Sustainable Destination Certification: What role does it play in your firm's/organisation's activity? - What are the main challenges related to or possibilities for the certification program? - What are the biggest sustainability challenges in your destination community? - What should be done to address such challenges? - Does your firm/organisation contribute somehow?
Innovation	<p>Above, you briefly introduced how you understand innovation; we would like to further explore the concept:</p>

(continued on next page)

(continued)

Main themes	Detailed questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you introduced any new products/services/processes lately? - If so, what, why, and how? - Did you consider addressing any sustainability dimensions when developing such innovations? - If yes, what dimensions? - Do you think such innovations will have any effect on your community? - If yes, how?
Co-creation	<p>Above, you briefly introduced how you understand collaboration and co-creation; we would like to further explore the concept:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regarding innovations to address sustainability issues, did you create new things yourself or co-create them with others? - If yes, what type of actors did you co-create with? - What was their role? - What were the outcomes of such activities? - Have you introduced any other sustainability aspects when co-creating new things? - If yes, what type and for whom? - Do you think co-created innovations have any benefits for the local community? - If yes, what benefits and for whom? - What are the main advantages of co-creating with others? - What are the main challenges?
Round up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there aspects we have talked about that you would like to follow up on? - Are there other aspects that we have not talked about that you would like to go further into?

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