

**Aldo Papone Conference 2008**  
**«Responsible Tourism Development»**

*CASE STUDY*

*Fresh Perspectives  
for Nikola-Lenivets Village.*

**Travel & Tourism Global Partnership  
Junior Achievement Russia**



**By TTP Russia students**  
**Alina Rodina and Anton Kachulin**

**Teacher: Luidmila Zhdanova**

**Kaluga  
Russia  
November 2008**

# Content

Content ...	2
Acknowledgements ...	3
Introduction ...	4
General Information...	4
Tourism Potential of Kaluga Region ...	5
The «Ugra» National Park ...	6
Park protection ...	7
Tourism and Recreation in the Preserved Area ...	7
Understanding Responsible Tourism ...	8
Case Study Topic ...	8
It Takes a Village... ...	9
The History of the Site ...	9
The Great Standoff, 1480 ...	10
Nikola - Lenivets in 19 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> Centuries ...	10
An Art-Village Project ...	11
An Outpost of the Contemporary Land-Art ...	11
Land-Art Festival ...	12
Nikola-Lenivets Village – A Popular Attraction ...	13
Land-Art Festival – Positive Impact on the Village ...	13
Different Interest Groups ...	15
Proposed Interventions ...	16
Development of Responsible Tourism Model in Nikola-Lenivets Village ...	17
Opportunities for Small Business ...	17
Fresh Perspectives – Development on a Larger Scale ...	18
Employment ...	20
Workforce Readiness... ...	22
The SWOT-analysis ...	22
Economic and Social Impact ...	23
Impact on the Environment ...	23
Conclusion ...	24
Nikola-Lenivets Village Land-Art Projects... ...	26
Teachers' Note ...	27

## Acknowledgements

We owe thanks to many people and organizations who helped and supported us in the process of realization of this project.

We wish to thank Junior Achievement Russia and Global Travel & Tourism Partnership for opportunity to have a great experience.

We extend our huge thanks to Global Partners whose support makes possible Aldo Papone Conference and our attendance at this remarkable event.



## **Introduction**

As part of the group involved in the Travel and Tourism Program at school we've been exploring the major attractions of our native city – Kaluga and the landmarks of the Kaluga region. One of the field trips brought us to Nikola-Lenivets – a tiny village with fabulous scenery and amazing art-objects installed in the landscape by a group of artists with assistance of inhabitants of Nikola-Lenivets and few surrounding villages.

We really enjoyed our summer visit. Apart from artistic value the land-art constructions installed in the village landscape offered tremendous opportunity for outdoors activities. When one girl of our group was asked about her impressions, she said she would like to come back again and again, and later added she even would like to live there. To a certain extent all group shared this impression.

We were a bit puzzled that there were no other visitors to Nikola-Lenivets. Certainly, it was fun to have the entire place for our group. But we also thought it was certainly worth for much more visitors to see and do what the village can offer. We wanted to come back and to learn more.

Our next visit in the autumn 2008 was related to our case-study activities. The village was still deserted and much less cheerful, than in the summer, although it had a certain charm, but of a different kind. The wonderful constructions we enjoyed so much during the first visit were still there, but somehow less welcoming. We talked with the local people, asked questions we prepared for them. This second field trip provided a lot of useful information. Nikola-Lenivets village was a natural choice for us as a topic for our Responsible Tourism Development case study.

## **General Information**

Nikola-Lenivets is a small village located in the Kaluga region in central European Russia. Kaluga region is an important industrial and research center with 34 science and research institutions, most of them located in the city of Obninsk, the first Russian science city, or Naukograd. The major sectors of the regional economy are automobile and construction materials production, forestry, agriculture, and pharmaceuticals. The Kaluga city of over 340,000 population, located 200 kilometers to the southwest from Moscow is the region's capital.

## Tourism Potential of Kaluga Region

Kaluga Region boasts a convenient geographic location. It is listed among the 20 most developed regions of Russia in terms of density of railroads and highways. The main transportation junctions of the region are Kaluga, Obninsk, and Sukhinichi. Two international highways pass by the region's territory. The region has two airports, including one of international status.



Kaluga is one of the least polluted areas of central Russia. It has a wealth of mineral waters and rivers with crystal clear water, picturesque landscapes and a large number of natural, historic and cultural sights. Its main rivers are the Oka and the Zhizdra. Among the natural resources the best known and well preserved are Kaluzhskiye Zaseki Reserve, Ugra National Park, Tarusa Wildlife Reserve, and Kaluzhskiy Bor Natural Sanctuary.

Besides the natural landmarks, Kaluga Region has a number of architectural masterpieces dating back to the 16-19th centuries (over 30 sites), as well as museums, the most famous of which is the Tsiolkovsky State Museum of the History of Cosmonautics. Kaluga craftsmen enjoy a well-deserved popularity for extraordinary embroidery, ceramic toys, pottery, and basket weaving.



According to the local ministry of economic development more than 100,000 tourists visited Russia's Kaluga Region in 2007 around 5% of visitors came from abroad. Most visitors coming to Kaluga region reach few popular attractions, well-known for their natural beauty, or historic and cultural significance, while an amazing number of local places of interest remain unknown to the majority of tourists and local people. There is a wealth of local resources and opportunities, together making up the immense variety of locations with more than just potential for both domestic and international tourism development on a larger scale.

Until recently, the flow of tourists to the region was limited by a shortage of hotels and a low standard of services. Special regional programs to attract investment in the tourist industry are aimed at reducing the inconvenience for travelers. Developing tourist programs, the local government and private sector companies emphasize the environmental tourism.

### **The «Ugra» National Park**

Of special interest are environmental tourism projects launched by the «Ugra» national park. The park was established in 1997 to preserve the unique landscape of the Ugra and Zhizdra rivers. Its resources are regarded as unique not only in the region, but also in the Central Russia. Over 65 % of the 100,000 hectare park territory stretching along the two rivers is covered by woods and lakes. It has 20 natural and 4 ornithological reserves, over 20 architectural monuments and 130 archaeological sites, including medieval settlements and sites of important historic events. Optina Pustyn, a famous Russian Orthodox monastery, is also situated here.



The park provides significant opportunities for people to enjoy variety of leisure pastimes and activities. It is a place to enjoy scenery, wildlife and tranquility. There is plenty to explore: large variety of plants and bird species, footpaths, weekend hikes for nature lovers, bird-watching, scientific field trips, boat trips along the Ugra River to see the historic sites and architectural treasures, other activities exposing tourists to over 200 local attractions. The «Ugra» National Park is part of the Green Ring program organized to provide one-day, usually weekend trips for visitors to enjoy closeness to nature.



## Park protection

To ensure that the minimum disruption is caused to the indigenous surroundings, the «Ugra» National Park is facilitating public environmental education and volunteer hands-on projects. Activities range from cleaning up to trail building, helping local environmental groups and officials conduct a census of certain animals or plant species. Priority for the park today is development of partnership relations with the local community to ensure development needs are balanced with proper concern for environment and community well-being.

The UNESCO biosphere reserve program created «to promote and demonstrate a balanced relationship between humans and the biosphere» was launched here in 2002. The design of the reserve includes a legally protected core area, a buffer area where non-conservation activities are prohibited, and a transition zone where approved practices are permitted. This is done with regard to sustainability of natural resources for the benefit of local communities. The effort requires relevant research, monitoring, education and training. The project aims on development and replication of interaction with consumers of the recreational resources to ensure sustainable development of the preserved territory.

## Tourism and Recreation in the Preserved Area

Fostering tourism and recreation facilities and services is the mainstream of the «Ugra» National Park social and economic development. To attract funds for environmental programs the park management is working on a number of joint projects based on interaction with the local businesses. Local authorities provide incentives for small and family-owned businesses through



microfinance credit programs with a purpose to promote rural tourism, develop and improve the range and quality of facilities and accommodation in order to maintain and wherever possible increase the economic potential of tourism, diversify incomes and improve standards of living for local population.

We learned a lot through our FAM visits and internship at the «Ugra» National Park as part of Travel and Tourism Program. Our experiences have helped us to understand what kind of approaches and models could be applied in development of responsible tourism in general and how responsible solutions could ensure the maximum positive and minimum negative impact of tourism on economy, society and environment of a particular village.

## Understanding Responsible Tourism

Our understanding of responsible tourism is based on the win-win, or rather win-win-win approach. We think that all parties involved, i.e. business, tourists and local communities are equally responsible for development of tourism and its impact on the economy, society and environment. This pattern also includes the government and local authorities as well as voluntary sector. These are the major stakeholders able to develop and implement responsible tourism models.



Responsible tourism primary goal is to balance the benefits and costs of development of tourism that may transform a village or a city or a region into a destination enjoyable for visitors and sustainable and profitable for residents and may bring much needed boost for community morale and local economy and help preserve and maintain the natural, historic, cultural and social wealth.

There's a need to invest time in education and consensus building so all stakeholders will be aware and willing to accept that development of tourism is mutual responsibility, and responsible tourism is a 'thing to do' to add success, prosperity and sustainability to destination. And there is a need in investments for capital expenditures to develop infrastructure needed to attract and keep visitors, and effective management to tackle problems visitors bring with them, so that the negative impacts will not outweigh the positive ones.

## Case Study Topic

With our understanding of responsible tourism development in mind we explored Nikola-Lenivets - a small village just becoming aware of its tourist potential because of the unsought fame brought by land-art festivals that started few years ago.

We wanted to figure out how responsible tourism may transform the area into a popular destination highlighting the possible effects and key issues of employment, income, sustainability and conservation of natural and cultural resources.

Our case study topic: Is it really possible for Nikola-Lenivets to be a popular destination and preserve the harmony of art and nature that attracts visitors, at the same time?

## It Takes a Village...

At first glance, there doesn't seem to be much to Nikola-Lenivets. Perched on a scenic outcropping over a bend in the Ugra River, it has beautiful landscapes, clump of well-tended dachas (country cottages), some ancient Slavic burial mounds and a 19th-century church.

Over the last decade an obscure village has become well-known: first in Moscow art circles thanks to an unusual local group of craftsmen, and later to a larger and more diverse audience - as a setting for land-art festivals.

Started by a Moscow artist who involved villagers in creation of extraordinary land-art objects (such as ziggurat of hay or aqueduct of snow and other constructions made of natural materials) installed in the fabulous scenery, these cultural events have become a draw for visitors and consequently transformed the village into a spot that enjoys publicity, trade and employment at the times when it is celebrating its festivals.

However apart from the regular land-art festivals and occasional folklore events the village remains isolated and deserted, despite of plenty of things it could offer to visitors throughout the year.

## The History of the Site

Actually the village hasn't seen much action through the centuries of its existence. The fascinating natural beauty and the soporific spirit that attracts today's country cottages owners who come for weekends and holidays, and artists who started land-arts projects here, seems to be the dominating feature of the site. Even the village's name reflects the effect of tranquility and relaxation – Nikola (St. Nickolas) gained the word Lenivets (lazy-bone or sloth).

The first records of inhabitants dwelling on the territory of today's Nicola-Lenivets are dated around three thousand years B.C. On the high left bank of the Ugra river appeared a little settlement of ancient Slavs-Vyatiches, which was later on fortified by an earth mound and a wooden fortress. Numerous ancient utensils and hunting devices unearthed at archeological digs are exhibited now in a museum of local history.

In the 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries numerous outposts built on the left bank the Ugra River extended the major Russian defense line that ran along the river Oka from Nizhniy Novgorod to Kaluga. This fortification system was given the name «The Blessed Virgin's Belt,» featuring its critical role in rebutting numerous enemies' contentions.



## **The Great Standoff, 1480**

The biggest thing ever to happen in Nikola-Lenivets was the Great Standoff, or 'Stoyaniye» between the Russian and the Mongol armies whose forces assembled and stood for half a year in 1480 on the opposite banks of the Ugra River unwilling to start the battle until the reinforcements arrived. Watching the increasing Russian forces the Mongol troops retreated and never came back. This event put the end to the Mongol rule in Russia that lasted for 300 years.

A wooden chapel was built on the site in memory of the Great Standoff between the Russian and the Mongol armies.

## **Nikola - Lenivets in 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

At the beginning of the 19th century the chapel was replaced by a Holy Trinity stone church, which became the most eminent religious and cultural center for local people. The church was built on the funds of a local landlord Muromtsev. Each of the villagers contributed his share of work in the church erection.



On the maps of the 19th century the settlement was marked by a symbol «from 2 000 to 10 000 inhabitants.» In the Soviet period the local social, religious, cultural and most of economic activities have declined. The landlord mansion was occupied by kolkhoz «Druzhba» (collective farm «Friendship»). The only thing, which reminded of the old times, was part of the lime tree alley leading to Nicola-Lenivets. The World War II brought more destruction. The area was occupied by Nazi troops. On their escape route in 1943 they burnt the village to ashes. Only the church remained untouched.

During the post-war period the church housed a diary plant – the only reason it was not destroyed during the time of the «Khrushchev's persecution.» The plant was closed in the 1970. However by the early 1990-s the church lied in ruins surrounded by only seven tumbledown houses. Only three local people inhabited Nikola-Lenivets at that time: Granny Katia, Anna Romanovna and Ivan Sokolov (Uncle Vanja).

## An Art-Village Project

In early 1990-s the village has come to be associated with artistic flair and creativity as well as physical labor and painstaking handiwork. Young Moscow architect Vasily Schetin happened to visit the desolated Nikola-Lenivets in search of a site suitable for an art-village project. Fascinated by the fabulous nature and tranquility he decided Nikola-Lenivets is just the place where nature and architecture objects could be inextricably linked. The project gained much appreciation and support and was approved by the government. The Soviet authorities though, were not happy about the avant-garde architectural forms suggested by the architect, thus Schetin had to make a more traditional design. In 1990 the development of an art-village at Nikola-Lenivets started. Many remarkable people provided support and contributed to the project success.



The project was not finished, but many enthusiasts built their own houses in Nikola-Lenivets. Among them was Nikolai Polissky, an artist who left Moscow for the countryside in the mid-1990s to paint landscapes, but eventually decided to seek out a more radical artistic medium. In 1998 a new road to Nikola-Lenivets was constructed with support of the local governor. The village inhabitants and cottage owners could enjoy more comfort and flexibility, and more outsiders curious to visit the unusual village gained a better access to the site.

## An Outpost of the Contemporary Land-Art

Nowadays Nicola-Lenivets is a registered nature-conservative and historical zone famous for art with a social and environmental conscience. Since 2000 Nicola-Lenivets has become an outpost of the contemporary land-art. Land-art genre came to prominence in the late 1960-s and 1970-s primarily. Materials such as rocks, sticks, soil, plants and so on are often used, and the works frequently exist in the open. Particularly large works are sometimes known as earthworks. Russian land-art is still very young and features the «frontier» zones – architecture, design and art.



A group of local artists called the «Nikola-Lenivets Promysly» (Craftsmen) has brought the village fame by building huge structures out of unstripped branches, twigs and logs, woven works of art that are futuristic and hauntingly archaic. The main peculiarity of these objects is that they are built out of natural materials: hay, firewood and even snow and integrated in the surrounding landscape. The group's founder and ideological leader Nikolai Polissky involved villagers in creation of extraordinary land-art objects representing the 'new Russian architecture' that draws on native traditions but also incorporates new ideas like sustainability and harmony with nature.

### Land-Art Festival

In 2006 the first land-art festival took place in Nikola-Lenivets. The festival served as a platform for discussing a wide range of topics, from innovative uses for Russia's park space to finding employment for rural artisans (other than turning out cheap souvenirs), new directions in contemporary art and architecture and new understanding of life in the contemporary village. The event's name «Archstoyaniye» (Architectural Standoff) was suitably ambitious. It referred to the Great Standoff (Stoyaniye) that marked the deliverance of Russia from the Mongol rule over 500 years ago.



The festival got its impulse from the management of the «Ugra» National Park, which had previously collaborated with Nikolay Polissky to devise new ways of attracting visitors. Some of the «Archstoyaniye» festivals already organized featured such themes as the Grand Standoff with fantastic armies of snowmen along the riverbanks, hosting a vaguely pagan celebration of the Orthodox Shrove-tide combustion with thatch rockets launched skyward, leaving a roaring bonfire in their wake, and Noah's Ark with eco-friendly houses on water floating down the Ugra river to take part in the "Raft Parade.»

Lately, the group has been building more things meant to last, such as the sculptures it installed in a park in northwestern Moscow last year, or the objects of «Arkstoyaniye», most of which the Ugra National Park plans to leave up until they erode naturally. But permanence does not necessarily change the meaning of their work.

## Nikola-Lenivets Village – A Popular Attraction

Nikola-Lenivets land-art festivals have become a draw for visitors and consequently transformed the village into a spot that enjoys publicity, trade and employment at the times when it is celebrating its spectacular events. Over the years large numbers of visitors came over. For local people visitors are much welcomed: their appreciation brings fresh perspectives providing a needed boost for community morale and inflow of money.



Land-art festivals attract visitors from Kaluga region (38 %), Moscow and Moscow Region (45%), as well as from Tula, Vladimir, Smolensk, and few other regions. At days when Nikola-Lenivets is celebrating the festivals hundreds of visitors are in attendance. The trend is definitely going upward. In the summer 2008 over 5,000 visitors were recorded as spending a day at «Archstoyaniye» coming to enjoy the landscape, see the art objects, take part in many outdoor activities, to explore surrounding areas.



The unsought fame that occurred when Nikola-Lenivets started hosting its land-art festivals has led to increasing demand and growth of visitors that has important implications on the village.

## Land-Art Festival – Positive Impact on the Village

The concept of the land-art festival is quite simple: all objects are to be constructed from natural, ecologically compatible materials, could not harm nature in any way and should be built with involvement of the local people.



Many consider Polissky's real work of art to be the changing attitudes and improving socioeconomic makeup of Nikola-Lenivets and nearby villages -- rather than anything that can be seen or touched. This is underscored by the fact that the objects the Craftsmen build are often transient, like the snowmen that melt and the wooden rockets that go up in smoke.

Nikolay Polissky has been praised for finding a constructive activity for young men in the depressed rural stretches of the Kaluga region. Among other things, he encouraged them to have faith in their own ideas. Participation in creating land-art projects has already changed the life of the Nikola-Lenivets villagers gradually giving them new occupation and income.

For instance the villagers weave improvised dwellings for themselves (some shaped as Alexander the Great's caravan, some as a Formula-1 bolide) and live there during the whole festival in front of the eyes of the astonished audience. They cook food and invite everyone willing to join. Not free, certainly, since this new socio-economical pattern that interweaves Life and Art is also a commercial project, which should help its creators to survive in the forsaken village. This is the «profit art», eminently.

Currently 15 local people are full-time employed at «Nikola-Lenivets Craftsmen». When preparation for the festival activities start, around 80 additional people, mostly living in the nearby village Zvizzhi, get work which is well-paid by local standards. They are willing to work - not only because of additional income, they also value the atmosphere of creativity and fun and feel they are doing something very important for themselves, for the local community and for the future of the village.

### **Land-Art Festival – Negative Impact on the Village**

Local population approves Nikola-Lenivets land-art festivals, but there are serious knock-on effects. Visitors arrive to Nikola-Lenivets by cars and coaches. They enjoy the festival atmosphere, explore the exhibition displayed on a territory that stretches from the parking lot to the bank of the Ugra, sample some local delicacies - homemade vodka and pirozhki (cakes), enjoy outdoor recreation, have meals in mass sittings outdoors. Many have campfires. They do not stay long, since there is not enough suitable facilities to accommodate all people visiting the site, and leave same day or after spending a night at the campsite which operates throughout the festival.

The growing numbers of visitors coming to Nikola-Lenivets for land-art festival celebrations and folklore festivities cause problems to the environment and residents of the nearby villages. Beauty spots are crowded during the busy days, lanes and roads are choked with traffic, the road leading to the village is damaged to the extent that villagers find themselves cut off after the celebration is over, car parking disfigure the scenery, footpaths crumble under the onslaught of walkers.

## Different Interest Groups

Popularity of the festivals encourages the organizers and local people involved in the land-art activities. They are eager to market the event and the area – both for commercial and social reasons.



Some residents are uncertain about the benefits of these changes. Even if certain social and economic benefits occur when festivals attract visitors to the village, there is an environment tension local people are not happy about. They are bitter about the litter, rubbish, and pollution caused by visitors' hordes arriving to the village during the festivals. Social tension is also in place. Jobs that are created during the festivals are seasonal and cannot seriously affect employment and income of residents. For the rest of the year the village remains secluded and somewhat isolated, particularly in winter. At such periods local people find it difficult to get jobs and are moving away to the cities and towns for higher salaries and better facilities.

Ms. Jakushina who is teaching at the school located in the nearby Zvizzhi school says: «On the one hand, students of our school are happy when Nikola-Lenivets is hosting land-art festivals or folklore festivities. They prepare various hand-made souvenirs to offer visitors. Gained money is used to buy some necessary equipment for the school. On the other hand, when celebrations are over we experience serious problems. After hundreds coaches and cars bringing visitors arrive and leave the village in just one day, the road is damaged to the extent that residents are not able to use it for weeks. School bus service is terminated: to get to school and back home students and teachers have to cover long distances on foot until the roads are reconstructed.»

The «Ugra» national park administration responsible for maintaining the area is seriously concerned with stress causing harm to the area environment. The environment expert of the local government, Olga Novikova, says: «The location is simply fantastic. It has fabulous landscapes, fresh air, clear water, and beautiful woods. Artisans create magnificent objects extraordinary appealing for visitors. However visitors cause serious disturbance to the natural vegetation and to the wildlife of the protected area. If the accommodation facilities are built in the nearby village Zvizzhi away from the most sensitive areas, visitors will be helped to enjoy the area as much as they are able with less environmental impact. Tourism infrastructure would have provide and equip provision of more civilized services to general public.»

Reconciling all these different interest groups to produce a successful development model for the area is not easy. Tourism development is useful for local employment and economy. However it may ruin the landscape and ecosystem of the national park. It is important to balance activities that include conservation, recreation, landscape preservation, economic survival and growth of the rural area along with the needs of both visitors and residents that are in many respects antagonistic to each other.

There is a clear need to make decisions about the precise levels of conservation and commercialism within the territory. Is it possible to define mutually agreed targets from conflicting opinions? We think it is realistic and manageable if planning decisions of the site enhancement consider protection of the unique natural qualities that made it attractive for visitors in the first place. Less damage could be caused to a natural environment more effectively by control and management than by banning it altogether in the name of the area protection.

### **Proposed Interventions**

The current impact of visitors on Nikola-Lenivets and surrounding area could be managed so as to cause minimum disturbance to the scenic quality by such environmentally friendly activities as:

- Signposting tracks from car parks;
- Improving campsites;
- Providing mini-market facilities;
- Providing more picnic facilities to encourage people to eat in specified places;
- Encouraging people to take their litter home;
- Patrolling the site and checking on the litter, camp-fires and damage
- Raising awareness of the rules for visiting preserved areas;
- Making sure rules are followed;
- Organizing explanatory talks and field workshops for those who want to know more;
- Guiding a range of walks for those who want to enjoy passing through different habitats, offering a variety of views;
- Linking the festival site to other tourist areas;
- Providing clearly marked footpaths to the nearby villages.

Introduction of new options and growing choice of organized activities in combination with more serious marketing may appeal to an expanded audience and thereby generate greater support with lower environmental impact. The proposed interventions could be implemented at relatively low costs, given there is an understanding and cooperation between the «Ugra» national park administration and «Nikola-Lenivets Craftsmen,» residents of the village, approval on behalf of the local authorities, as well as well-developed network of volunteers involved in local conservation projects. Reasonable fees charged for provided services may improve the site management right away and help make up for shortfalls in funding and regular employment for the villagers in the area which otherwise is very poor.

## **Development of Responsible Tourism Model in Nikola-Lenivets Village**

To ensure sustainable development and continuing success of the responsible tourism scheme in Nikola-Lenivets more efforts and funding are needed to provide the essential infrastructure for growth above a basic level.

The local authorities recognize the possible positive effects of tourism development in the area and promote Nikola-Lenivets. However public sector funding is limited to maintenance of roads and electricity.

Significant investments from the private sector may raise the tourism activities, but are not easily gained, since it may take years the investments to pay back.

It is not all bad news. Much of the provision for visitors may rest on with small and family-owned and run businesses: guesthouses, motels, cafes, boat yards etc. This is particular important for the rural area interested in growth and profit. The municipal government encourages private sector to develop tourism in the area provided it guarantees low environmental impact and makes use of environmentally friendly technologies. Environmental protection is a law priority. Public funding and grants are provided for projects whose effects are ultimately not destructive.

### **Opportunities for Small Business**

A range of local services for small businesses to provide to visitors to Nikola-Lenivets is impressive.

Currently visitors who want to stay longer do not have much choice. They either spend a night at tent camping or at a few bed and breakfasts run by several local families. The owners make their living and profits – approximately 100,000 rubles per mth. in the summer season, and 30,000 rubles per mth. in less busy periods.



10 more potential ventures in the neighboring villages could be reconstructed to house tourist facilities with the capacity to accommodate 8-10 visitors. If 2 currently disused buildings in Nikola-Lenivets are converted into boarding houses to accommodate around 150 people per night, it will be a solid income and valid alternative to disrepair and dereliction.

Catering service in Nikola-Lenivets is currently limited to few family-run ventures that offer homemade lunch for 300 rubles (soup, meat, pickles and soft drinks). While at the «low season» the offered catering service could to a

certain degree satisfy visitors' needs, at the time of land-art festivals and folklore festivities when Nikola-Lenivets experiences a mass tourist growth it is certainly not enough.

Small businesses could also offer transport services: running coach tours focused on the attractions outside Nikola-Lenivets and regular bus services to the nearby towns with railroad and coach facilities to utilize the well-developed regional transport system to a greater extent than is now done.

Trade and social services are also waiting to be enhanced. More visitors coming and staying in the area mean extra trade for residents and local artisans. Visitors coming on a more regular and organized basis will spend money buying souvenirs and art-objects, as well as in facilities designed for tourists, which will also add to the residents' well-being.

### **Fresh Perspectives – Development on a Larger Scale**

Unless there is an introduction of more facilities and services in Nikola-Lenivets, visitors may stay away and go to the site offering more comfort. Development of tourism on a larger and more regular scale would require strategic planning with consideration of stakeholders' opinions, interests and needs in building new and enhancing existing infrastructure and effective management.

In this way a consensus about the tourism development model, its strengths and weaknesses and whether it should proceed can be reached at an early stage of the planning process. Stakeholders would attempt to quantify the costs and benefits of the development model in order to decide whether or not to go ahead.



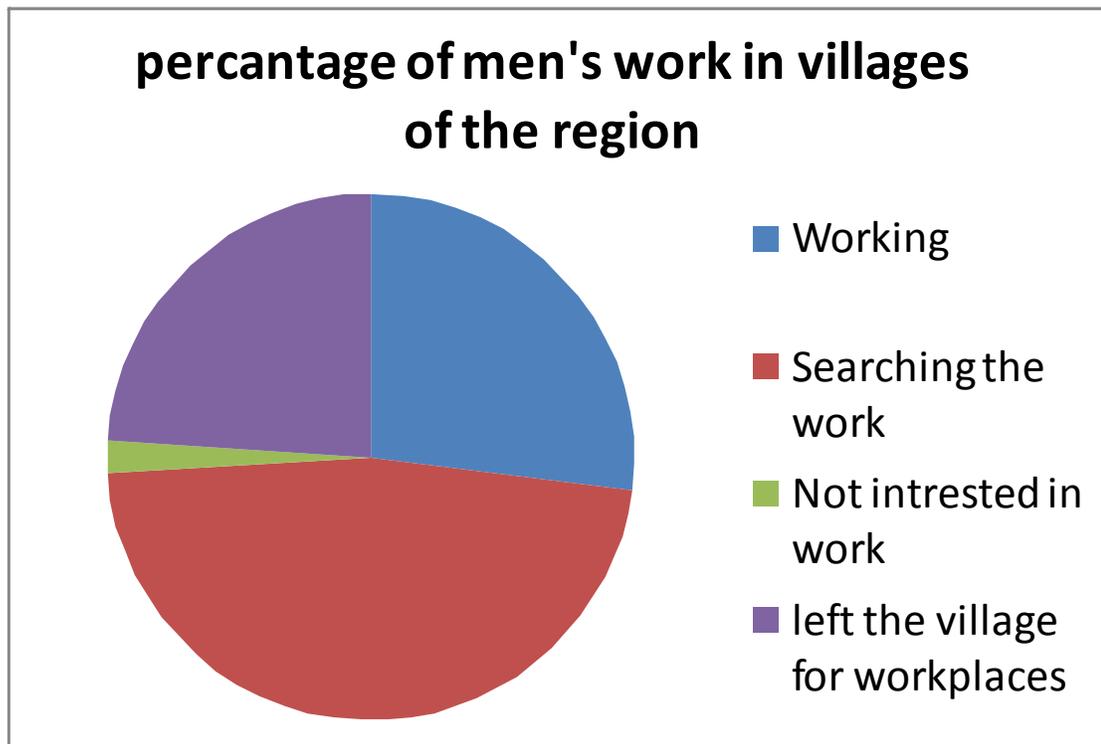
If the village is to cope successfully with tourism development that is sustainable in the future it will need to focus on the needs of residents, visitors, business and environment and identify the possibilities of providing more up-to-date tourism facilities and services to the area to find the common commercial, conservation and social interests.

In fact enterprising tourism activities in Nikola-Lenivets have already started thanks to enthusiasm and leadership of Nikolay Polisskiy and Vasiliy Schetin in and involvement of the local community. Let's see what has been done and what should be done in the future.

Tourist Activity	Done	To be done
1) Accommodation	Several guest lodges in Nikola-Lenivets and nearby villages are ready to accommodate visitors.	To convert the disused farm building into accommodation facilities for around 150 guests.
2) Catering	Few family-owned «field kitchens» for visitors.	Catering infrastructure: café, bar, enhanced picnic site with catering service.
3) Attractions	Land-art objects and outdoor facilities, footpath to the Zvizzhi village.	Additional routes, walks, field-trips, boat tours etc.
4) Trade	Shops available at a 5 - 6 km distance from the village.	Mini-market, souvenir stalls.
5) Social Services	Natural environment protection, control and monitoring.	Accident prevention and medical services.
6) Facilities	Electricity, cold water.	Gas, hot water.

## Employment

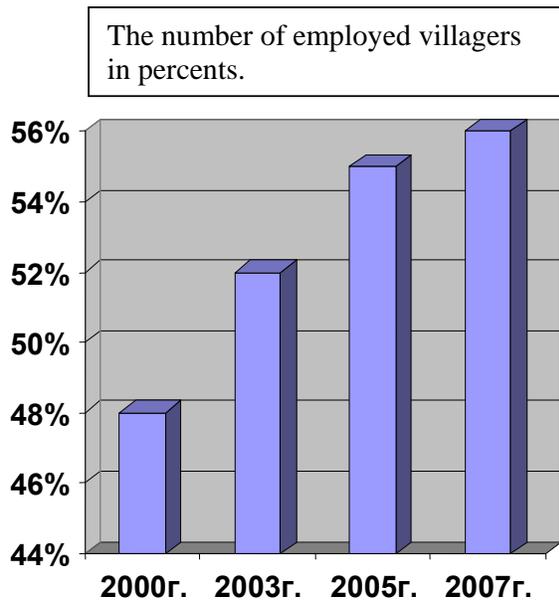
The graph below shows the current situation with employment in the area. It is obvious local community is facing a serious unemployment problem. The graph also shows a large rate of migration from the area.



Former collective farm "Friendship" which used to be the major source of jobs and incomes for the villagers is now on the verge of bankruptcy. There are no workplaces for youth in the region. That's what Artem, local school student thinks: «I wish more visitors to come to Nikola-Lenivets. It will help our village to survive and our school will not be closed. Ideal job for me is in tourism, and I would like to live here and run a tourism business in the future. I love our small village!»

The main environment expert of the municipal government, Olga Nikolaevna Novikova, thinks that tourism development may encourage people to stay and earn for living in the village. «Only last year 92 residents left the location. New job opportunities will provide for villagers' well-being and stability.»

According to the local authorities records, shown in the graph below, since 2000 when Nikolay Polissky started land-art projects in Nikola-Lenivets the unemployment rate has gradually decreased.



If more tourism can be developed in the area it can increase local people's participation in managing the tourism product, such as small-scale operations and culturally based schemes and also promote a wide participation and spin-off enterprise opportunities. Development of tourism infrastructure and activities can be a valuable resource in helping villagers tackle unemployment problem through self-employment and creation of more job opportunities.

### **Workforce Readiness**

The problem is that many villagers have few advanced skills or assets other than their capacity for hard work and may not have the adequate skills for provision of high-quality tourism services. On the other hand, a large percentage of the local population has already been involved in the tourism activities and gained a certain extent of necessary skills, working at the festivals, offering accommodation and catering services and acting as tour guides since the art-projects were started in Nikola-Lenivets. To enhance employment opportunities it would be important to promote vocational training and advisory services.

Also, as we learned from our talks with the villagers, many skilled people who left the village to the cities and towns because of better job opportunities, will gladly return, provided there are employment opportunities locally.

Additionally the local community leaders Nikolay Polissky and Vasily Schetinin have been providing encouragement and support to all willing to learn and work through years. With their support young people of the village with just a rural school education background have become skilled craftsmen, famous across Russia and internationally.

## The SWOT-analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protected park territory;</li> <li>- The famous brand of Nikola-Lenivets;</li> <li>- Fascinating land-art objects;</li> <li>- A wide range of outdoor activities;</li> <li>- Promotion through land-art festivals;</li> <li>- Accessibility from Kaluga, Moscow and surrounding areas;</li> <li>- Availability of land and additional attractions;</li> <li>- A variety of target markets;</li> <li>- Ecologically pure location;</li> <li>- Consensus of major stakeholders on the need for the area to remain attractive to visitors;</li> <li>- Community involvement and approval of the changes related to tourism development at a larger scale;</li> <li>- A large percentage of local people already employed in the tourism activities or having a certain experience in this area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of funding required for regular monitoring and control pollution through litter, waste, oil spillages from boats, and noise from engines in the vulnerable areas;</li> <li>- Lack of qualified personnel to manage large number of people who trample on plants and other vegetation to stay away from vulnerable areas;</li> <li>- Lack of accident prevention, medical assistance;</li> <li>- Surrounding area may suffer because access roads cannot cope with the added volume of traffic;</li> <li>- Additional attractions and events to keep the visitors' interest require skilled personnel and investments;</li> <li>- Local population's employment pattern is seasonal and depend on related to land-art festivals;</li> <li>- Visual impact affected by construction of facilities: new facilities can spoil existing landscape or built environment that attracted visitors in the first place;</li> <li>- Lack of qualified workforce prepared to offer more advanced services.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhancement of facilities: shabby residential houses become boarding houses;</li> <li>- New infrastructure: roads, hotels, car parking, waste disposal sites;</li> <li>- Focus on environmental impact: money brought by tourists can be used to maintain, improve and restore the environment;</li> <li>- Potentially positive economic impact;</li> <li>- Potential for small business development in accommodation, catering, transport and extra trade;</li> <li>- Facilities built, restored and maintained with extra income provided by visitors;</li> <li>- Meeting the needs of the community in employment and diversified income;</li> <li>- Community morale and income growth;</li> <li>- Benefits to the area, region and visitors attractions;</li> <li>- Help residents to stay and earn for living in the village;</li> <li>- Strategic planning for development with consideration of the major stakeholders' interests and needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pressure on the local environment: pollution, congestion, overcrowding and degradation of environment;</li> <li>- In the long-term mass tourism could cause destruction of natural resources;</li> <li>- Loss of land to new construction and infrastructure development;</li> <li>- Increased contrast between tourist and 'local' facilities;</li> <li>- Tension between tourists and residents of the nearby villages;</li> <li>- Complete change in the local life-style;</li> <li>- Migration of rural population to the cities and towns - disappearance of local villages;</li> <li>- Possible legislation restrictions related to national park territories use for general public;</li> <li>- Ultimate decline of visitors' interest;</li> <li>- Local craftsmen and artists may leave the area.</li> </ul>

## **Economic and Social Impact**

Fostering tourism development in Nikola-Lenivets will bring more people, more money, jobs, new buildings, enhanced facilities and better transport communications to the village. The economic impact may be both positive and negative.

Development of tourism in the area in terms of building new infrastructure: roads, hotels, car parking and additional attractions will provide the much needed economic boost and diversification of employment and income for residents.

The benefits of the development of tourism in the area are obvious.

- New jobs
- Better prepared workforce
- Enhanced infrastructure
- Growth of income and standards of living for local people.

Tourism development in the location can also have a negative impact on local people's day-to-day life. Among the risks are:

- Prices go up along with purchase capacity and cost of living;
- Local agriculture small enterprises go out of business;
- Loss of land to new construction and infrastructure development;
- Migration of rural population to the cities and towns;
- Complete change in the local life-style may lead to disappearance of local villages.

## **Impact on the Environment**

Development of tourism on a larger and more regular scale may certainly negatively affect the preserved territory of the «Ugra» natural park. However the park administration is ready to collaborate with local authorities, communities and private sector to provide conditions for regulated tourism and recreation with consideration of preservation of designated national parklands and protection activities that include environment programs and regular communication with visitors. The park administration is positive about capability of minimizing possible environmental risks and is keen on collaboration with a purpose of providing more and better visitors' services and more opportunities to local residents.

## Conclusion

We explored Nikola-Lenivets – a small village that is just becoming aware of its tourist potential and has yet to figure out what additional infrastructure is needed to attract and hold visitors and how to tackle with problems visitors bring with them.

Our survey was based on a win-win-win approach to development of responsible tourism. We think that responsible tourism primary goal is to balance the benefits and costs of development of tourism that may transform a village or a city or a region into a destination enjoyable for visitors and sustainable and profitable for residents and may bring much needed boost for community morale and local economy and help preserve and maintain the natural, historic, cultural and social wealth.

We believe that responsible tourism development is possible if all major stakeholders: business, tourists and local communities, government and local authorities as well as voluntary sector realize they are equally responsible for development of tourism and its impact on the economy, society and environment.

We understand there's a need to invest time in education and consensus building so all stakeholders will be aware and willing to accept that development of tourism is mutual responsibility, and responsible tourism is a 'thing to do' to add success, prosperity and sustainability to destination.

We tried to identify the most important considerations for the community and environment in relation to perspectives of tourism development in Nikola-Lenivets village and ranked the resulting list of consequences both for the natural environment and for people's welfare of implementing the responsible tourism development model.

We realize the need in investments for capital expenditures to develop infrastructure needed to attract and keep visitors, and effective management so that the negative impacts will not overweight the positive ones.

We figured out the areas of major importance for stakeholders' responsibility, interaction and joint actions:

- Conservation of the landscape and biological diversity;
- Planning for tourism development with specific attention to infrastructure and tourism product marketing and promotion;
- Respect to local cultural traditions, support of traditional crafts;
- Training of local population in providing responsible tourism services and sustainable tourism development;
- Support for local initiatives on tourism infrastructure development;
- Support for local small and family-owned businesses;
- Effective management to achieve the economic growth and community well-being;

- Ensure safety for visitors, residents and environment.
- Monitoring and control mechanisms for tourism activities to prevent negative impact on natural and cultural heritage.

We considered the possible ways and effects of laying on a responsible tourism model in a particular village highlighting the key issues of employment, income, sustainability and conservation of natural and cultural resources.

We are sure that responsible tourism development can preserve the harmony of art and nature that made Nikola-Lenivets attractive for visitors on the first place and to transform the village into a popular destination enjoyable for visitors and profitable and sustainable for residents.

## Nikola-Lenivets Village Land-Art Projects

### 2000

Project «Snowmen Standoff» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» jointly with Konstantin Batynkov, Sergey Lobanov

### 2001

Project «Tower» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» jointly with Konstantin Batynkov.

### 2002

Project «The Ugra Lighthouse» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen.»

### 2003

Project «Media-tower» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen.»

Project «Art-market» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen.»

Project «Empire column» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen.»

### 2004

Celebration of the Orthodox Shrove-tide, Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» and local residents jointly with Herman Vinogradov and Alexander Shaburov.

Project «Art-market -2» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» jointly with Alexander Panov.

Performance «The Ugra Lighthouse,» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» jointly with Vyacheslav Mizin, Alexander Panov, Asya Silaeva, Konstantin Skotnikov, Alexander Shaburov.



## 2005

Project «Hill-Maze» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» jointly with Alexander Panov.

Project «Lihoborskie Gate» Moscow, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» jointly with Galina Lihterova.

## 2006

Performance « Russian Space Fire» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» jointly with Herman Vinogradov.

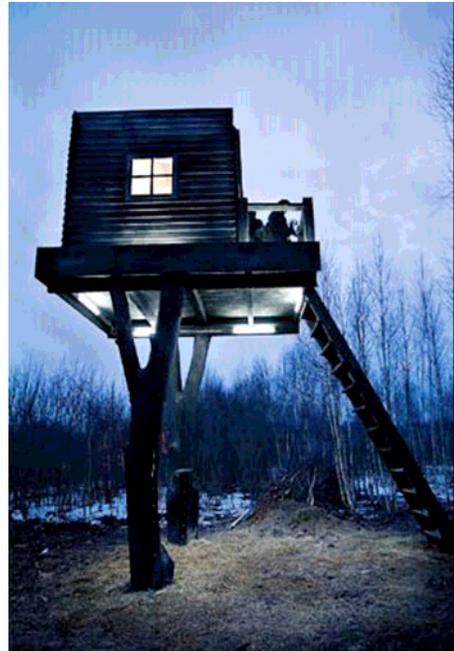
## 2007

Project «Frontiers of the Empire» – «The fourth Rome near Kaluga» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen.»

Project «Rooks Have Come», Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen» jointly with Vladimir Simonov, Andrey Belov, Alexey Gusev.

## 2008

Performance «Noah's Ark» Nikola-Lenivets Village, «Nikola-Lenivetskie craftsmen.»



## Teachers' Note

Case Study activity and content may be used within TTP «Passport to the World» curriculum. Activities and methodology are useful for organizing FAM visits, surveys and field-trips as well as various environment and social responsibility projects implemented in relation with TTP activities, projects and events.

TTP Russia Teacher: Luidmila Zhdanova