

# Exploring the Economic Potential of Tourism in Gorgora and its Surrounding Areas

Lake Abebe Ayele\*

Lecturer, Department of Tourism and Hotel Management,  
College of Business and Economics,  
Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia

Corresponding Author: Lake Abebe Ayele\*

**Abstract:-** The need to develop tourism responsibly becomes a main concern as tourism grows in importance and complexity for communities worldwide, and tourism is also starting to figure into development theories. The purpose of this study is to investigate the study area's tourism's possible economic benefits. A mixed research approach was used with a descriptive design. 268 respondents were participants in the survey questionnaire, and 8 interview participants were from tourism businesses. Personal observation was also used as a research tool. The study showed that Gorgora and the surrounding area have a wealth of underutilized tourism resources that might boost economic benefits.

**Keywords:-** Local Economy, Tourism Development Challenges, Tourism Potentials.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In emerging nations, the tourism industry has the potential to be a major engine of economic growth. It offers chances to develop creative businesses, create inclusive and productive jobs, fund the preservation of cultural and natural resources, and boost economic empowerment particularly for women, who make up the majority of workers in the tourism industry. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism industry accounted for the majority of global service employment, about 7% of all international trade, one in ten jobs globally, and 25% of global service exports (UNWTO, 2020).

In many nations, the tourism sector serves as a vehicle for economic development. Because travelers and tourists spend their money on a wide range of goods and services, their presence has an economic impact on tourist locations. According to Luvang and Joseph Shitundu (2003), this expenditure can be viewed as an infusion of cash into the host economy, generating new levels of consumer demand. It is well known that the tourist industry requires a great deal of labor and has grown to be a major employer in many nations. Furthermore, the level of expertise needed varies from higher to lower. Young people, women, and people with disabilities can now find employment there (Clancy, 1999; Hawkins and Mann, 2007; Croes and Vanegas, 2008 as cited in CROES, R., 2014).

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The tourism sector offers opportunities for economic diversification and market-creation. When effectively managed, its deep local value chains can expand demand for existing and new products and services that directly and positively impact the poor and rural/ isolated communities. The sector can also be a force for biodiversity conservation, heritage protection, and climate-friendly livelihoods, making up a key pillar of the blue/green economy.

Existing research on the effects of tourism from visitors' perspectives in destinations has received a lot of attention. On the other hand, not much is known about how the rise of tourism may benefit destinations from the standpoint of local communities. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate if the benefits that are promised truly materialize and what conditions contribute to the formation of these benefits in order to state that tourism is a useful instrument for rural area development. As a case study, this research aims to investigate the economic possibilities of tourism in Gorgora and the adjacent surroundings.

## III. RIVIEW OF LITERATURES

With rising earnings in developing economies supporting both domestic travel and international trade, tourism has grown to be one of the largest and fastest-growing sectors in the world (Sharma, 2022). Because of its size, the sector is expected to have a major impact on structural change, diversification, and economic growth. A comprehensive analysis of the literature reveals that a great deal of study has been done on the topic of tourism and economic growth, but that the connection between tourism, economic growth, and current local policies has not received enough attention (Calero and Turner, 2020).

Nonetheless, certain research has indicated a long-term correlation between tourism and economic expansion and advancement. Globally high rates of unemployment and poverty have been shown to be two of the most significant issues facing the contemporary world. However, because it has the ability to produce a large number of jobs that are tied to it both directly and indirectly, tourism has been identified as one of the potential ways to reduce poverty and unemployment. Nonetheless, little research has been done on how tourism affects regional economies, especially in

Ethiopia. This study is being done in order to determine how tourism affects regional economic development. Despite being a subset of the service sector, tourism nevertheless generates income that goes toward the host nation's GDP and

directly affects its economic expansion. The tourism sector can be a workable answer for nations with large foreign exchange profits and consequently higher rates of economic growth. (T. Goutam, 2018).

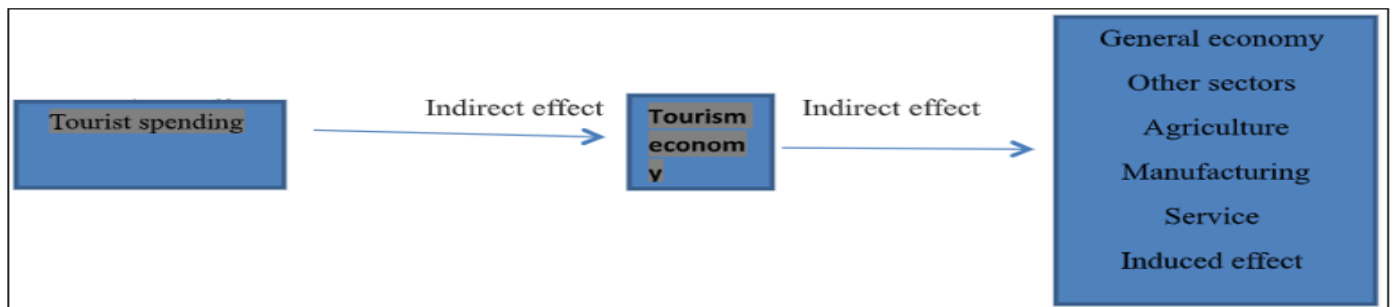


Fig 1 Conceptual Farmwork of the Study

**IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

➤ *Description of the Study Area*

Gorgora is the name of both a tiny settlement with a harbor and a small peninsula that juts into Lake Tana. The peninsula was once home to a significant Jesuit residence. "Old" Gorgora was situated 5 km west of DebreSina and its churches, and 5 km northeast of Maryam Gimb, also known as New Gorgora. DebreSina is typically not regarded as a town in and of itself. The Mandaba monastery, which is situated near the headlands of the Gorgora peninsula, is another noteworthy sight. When R.E. Cheesman visited

Mandaba in 1932, he noted that the monastery was surrounded by a tall wall and that women were not permitted within the gate. The town is well-known for the Debre-Sina Mariam church and its numerous monasteries, the adjacent Susenyos palace, and the Portuguese cathedral that was left empty after the Jesuits were driven out by Emperor Fasilides. Nearby the port of Gorgora, there are monasteries such as Angara Teklehayimanot, Birgida Mariam, Mandaba, DebreGelila, and Jebera Mariam. Though no more tourism facilities in the town, Gorgora port hotel and Tim and Kim campsite are the major accommodation centers.



Fig 2 Google Map of Gorgora ,2022



Fig 3 View of Lake Tana from Gorgora Side



Fig 4 Bird Species in Gorgara Photo by the Researcher, 2023



Fig 5 Celebration of Man Indeaba Medhaniale Photo by the Researcher, 2023



Fig 6 Monastery of Debresina Mariam: Photo by the Researcher, 2023

➤ *Research Design*

The descriptive case study research technique was selected for this investigation. This approach aids in evaluating the study area potentials and challenges to the growth of the tourism industry in Gorgora and its environs. From 876 local communities 268 were taken as a sample based on google online sample size calculation and selected randomly.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents Researcher's own Survey 2023.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	160	59.7
Female	108	40.3
<b>Total</b>	268	100
<b>Age</b>		
18 – 30	56	20.9
31 – 40	42	15.7
41 – 50	34	12.7
51 – 60	52	19.4
Above 60	84	31.3
<b>Total</b>	268	100

Table 1 displays the respondents' demographic characteristics. The study included the following characteristics: gender, age, nationality, and educational background. With 59.0% of the respondents being male and 40.29% being female, the respondents' gender distribution was very similar. The respondents' most common age category was above 60 (31.3%), followed by 51–60 (18.8%). More than half of the responders from the local community were above the age of 50 (50.1). Governmental agencies, lodging facilities, tour operators in the area, and churches were among the interviewees.

Table 2 Personal Profile of Interview Respondents Researcher's own Survey, 20223.

Variables	Characteristics categories	Respondents No
Sex	Male	8
	Female	-
Age	18-28	5
	29-39	2
	40-50	1
Educational background	1-8	1
	11-12	2
	Diploma	2
	Degree	3
Occupation	Local guide	2
	Monastery administrator	2
	Hotel manager	2
	Tourism expert	2
Work experience	< 5 years	2
	5-10	5
	10-15	1
Address	Kolladiba	2
	Gorgora	6

**V. RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

➤ *Economic Potentials of Tourism Development*

Gorgora as a new destination in Ethiopia can be benefited from tourism by offering its unique tourism products. Though the destination is blessed with many natural and cultural attractions, the contribution of tourism for the local economy is very less. It is evaluated with the response of the participants as follow:

Table 3 The Status of Benefit By the Local Communities from Tourism

	<b>Are you benefited from tourism activities?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid %</b>
Valid	No	190	70.8
	Yes	78	29.2
	Total	268	100.0

Source: Researcher’s Survey, 2023

As shown in table 12 above, 70.8% the participants responded that there is no benefit at all that they derived from tourism activities in their localities where as 29.2% of the local respondents agreed that there is some kind of benefit that they got from tourism.

Table 4 Kinds of Benefits Gained from Tourism by Locals

	<b>Benefit from tourism activities</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid %</b>
Valid	Tour guide service	2	2.56
	Employee in different businesses	28	35.90
	Sales of agricultural products	32	41.03
	Boat driving	16	20.51
	Total	78	100

Source: Researcher’s own Survey ,2023

The above table shows that the most common benefit from tourism activities is sales of agricultural products with a percentage of 41.03%. The least common benefit is tour guide service with a percentage of 2.56%. The other two benefits, employee in different businesses and boat driving, have percentages of 35.90% and 20.51%, respectively.

They stated that benefits are seasonal since most the businesses depend on foreign tourists especially during the summer season. Most of the domestic tourists are not using the tourism products and service

Table 5 The Length of Stay and Usage of Local Products by Tourists

	<b>Length of stay and usage of local product by tourists?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid %</b>
Valid	Good	17	6.6
	Fair	25	9.2
	Poor	127	47.4
	very poor	99	36.8
	Total	268	100.0

Source: Researchers’ own Survey ,2023

The above table shows that out of 268 respondents, 127 of them had a poor experience with a percentage of 47.39%. The least number of tourists had a good experience with a frequency of 17 and a percentage of 6.34%. The other two categories, fair and very poor, had frequencies of 25 and 99,

respectively, and percentages of 9.33% and 36.94%, respectively. The lack of infrastructure and a limited supply of Products prevents tourists from staying longer. Instead of utilizing regional goods and services, tourists bring their own food in bags.

Table 6 Tourism Business Potentials Responded by local Communities

	<b>Potentials for businesses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid %</b>
Valid	Tour guiding service	160	59.7
	Souvenir shopping	141	52.6.
	Boat driving	183	68.4
	Juice and food production	81	30.3
	Supply of fruits and vegetables	113	42.1
	Traditional night clubs	42	15.7
	Establishing hotels	194	72.3

Source: Researcher’s own Survey ,2023

The above table shows that out of 268 respondents, establishing hotels has the highest frequency with 194 respondents and a percentage of 72.3%. The least common business is traditional night clubs with a frequency of 42 and a percentage of 15.7%. The other five businesses, tour guiding service, souvenir shopping, boat driving, juice and food production, and supply of fruits and vegetables, have frequencies of 160, 141, 183, 81, and 113, respectively, and percentages of 59.7%, 52.6%, 68.4%, 30.3%, and 42.1%, respectively.

Local communities recommended they can engage in professional tour guiding through taking effective training, provide souvenir shopping with salesmanship ability to attract customers, can engage in boat driving and not only giving transportation service but also entertaining tourist on Lake Tana. The locals can start juice and food production business particularly fast foods. From the researcher personal observation and interview informants the prospect of tourism development in Gorgora and its surrounding can be in three ways i.e. through establishing small and micro enterprises in hotel and tourism businesses, providing local inputs in to the hotel supply chain and employment opportunity of the poor.

➤ *Establishing Small and Micro Enterprises in Hotel and Tourism*

One of the experts from Dembeya Woreda Culture and Tourism Office emphasize that:

To increase the number of visitors and gain the benefits of tourism, the development of tourism via small and micro enterprises with due emphasis towards pro-poor tourism, which can result in sustainable tourism development such as: the management of natural resources, preservation of cultural heritages, and less economic leakages. In so doing, the ultimate objectives will be the satisfaction of both tourists and host communities. Thus, Small and micro firms can therefore provide a wide range of direct tourism-related products and services.

• *Food and Juice Production:*

Most of the informants believe that the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in Gorgora and its surrounding can enable to provide juice to meet customer's expectation. Besides, preparation of fast foods and traditional coffee with its colorful ceremony for customers can be a better business which was not in existence.

• *Creating Local tour Guide Association:*

It is believed that good interpretation and commentary of attraction sites is crucial for image building of a destination. In addition, local guides are more responsible in satisfying the tourists and in facilitating their needs. Thus, professional guides can be organized to provide service for tourists. One of the informants from monasteries informed that most of domestic tourists got guiding service for free particularly in monasteries. As a result, it is possible to set fair price for guiding service of the domestic tourists which can raise the awareness level of domestic tourist and generate income for the local communities.

• *Boat Driving:*

One of the local guides states that boat driving was arranged for travelers from Gorgora to ManIndeAba monastery, Delgi and other monasteries as a means of transportation. But boat driving for relaxation on lake tana is not common. Thus, setting fair price and arranging boats for relaxation is advisable for the local communities.

• *Establishing Traditional Night Clubs:*

There are different ways of promoting cultural experience of a destination. Among this traditional night clubs are effective means for cultural exchange and entertainment of the tourists. Thus, the tourists' states that tourist want to enjoy with the traditional dance and music at night and this was their experience in other destinations. In addition, music band can be organized to provide service for Gorgora and its surrounding.

➤ *Provision of Local Input in the Hotel Supply Chain*

The tourism value chain includes the arrival of tourists at a destination, different activities to provide service, and the departure of tourists. Thus one of the informants from hotels states that:

• *The life of the people of Gorgora should depend on tourism.*

From his explanation, through tourism value chains, different businesses can be mutually established, and the multiplier effect of tourism can be implemented. Since most of the land around Gorgora lies around Lake Tana, with its abundant water resources and favorable climate, using the opportunity of the Sarava Dawulo Irrigation Project to use Lake Tana, the area is ideally suited for horticulture, fruits, vegetables, different crops, and even coffee. Consequently, these products are inputs for hotels, juicers, and traditional coffee makers.



Fig 7 some fruits in Gorgora  
Source: Photo by the Researcher, 2023

The respondents also mentioned that the poultry farm is also feasible business in Gorgoa for the poor to engage in. Another expert from Dembeya woreda Culture and tourism stated that Lake Tana is an important source of fish for Gorgora and its surroundings. The total area of Lake tanaTana basin is 16,500 km<sup>2</sup> and the lake itself covers about 3,150 km<sup>2</sup>. Currently, there is some fishing activity around the lake but most of this is subsistence in nature, or relatively small-scale. Most fishermen use a traditional boat named Tanqua. Most of the fish is sold as fresh. However, some fishermen have recently started producing dried fish. The

dried fish market is slowly increasing and is even being marketed to Sudan. It appears because of this, Chuahit, which is located 15kms North of Gorgora has become a dried fish trading center. On the other hand, frozen fish market is almost non-existent since it needs resources such as freezers which couldn't be afforded by local fishermen. The fishing potential of Lake Tana is untouched, with only 8% of the potential being used at this time. Thus, fishing through modern mechanisms can be means of income for the local communities through supply or hotels, distributing to different destinations and directly selling to customers.



Fig 8 Fisher at Lake Tana,  
Source: Researcher 2023

As tourism is more labor intensive than other sectors (agriculture), it can create more employment Opportunity for the poor. According to the experts from Dembya Woreda Culture and tourism office, Gorgora is a home of fascinating tourist attraction which can serve as recreation center for couples, wedding ceremony, for farewell part and regional,

zonal and other meetings, and to spent weekend with families particularly for tourists from nearer areas. Thus, the coming of these customers to Gorgora initiate the service providers to make ready all tourist facilities and amenities. From our previous analysis, encouraging small and micro enterprises in tourism sector and providing local inputs in the hotel supply

chain uses both skilled and unskilled manpower. Consequently, the local have many options to get employment in different businesses.

One of the local guides responded that: Gorgora and its surrounding can create employment opportunity for most of the poor if the newly ongoing construction of Gorgora new project is completed. Agricultural projects to produce fruits and vegetables can also create employment opportunity for the local communities. Starting from seedling up to distribution; there are many activities which require human power.

One of the informants’ states that if the locals engage in small and micro enterprises, they in turn create Employment opportunities for others according to the size of operation and organization. From their current experience the local communities are not commented to work in hotels, lodges and other businesses since their misconception that the job is work of the servants. In addition, the employees are low paid and the job is seasonal. The informants also mentioned that after the construction of Gondar to Gorgora asphaltic road, the transportation sector will create employment opportunity for the local communities. Because, taxi ,Minibus and Bahajaj will begin their service provision from different regions .Even transportation service within the town of Gorgora will be function .Thus ,the local communities are supporting the contractors of the road to finish the construction with in short period of time .

- *One of the monastery administrators emphasized that:* “Even though the support of the government particularly Dembya Woreda administration is very weak, the unemployed communities of Gorgora have no the habit of hard work at any sector. rather they spent their precious time through playing gambling, drinking alcohol, chewing Chat and others. Great effort is necessary to change their attitude towards productivity.”

One of the experts from Dembya woreda Culture and tourism office generalized that the natural attractions, historical attractions and the cultures of the local communities are belongs to the poor communities of Gorgora

and its surrounding .Unless the communities are beneficiary from tourism, the presence the attraction sites will be meaningless for them .On the other hand the preservation ,conservation and protection of the attraction sites highly depends on the active participation of the local communities .Thus ,through effectively developing business opportunities from the tourism sector and creating employment opportunities ,sustainable tourism development can be easily implemented. In doing so it requires to adopt the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs as there may be ups and downs to start.

The monastery administrators stated that through different event and festivities, there may be different opportunities for the local unemployed to engage in business even for a day or a week.

For example, during the annual celebration of ManindeAba Medhanialem monastery on March 27 every year and the annual celebration of the Monastery of Debresinamariam on November 21 every year, different tourists, particularly pilgrims, come to the holy places to get blessed by the holy day. They come to the sites three or four days before the main celebration day. Consequentially, the tourists travel outside of the monasteries, using trees as housing, using packed food, and traveling on foot since there is no transportation service. Therefore, the locals ought to take advantage of this chance. Currently, the local communities, particularly the youth, engage in devil activity by stealing shoes and other properties of tourists while they leave them outside of the monastery.

➤ *Employment Opportunity*

- *Factors For Tourism Development In Gorgora And Its Surrounding*

Although Gorgora is a promising destination for sustainable tourism development, there may be different threats for its effectiveness which cannot be easily controlled. The respondents from the local communities mentioned the challenges as follow:

Table 7 Challenges for tourism development by responded by local communities

	<b>Possible Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid %</b>
Valid	lack of commitment and sense of ownership of tourism resources	162	60.5
	shortage of budget and resource	229	85.5
	absence of tourism infrastructure and facilities	254	94.7
	seasonality of tourist flow	92	34.2
	absence of financial institutions	194	72.4
	Absence of professionals in the area	116	43.2

Source: researcher’s survey, 2023

The above table shows that the most common challenge to the tourism industry is the absence of tourism infrastructure and facilities with a frequency of 254 and a percentage of 94.7%. The least common threat is seasonality of tourist flow with a frequency of 92 and a percentage

of 34.2%. The other four threats, lack of commitment and sense of ownership of tourism resources, shortage of budget and resource, absence of financial institutions and absence of professionals in the area, have frequencies of 162, 229, 194,



and 116, respectively, and percentages of 60.5%, 85.5%, 72.4%, and 43.2%, respectively.

Although it is extremely difficult to determine the precise economic impact of tourism, especially in the absence of a tourist satellite account, the benefits and contribution of tourism to the local economy development in Gorgora and its surroundings are minimum in comparison to that of the existing tourism resources. Most of the time tourists in Gorgora and its environs go back home with their money. Numerous issues, such as the weak connections between tourism and the local economy, the lack of developed primary and supplementary tourism products and services, and the subpar quality of the currently available tourism products and services, can be blamed for this. From the researcher personal observation and the experts' interview, the following threats can hinder the development tourism in Gorgora and its surrounding:

- *Poor Financial Support:*

Most the residents of Gorgora are retired and the youth engage in different daily activities as daily labor in construction, irrigation, metal and wood work for their hand to mouth way of life. Thus, they cannot save money for future use through which establish their own business.

- *Location of Gorgora:*

Since Gorgora is not located in the main route from Bahirdar to Gondar, The tourists may not be interested easily to visit the destination. It requires big effort of promotion to attract customers. In addition, tourists may forget to include in their itinerary since it is located in pocket area.

- *Absence of Tourism Infrastructure:*

Tourists may shorten their length of stay and be dissatisfied if they did not get access to good accommodation, transportation, supply of electricity, clean water, banking service, telecommunication, internet access, health care, access to shopping and others. Thus, fulfilling these facilities is big challenge. These infrastructures are also vital for the residents to engage in different businesses.

- *Problem of Administration Structure:*

Gorgora is under the administration of Dembya woreda being as one kebele. Most decisions including allocation of budget for tourism is done at the woreda level. Even though there is culture and tourism office at the town of kolladiba, there is no any governmental office which follows up the performance of tourism in Gorgora and its surrounding. On the other hand, most of the attraction sites of Dembya Woreda are located in Gorgora and its surrounding. To create different enterprises in the tourism sector, there is no small and micro enterprises development office in the area. which facilitate all the requirements. In addition, Gorgora resort hotel which is the main accommodation center of the town with its interesting view of Lake Tana and Marine transport enterprise which perform metal and wood work activities in particular manufacturing of modern boats are under the administration of Tana marine transport enterprise at Bahirdar. As a result, there is much bureaucracy to give quick service.

- *Unfair Competition Between local and Foreign Investors;*  
Since the local compete with the foreign investor equally, the foreign investors can easily get the opportunity. This creates problem in developing sustainable tourism. Because, there will be leakage with the loss of currency being send to their homeland.

- *Absence of Saving and Credit Institutions:*

Saving and credit institutions are playing important role in providing long term credit service for the local communities.

- *Lack of Skilled Manpower in Tourism:*

Most of the employees in the hotel are working through *experience* without any training. since tourism is a service industry in which the customer gets the service being there at delivery, it requires great care to deliver quality service, Thus, conducting short-term training for service providers may be the responsibility of governmental bodies. The poor cannot afford the expenditure of the training due to low pay condition and their struggle is for survival.

- *Seasonality of Tourist flow:*

There may be good tourist flow from September to February in Ethiopia. whereas, in the remaining months, the flow of tourists decreases due to the coming of summer season and absence of different festivities in the country which attract tourists. This in turn results in reduction in the income of the service providers and withdrawals of the employees from their job.

- *Fluctuation in the Volume of Lake tana:*

It is obvious that lake Tana is wonderful in attracting most tourists from different corners of the world. It is home of many islands and monasteries which have unique religious treasures and different miracles were made.

What is annoying now is that the volume of Lake Tana is fluctuating from season to season decrease its volume during the dry season. The most horrible news is that the occurrence of weed on the lake which has the power of diminishing the volume of the Lake. It is clear that without the existence of Lake Tana, the destination will not be tourist site at all since most of the tourism activities will not be there. Particularly, marine transport, fishery, irrigation projects to produce fruit and vegetables and entertainment on lake tana will no longer be available.

- *The Development of Gorgora as a Major Tourist Destination Can Improve the Aesthetic Value of the Town and the Availability of Basic Infrastructure:*

This could attract nearby rural residents to live in the small town, leading to overcrowding beyond it carrying capacity and loss of productive manpower for farming. The crowded town could result in pollution of the environment (water, noise, or air), overexploitation of tourism resources, and quarrels among local communities. On the other hand, the agricultural productivity of the countryside residents could decrease, leading to a reduction in the supply of agricultural products to the towns. This is because farmers will become producers and consumers of their product.

Additionally, foreign tourists may trivialize the culture of the area.

- *Lack of Market Segmentation:*

As most of the service providers are not aware of marketing, there will be a problem of segmenting the tourism market. It requires studying the needs and wants of customers according to their demographic, geographic, and psychological characteristics.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Gorgora, could be a popular tourist destination, has the potential to contribute to poverty reduction by providing income for local communities. However, the sector faces challenges such as poor service and limited options for customers. To address these issues, small and microenterprises can be established to run tourism businesses with minimal capital. Investors are interested in establishing standardized hotels, lodges, and recreational centers, which could create employment opportunities and fill the accommodation gap. However, managing these challenges may be challenging for local communities.

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