

ABSTRACT

Community Based Tourism carries greater number of advantages to the wider community by improving the living standard in rural areas. Nilgala and in the periphery of Gal Oya National Park are places where poor household population live though the areas is rich with natural cultural and historical attractions, values and places promising for developing Community Based Tourism. This study mainly focuses on finding the potential and challenges for Community Based Tourism Development in Nilgala and in the periphery of Gal Oya National Park and exploring benefits of promoting Community Based tourism in Nilgala and in the periphery of Gal Oya National Park. In order to achieve objectives, this research adopted to the qualitative approach and primary data were collected from 11 several key stakeholders in Nilgala and in the periphery of Gal Oya national park. Semi structured interviews were used with a purposeful sampling technique. A qualitative data analytical method was employed and the collected data were transcribed and analyzed by using qualitative content analysis. The findings of the study revealed about the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental benefits of Developing Community Base tourism related to the Nilgala and periphery of Gal Oya National Park. Absence of Infrastructure Facilities, Poor Government Cooperation. Lack of Human resources and Lack of E-Commerce Awareness, less awareness, Economic Problems, Poor Knowledge about Concept were the challenges for developing Community Base tourism. Moreover, tourism assets and tourism attributes which can be converted in to effective tourism products were identified as the potentials for Community Base Tourism Development in Nilgala and periphery of Gal Oya National Park. The recommendations of this study included directions to avoid Challenges and ways to develop the tourism in Nilgala and periphery of Gal Oya National Park.

Keywords: Community Based tourism, potential, develop, qualitative study, community empowerment