We established Red Rocks Conservation Centres to integrate tourism and community to sustain biodiversity at the volcanoes national park. We bring together the people and resources needed for long-term solutions to enhance the community which is involved in the conservation. Women and youth from the cooperatives take responsibility for most aspects of running the cultural activities; they purchase and prepare any materials that are needed and share the labour among themselves. We at Red Rocks handle marketing, provides a venue, and hires a local guide to translate for the guests.

Activities run exclusively by the women are banana beer making, basket weaving, traditional dancing, agricultural tours, food preparation, and homestays; while the youth involves in painting arts all typically priced on less. The cooperative takes 80% of the revenue for the activities after the local guide has been paid Profits earned by the cooperative members are saved collectively. At the end of each year, the funds are used to provide health insurance for everybody in the cooperative and of the funds remaining, 60% is shared out equally among members and 40% is saved for emergencies and future investment. As most of the women in the cooperatives are subsistence farmers, they have very little opportunity to earn cash. The money provided by the activities at Red Rocks enables them to improve the educational opportunities of their children through purchasing school uniforms and paying for school fees beyond the primary level. They are also able to buy clothes and other small commodities such as soap.

The benefit of the revenue earned by the cooperative goes beyond addressing the immediate needs of the women. The cooperatives hope to use their profits to improve their livelihoods in the long term by purchasing land, better varieties of crops, tools, and livestock to make their agricultural activities more productive.

There is a social element to working within the cooperatives that encourages the membership to proliferate. The cooperative model we use also encourages empowerment, as the women have to cover their own expenses for the activities and avoid becoming entirely dependent on Red Rocks as they have to learn how to budget and plan their activities in advance. There may also be additional benefits from interacting with tourists taking part in the activities. Red Rocks are concerned that the cooperatives do not become dependent on the business. As it stands, if tourism to the area were to fall or Red Rocks go out of business, the cooperatives would lose all links to the market and the women would have to revert to solely relying on subsistence agriculture for their livelihoods. To ensure the cooperatives are able to become self-sufficient, we reconsidered how their relationship functions.