

Making Tourism Count

for the Local Economy in the Caribbean

Guidelines for Good Practice

April 2006

Published by
Pro-Poor Tourism Partnership
and the Caribbean Tourism
Organisation



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Brief 5

Involving local people and products in tours, packages and excursions

The Issue

The Caribbean has more to offer holidaymakers than sun, sand and sea. Tours, packages and excursions need to be available to offer a range of cultural, natural heritage and 'meet the people' opportunities. Such excursions are a key way of enhancing the product and customer experience, and spreading the benefits of tourism wider into the local economy.

Some Caribbean islands offer excursions based on people's culture, such as dance groups performing for tour groups, visits to villages for local food and/or music, and visits to cultural heritage sites. But most excursions are based on enjoying the beach or outdoors with little interaction with local people.

Developing new excursions requires a thorough and careful approach. A variety of components are involved, such as the provision of transportation, guiding and a range of activities, experiences and admissions. These also raise issues of quality and health and safety.

Consider the opportunities

- Holidaymakers from the UK and other European originating markets are seeking more fulfilling experiences in the destination, and opportunities to venture beyond the confines of their hotel or resort.
- Most tourism brochures currently focus exclusively on sun, sand and sea. Excursions that introduce tourists to sugar cane plantations, farms, villages, culinary techniques, dancing traditions, and the legacies of indigenous and colonial history are marginal in the current product offering in most countries.
- Excursions provide memorable experiences and 'stories to tell', particularly when based on direct interaction with local people. They can also encourage repeat visits by introducing tourists to other parts of the country and showing that there is more to be seen.
- Excursions can spread the benefits of tourism, particularly in all-inclusive resorts, and enable tourists to buy directly from craft producers or to contribute through entrance fees to the maintenance of natural and cultural heritage. The country captures more tourist expenditure without increasing the 'cover price'.
- Excursions can make good use of different destinations' unique rich culture.

Understand the challenges

Developing excursions requires careful planning. The challenge is to develop tours that engage with local people, meet market needs, are of appropriate quality and meet the health and safety requirements of the international operators and national regulation. Key issues relate to the EU Package Travel Directive, which places a duty of care on European tour operators, and the role of domestic tour operators and ground handlers in developing excursion programmes.

Standards, risk and legal liability

Although interpretations vary in different jurisdictions, tour operators are responsible for the quality and health and safety of anything that they offer in brochures, sell in resorts or recommend. As a result, tour operators and their staff are careful only to recommend excursions that they have inspected and audited for quality and health and safety. New excursions must fit these standards if they are to be sold to international tourists through tour operators.

Important factors are:

- The provision of food and drinks outside the controlled environment of a hotel or resort. International standards include the use of different coloured chopping boards, aluminium work surfaces and date stamping of food. Lunch stops also have to be audited for health and safety.

- The security of the area, which may require particular attention for evening excursions: if community members are direct beneficiaries and are included as partners, then this may significantly reduce the risk of any incidents.
- The responsibilities of tourists. It is important that visitors do not carry disease on to farms, nor take away plant or animal material that is indigenous to the site.

Disincentives affecting tour operators and hoteliers

There is less economic pressure on ground handlers to innovate if what they have already developed sells. Creating new quality products requires auditing by overseas tour operators for resale and takes time for them. They need to recognise the long-term advantages.

Hoteliers sometimes seek to discourage their guests from becoming involved in community-based activities outside of the hotel because of a loss of revenue for hotel-organized events and meals. Yet hotels need good local relations in their immediate neighbourhood. If there is a rich excursion programme visitors may stay longer.

Community organisation and behaviour

Begging and hassling undermine the quality of the tourism experience and keep tourists away. Controlling this involves a high degree of community organisation and leadership.

Developing local excursions: *working examples*

Turning the cocoa bean into a full day out

In **Dominican Republic**, 'Ruta del Cacao' is run by Monbayasa, the Association of Tourism Micro-entrepreneurs in Monte Plata. A tour has been developed to an organic cocoa farm and co-operative where guests can see cocoa and tropical fruits growing as well as the living conditions, production and processing techniques, and social projects.

Guests can also taste the unprocessed seeds and fruits in the field, buy locally manufactured arts, watch and participate in

folkloric dancing, enjoy a traditional lunch, and of course taste and buy organic cocoa products, such as cocoa wine. The tour emphasizes the socio-economic and ecological relevance of organic cocoa production in the region.

There is a similar attraction in Grenada at Belmont Estate. The original farmhouse has been recreated as a museum, 'dancing' of cocoa beans is performed to live drumming and singing, and there is a tour of cocoa processing and

machinery. There is also a gift shop where cocoa products and other artisanal products from the area are sold. The restaurant offers a Grenadian buffet which utilises produce from the 400-acre farm, and each guest is provided with a bar of locally made chocolate.

✓ Remember, what is common in your area may be new and fascinating to tourists

**More working examples
on page 4**

What can you do?

Good practice approaches for hotels and tour operators¹

- ✔ Go exploring: find out about local talents, traditions and sites. Think laterally about what could become an innovative quality product.
- ✔ Excursions and activities contribute most to the local economy where they build on existing livelihoods and cultural activities – the ‘living culture’.
- ✔ Create partnerships between local and overseas operators to ensure that quality and health and safety issues are managed properly.
- ✔ Work with all stakeholders to ensure guest security and reduce hassle for tourists. This requires close collaboration between tourism operators and local community leaders, organisations, local government and police. The community needs exposure to what makes tourism work – or not work. And they need tangible benefits from making their area welcoming for tourists. Words of wisdom from others are insufficient incentive.
- ✔ Integrate local interaction and local shopping into existing excursions. Visiting local craft markets or workshops can enhance tourists’ experience and expenditure.
- ✔ In developing excursions that fit with tourists’ perceptions and expectations, draw on advice from local representatives of international tour operators, client feedback, and international guide books.
- ✔ Jointly develop codes of practice on commissions and incentives². Guides and drivers need to work for a bigger cake, not a bigger share of a small cake.
- ✔ Ensure high quality guiding with local knowledge. Tours that involve local people will not be successful if guides are hostile or dismissive of local culture. A diverse guide service can substantially enhance the tourist experience and create local employment.
- ✔ Be open to different kinds of guide training. The licensing of guides can ensure quality; however it can also exclude those without formal education but with good conversational language skills. Initiatives by government which take unlicensed informal sector guides and train them are one way to enable less educated guides to enter the market.
- ✔ Ensure destination managers and local guides work in collaboration on the development of guiding materials. In Belize, some destinations no longer offer self-guided brochures, but only maps to ensure that tourists use local guides.
- ✔ Train entrepreneurs. Training for local suppliers of crafts, tours, and other services is essential – in customer relations, business management, health and safety. Tourism businesses can provide much of this, particularly ‘experiential training’ where local entrepreneurs experience tourism first hand.
- ✔ Assess and manage social impacts of tourism. For example, encourage tourists to cover up, particularly when entering churches, and discourage them from giving away sweets in the street or from the windows of vehicles. Begging is often generated by the behaviour of tourists.
- ✔ Assess and manage environmental impacts. Cruise boats can pose particular problems because of the large numbers of people in small areas. Tourists need to be able to dispose of litter responsibly. Wear and tear at heritage sites or disturbance of wildlife needs to be monitored and managed. Coaches should cut their engines to reduce noise and air pollution.

Benefits to be gained

from new, diverse, people-focused excursions

- **For hoteliers:** extended length of stay, repeat business, word of mouth marketing and referrals
- **For tour operators:** increased business, revenues/profits from commissions, a more distinctive offer
- **For local communities:** employment and enterprise opportunities, inclusion in opportunities provided by tourism, and promotion of cultural preservation through tourism
- **For all:** a better experience, customer satisfaction, increased spend and an enhanced brand

Developing local excursions: more *working examples*

Recognising the value of local traditions

In **Dominican Republic**, Bachata is a style of rural guitar music, which until recently was regarded as vulgar, associated with rural backwardness and poor quality. Only after Bachata artists began to win international acclaim in the 1990s was Bachata included in tourism programmes.

✔ Don't dismiss the value of local culture

Learning about marketing the hard way

Mamiku Gardens, an eco-heritage site in the **Windward Islands** has been able to break into the cruise ship onshore excursion market. One of the lessons learned by the proprietor was the importance of marketing. '[We] were totally unaware of the importance of marketing when the Gardens were first opened and valuable time was lost.' The enterprise has now spent far more than originally planned on a website, videos, maps, brochures, flyers, radio and television features, and road signs. Based on her experience, the owner estimated that it took 'two years or more' for a cruise line to become interested in a new product.

✔ Help local entrepreneurs to invest sufficiently in marketing and to tap into your tourist market

About the Briefs ...

The eight Briefs in this series provide practical tips on how to develop different types of local linkages, drawing on experience in several different countries in the Caribbean ▶

For other Briefs in the series and further information see www.propoortourism.org.uk/caribbean

Brief 1: Overview: tourism and the local economy – building linkages

Brief 2: Bringing local producers into the supply chain

Brief 3: Building links with local farmers

Brief 4: Employing local staff

Brief 5: Involving local people and products in tours, packages and excursions

Brief 6: Encouraging tourists to spend in the local economy

Brief 7: Building neighbourhood partnerships

Brief 8: Managing internal change for developing local linkages.

The Appendix provides more details, further examples, sources, and a useful list of contacts.

The Briefs outline some of the benefits and challenges of local linkages, and then focus on what to do. They provide tips on good practice mainly for hoteliers, but also for other private, governmental and non-governmental operators in tourism.

Endnotes:

1. See also a Travel Foundation checklist and guide to creating sustainable excursions, at www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/tools_training_guidelines.asp
2. For an example of development of codes of practice with local guides and vendors, see details from The Gambia in PPT Working Paper No. 15 *Improving Access for the Informal Sector to Tourism in The Gambia*, by Adama Bah and Harold Goodwin (2003) www.propoortourism.org.uk/15_Gambia.pdf

More details, sources and further examples can be found in the Appendix.

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Brief 6

Encouraging tourists to spend in the local economy

The Issue

The money spent by holidaymakers in the local economy makes a direct contribution to raising the household incomes in local communities. It also provides an enhanced experience for tourists.

Activity around the resorts and hotels contributes to creating a richer destination – in both senses. If tourists are to spend freely, they need to feel comfortable as they explore the neighbourhood, attractive goods and services must be highly visible, and tourists must trust the health and safety standards.

Consider the opportunities

In an increasingly competitive ‘sun, sand and sea’ marketplace, it is important to offer tourists goods and services that are distinctive to the local area. Whether buying local crafts or enjoying an annual festival, local activities enrich the destination experience leading to more referrals, repeat business, and an enhanced destination image.

Shopping is a vital component of the holiday, but tourists want to buy goods that are particular to their destination. If they are sold items which are imported from another country, or worse still another continent, then the authenticity and quality of the destination is called into question and the competitive edge is lost. In the Caribbean, many of the curios are imported, some from Asia.

One way to raise tourism expenditure, without raising the ‘cover price’ of a holiday, is to provide tourists with high quality opportunities to spend more while in the destination.

Understand the challenges

- ✓ *Local people hassling tourists* over entering shops, taking taxis and accompanying them puts tourists off, creates an air of insecurity, and can cause crime to develop.
- ✓ *Commission structures* can mean that there is little scope for local producers to earn a profit because of the margins paid to tour guides. It can be hard to break into the market and persuade excursion groups to stop at a new product, because guides rely on established commissions from their existing stopovers.
- ✓ *Excess haggling by tourists* – sometimes encouraged by guides, taxi drivers or out-of-date guidebooks – further reduces returns.
- ✓ *Poor marketing strategies for local products* and lack of a brand identity result in poor awareness amongst tourists of the opportunities to purchase local products and of their inherent value.
- ✓ *Excessive competition between producers* can drive prices down.
- ✓ *Local crafts struggle to compete with imports* if either the quality is lower or if well-produced, price is comparatively high. Tourists are often prepared to pay more for the genuine article if they understand about the raw material, the production process and its

cultural value, particularly if there are only a few practitioners.

- ✔ *Lack of information on the local area*, lack of reliable public transport, and uncertainty about where it is safe and unsafe to go, can discourage tourists from going outside the resort.
- ✔ *The structure of the all-inclusive package* is not pre-disposed to encouraging expenditure outside the resort for two reasons: tourists have an incentive to stay inside where food and drinks are free and the environment known; and the legal liability of tour operators prevents the recommendation of any local activity unless it has been audited for health and safety.

Using festivals as a way of attracting visitors to spend locally

The **St Lucia Jazz Festival** was originally conceived in 1992 as a marketing tool to raise market visibility and boost arrivals in the low season in a relatively low cost way. The initiative required an enormous amount of stakeholder collaboration involving multiple finance sources, tax waivers, media collaboration, use of volunteers and contracted staff, sponsorships and partnerships but is now a leading event in the national and tourist calendar. The festival boosted visitor arrivals, raised awareness of the destination, provided exposure for local artists, and a ready audience for other tourist accommodation, transport, food, performances, events and souvenirs services. The value of additional media exposure due to the event is estimated to exceed the annual budget of the marketing board.

Each year, the **Jamaica** Conservation and Development Trust holds its 'Misty Bliss' at Holywell Recreational Park in the Blue Mountains. The fair blends cultural entertainment with the rich natural heritage. A major part of the fair aims to increase the awareness and sensitivity of Jamaicans to the Blue and John Crow Mountain Park, as well as generating revenue towards the park's further preservation.

In **St Lucia**, the weekly Seafood Friday in Anse La Raye provides the opportunity for local vendors to reach a new market, and provide a channel for locally caught seafood. The key outcome has been that typically unemployed middle aged females of Anse La Raye now have alternative means of income, up to \$600 per month.

- ✔ *Use festivals as a catalyst for tourists to enjoy – and spend in – the local area.*

What can you do?

Good practice approaches

- ✔ Support product quality and innovation. Start by identifying authentic local products that are already produced and look at ways of developing these further. Innovation can mean developing a traditional skill or product into a modern product desired by tourists.
- ✔ Offer retail space to local craftspeople and advertising space to local taxis, excursions and guides.
- ✔ Provide business advice and support to local entrepreneurs. Your contacts, market networks and understanding of tourists' needs can be invaluable.
- ✔ Work with local partners to ensure security of tourists in the community and reduce hassle. This involves engaging the local community and its leaders, the tourism industry and local police (see Brief 7). It is not surprising that poor people on the margins of the industry take every opportunity to earn a little cash, but if harassment is reduced, sales can expand to benefit everyone.
- ✔ Provide information to tourists:
 - Maps, so that tourists can find their way around the area
 - Guides to pricing: for appropriate haggling, ball-park prices
 - Information on public transport: where to find taxis, taxi charges
 - Information in the hotel lobby or in rooms. If local products reach quality standards, information can be provided in welcome packs and briefings.
- ✔ Engage in open discussions on a commission system that will work for the destination, including the poor producers. It is not possible to take ever larger commissions from ever fewer sales. A virtuous circle needs to be created where product expansion, reduced harassment and greater quality increase the volume and value of sales and commissions spread further.
- ✔ Drop off tourists at craft markets close to hotels and point out the short walk back to the hotel. This can work if security along the route is managed.
- ✔ Support destination-wide initiatives, such as festivals, regeneration of infrastructure, and development of a local brand. Festivals can bring tourists into the destination in the low season, and encourage tourists out into the community. The success of certification schemes, such as a local brand, also depends on general acceptance and uptake by many operations.

Table 1 shows a wide range of ways in which local artisans, guides and restaurateurs can boost their sales. Hotels and tour operators can assist with making change happen.

Table 1: Factors that encourage purchases of local crafts, food, guiding and market products

<p>Local craft sales are boosted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products specific to the destination (based on amber, coconut, rum, colonial ‘firsts’) • More production on-site, at the stalls • A range of differentiated products: not all vendors selling the same • Product innovation: combining local skills with modern preferences (e.g. in the Gambia, women make Gambian dresses for Barbie dolls!) • Less hassle of tourists: harassment stops sales • Price information for tourists (a range within which haggling is appropriate) • Better quality products • Better presentation of products • Ensuring products can be packed and are transportable • Sales inside hotels • Labelling and interpretation to tell ‘the story’ and thus add value • Tailor-made items made to order (e.g. personalised with names) • Code of conduct among sellers governing behaviour, prices, location, management of environmental impacts of materials used • Art and craft areas or clusters, where tourists can see producers and competition drives innovation • Reputation and popularity (the idea of must-have souvenirs) 	<p>Local food and drink sales are boosted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring product quality and standards • Exploiting smells, flavours, tastes and niche preferences (e.g. organic coffee and chocolate) • Opportunities to mix with locals • Country labels: brands that guarantee tourists authenticity, local sourcing and recognised quality • Local festivals
	<p>Local market visits are boosted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local colour • Range of products • Opportunities to see producers at work • Reliable transport • Opportunities to mix with locals
	<p>Local guiding is boosted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of specialist guides (e.g. in birding, agricultural tours) • Licensing or system of official recognition • Agreed pricing that is made available to tourists in writing

*Encouraging tourist expenditure locally: **working examples***

Developing a unique product and brand

In **Barbados**, a national logo competition held by the IICA Agro-tourism Linkages Centre in Barbados aimed to enhance the development of a signature Barbadian product – ‘Barbados Blackbelly Sheep’. A workshop was then held for artisans to consider ways of using the logo on a range of functional and decorative craft items. Such unique locally branded products may be marketed through hotels and/or sold directly to tourists.

➤ Develop a new brand highlighting local quality products

Creating opportunities for tourists to spend in villages

In **Dominican Republic**, Outback Safaris provide rural excursions which combine ‘history and social lessons, culture, plants, animals, fun and charisma’. The community gains directly from cash spent by the company, such as payments to boat owners and ranches, and expenditure on road building. But just as importantly, Outback Safaris creates opportunities for tourists to spend locally too. Tourists visit villages and homes, and rural people earn approximately US\$1,300 per month from sale of local products to tourists or fees for visiting their house. The company makes donations for education and health through a local foundation and encourages tourists to do the same, rather than to give away sweets or coins on the street. In the first half of 2005, around US\$35,000–40,000 was earned for the Foundation from the sale of T-shirts to tourists.

➤ There will be many different ways for tourists to spend on local products. Find some and keep adding more.

Caribbean festivals:

a key route for incorporating local people and culture into the tourism product

Festivals are one way to involve local people in the tourism product, and encourage tourists to enjoy – and spend in – the local area.

Carnivals and indigenous music festivals in particular have been pivotal to the development of the cultural industries and arts sector. Festivals create new clients, markets and media exposure for the entertainment sector, stimulate infrastructure development, heritage conservation and investment into the arts and strengthen inter-sectoral linkages between tourism, travel and culture.

Festivals have also proved to be very useful in boosting the destination as a whole, by creating a new tourism season, filling the void in the tourism calendar, improving hotel occupancy levels and building destination image. Festivals

also create new tourism demand from the short break travel market, the Diaspora and intra-regional tourist (groupings that are largely omitted in tourist marketing plans). The spending of festival tourists, which is considered 'new' or incremental and counts as an export industry, has been very significant as a share of total visitor expenditure, where the data on visitor arrivals have been documented by exit surveys – see Table 2.

The best example is the Trinidad carnival – the largest festival in the region in terms of visitor arrivals and expenditures. Arrivals have grown by 60 per cent since the late 1990s, such that by 2004 there were over 40,000 visitors that spent approximately US\$28 million. This accounts for over 10 per cent of annual visitor expenditures.

Table 2: Festival tourism economic impact

Festivals	Year	Arrivals	Visitor expenditures US\$m
Trinidad & Tobago Carnival	2004	40,455	28.0
St. Lucia Jazz Festival	2000	11,041	14.8
Barbados Cropover	2000	3,485	3.2

Data is taken from K. Nurse. 'The Cultural Industries and Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States' (forthcoming Commonwealth Secretariat).

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Brief 7

Building neighbourhood partnerships

The Issue Partnerships with residents and neighbours can cover a variety of issues: waste management, water use, energy supplies, development of local craft markets, local guiding services, improvement of local enterprises and services, seafront development, creation of pedestrian streets and local restaurants and cafes, management of attractions and development of new ones, management of begging, traffic control, control of sex tourism and policing of crime, as well as festivals for local people and tourists to enjoy together.

There are many opportunities to enrich the destination. A successful tourism destination requires that the host community is welcoming to guests. Part of the business case for ensuring that there are significant local benefits from tourism for local communities is the 'license to operate' (see Brief 1). Local communities are reduced to hawking and begging when they are denied access to sell to tourists and when the community sees tourists as unwelcome and 'fair game'. In order to avoid this, the tourism industry needs to work individually and collectively at developing positive relationships with neighbouring communities.

Consider the opportunities

Building local partnerships can help the destination become a better place for tourists to visit and a better place for people to live. Local partnerships can do the following:

- **Enrich destinations:** the local area within walking distance or a short bus or taxi ride can become part of the destination used by tourists staying in the hotels and resorts.
- **Boost local communities:** local people not only gain opportunities to sell goods and services to tourists, but also benefit from enhancement of public spaces, parks, gardens, promenades and pedestrian streets. They may be developed for tourists but enjoyed by locals to play chess, talk with friends or sit in the shade of a tree. This in turn adds to the authenticity of a place and creates an ambience that tourists enjoy.
- **Reduce hassle and feelings of risk to health or safety:** effective local partnerships between government, hoteliers and local people can reduce hassle of tourists and

thus greatly improve tourist enjoyment.

- **Reduce the negative impacts** of tourism, such as litter, waste, or sex tourism.

Although one hotel or tour operator, with vision and commitment, can achieve real change, so much more can be achieved if stakeholders, and even competitors within a destination, work together:

- **Economies of scale** can be gained by businesses working together: If hotels and tour operators collaborate, they can provide a substantial market to local business that enables them to invest in expanding production, or they can provide inputs (such as health and safety training) that may be too expensive for one operator. Local entrepreneurs can collectively improve their transport or marketing in ways that cannot be afforded individually.
- If a **new initiative** is supported by different parts of the tourism supply chain, success is more likely. For example,

a new craft centre will flourish if: tour operators are consulted on their client needs and then include it in their tour; international tour operators audit it to ensure its inclusion is allowed; hotels purchase its soft furnishings and provide information about it on notice boards; and agreements are made with local taxis and guides so that tourists are taken to it.

The tourism sector has much expertise to offer local entrepreneurs, but other sector inputs are essential: such as micro-business development, technical aspects of agriculture or light manufacture, and business finance. Local government also needs to be involved.

Understand the challenges

In some destinations in the Caribbean, and elsewhere, it is a considerable challenge to provide experiences for holiday-makers that meet the quality and health and safety expectations of consumers and the requirements of the Package Travel Directive. For tour operators and hoteliers to encourage their clients to venture out of the hotel or away from organised excursions, health, safety and security issues have to be managed so that the necessary minimum standards are assured by the community, local government or the police.

Collaboration requires competitors to work with each other, and different sectors to come together.

Existing interests, taxi drivers, guides and street vendors are often well organised and adept at defending their interests. Taxi drivers who have borrowed to finance their taxi and

buy a license will jealously guard their interests; they may make it very difficult to introduce a bus service from the hotel or resort to town. Freelance licensed guides and unofficial guides touting for business may intimidate tourists and discourage them from venturing out alone. Vendors selling cheaper imported crafts and paying for their pitches may crowd out local craft workers who could provide a more authentic local experience – including demonstrations of weaving, leather work or carving. These issues are not easily addressed and generally require a transparent partnership approach engaging all the stakeholders with the support of government. All those involved need to share a common vision about how the relationships are to be changed and to support the changes knowing clearly what they will gain and lose.

What can you do?

Good practice approaches

A neighbourhood partnership will require many stakeholders to think about where they live and work in a whole new light:

- ✔ Gathering views is a great place to start. Collect reliable information about what tourists think about the destination and the quality of its offerings. Find out what each of the stakeholders thinks about the goods and services provided by others. Identify the main problems and thus shared solutions. Partnerships cannot be developed without a shared understanding of the problem and a shared vision about how to change it.
- ✔ It is not just about talking, and not just environmental improvements or social programmes: to achieve sustainable change local people need to have tangible economic benefits.
- ✔ Local approaches to tourism management can be instituted by establishing action groups, such as Tourism Action Committees (TAC), to act as lobbyists and to promote local area linkages, identify needs and opportunities. The TACs should liaise with/report to

the National Tourism Organisations. TACs were established in Trinidad and Tobago.

- ✔ Provide craft workers and other local trades people with a physical space from which to trade and avoid hawking; create markets which are close to tourists. Instead of pushing or wishing them away, bring them in.
- ✔ Have frank and open discussions about commission systems and fees. Explore how everyone can benefit from a 'bigger cake' rather than fighting for shares. Agree new rules and shares. Encourage each stakeholder group to develop and regulate its own code of conduct.

Whole manuals and treatises have been written about how to do community development. While this is not the place for more, some tips from other local tourism initiatives include:

- ✔ Finding the right people to work with is key. Understand local social structures and include those leaders, poor groups, and social entrepreneurs who get

things done locally. Bring in a local facilitator to help if necessary.

- ✔ Find out what goals local people have: they may be different to what tourism operators expect. In several pro-poor tourism projects, local income has been welcome, but poor people also have non-financial priorities such as training, dignity, access to natural resources, access to infrastructure and ability to participate in decisions.
- ✔ Partnerships can fall apart when expectations are very high and delivery is very slow. Do not promise more than you can deliver and manage expectations. Focus on some short-term practical steps as well as more ambitious long term plans.
- ✔ Communicate! Lack of communication can breed suspicion. Just as communities may not understand tourists' needs, so business people may not understand community needs. Style and pace of negotiation may be different. Finding joint ways forward depends on creating adequate communication channels, both formal and informal.
- ✔ Find appropriate ways to share risks and benefits across all partners. Make sure the poor understand their risks and are not over-exposed.

A partnership approach working with other stakeholders is essential. Work out how each can benefit more from collaboration, and to make it happen.

- ✔ Partnerships need to include the international and domestic private sectors, local government, local businesses and the community.
- ✔ Seek to involve a range of tourism companies – across a destination and up and down the value chain – in building local linkages.
- ✔ Test ideas and their market potential with tour operators along the value chain early on.
- ✔ Tourism ministries and tourism officers cannot deliver alone; they will need to secure the support of other parts of government, for example, street cleaning, road maintenance, the police and planning.
- ✔ Focus on what more can be achieved by working together, compared to what any individual company or entrepreneur can achieve alone. Give participants a tangible reason to engage.

Neighbourhood partnerships: working examples¹

Using public spaces for community and tourism

At Rodney Bay in the heart of St Lucia, the public square features local culinary specialities, as well as local music including picong and other art forms. Rodney Bay Committee handles decisions regarding the area and contributes to such activities as the St Lucia Jazz Festival. Many other Caribbean islands could benefit from the development of local open spaces that can both serve the community and double to feature events that will enhance the tourism product.

- ✔ Form a local group to plan better use of public spaces

Co-ordinating development with the community

In St Lucia, the Laborie Development Foundation and Laborie community undertook a three-year strategic planning process from 1999–2002 to reduce ad hoc, unplanned development. The focus was on the overall development of the community, including the development of tourism. One project linked cultural festivals to the accommodation sector in Laborie. The approach has been very successful and requests for assistance from other communities has resulted in the Foundation documenting the approach in various media, including a video.

- ✔ Work with local community initiatives to integrate tourism into local plans

Neighbourhood partnerships: *more examples*

Developing the tourism infrastructure and training

In St Lucia, significant strides have been made in the area of heritage and community tourism with the development of 14 heritage sites and 24 ancillary attractions. For example, a grant from the Community Tourism Foundation enabled the Forestierre Tour Guides Association to construct a lookout point at the summit of Piton Flore Trail. Other activities also include the re-training of the tour guides, trail reconstruction and signage. The project engaged the Forestry Division and the Ministry of Social Transformation as key partners.

Training health and hygiene

At Boca Chica near Santo Domingo in Dominican Republic, 145 women who sell fried fish on the seafront took a course in food handling. They were then offered a micro-entrepreneurs course, and at the end of the course, introduced to a loan scheme run by government. Such a move helps the destination as well as the local economy.

✔ **Make it real: provide training and finance to local participants**

About the Briefs . . .

The eight Briefs in this series provide practical tips on how to develop different types of local linkages, drawing on experience in several different countries in the Caribbean ▶

For other Briefs in the series and further information see www.propoortourism.org.uk/caribbean

Brief 1: *Overview: tourism and the local economy – building linkages*

Brief 2: *Bringing local producers into the supply chain*

Brief 3: *Building links with local farmers*

Brief 4: *Employing local staff*

Brief 5: *Involving local people and products in tours, packages and excursions*

Brief 6: *Encouraging tourists to spend in the local economy*

Brief 7: *Building neighbourhood partnerships*

Brief 8: *Managing internal change for developing local linkages.*

The Appendix provides more details, further examples, sources, and a useful list of contacts.

The Briefs outline some of the benefits and challenges of local linkages, and then focus on what to do. They provide tips on good practice mainly for hoteliers, but also for other private, governmental and non-governmental operators in tourism.

Footnotes

1. The most detailed report on implementing a neighbourhood partnership in a resort comes from outside the Caribbean: The Gambia experience (Bah and Goodwin 2003): www.propoortourism.org.uk/15_Gambia.pdf
2. For more information on Laborie Development Foundation, see www.laboriecommunity.net/projects.htm