Good Practices in Community-Based Tourism in the Caribbean

UWI/EBCCI Heritage Tourism Workshop

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Presentation Overview

- Key Elements of Community-based tourism (CBT) & link with heritage tourism
- Policy on CBT
- CBT benefits & opportunities
- CBT critical success factors
- CBT Caribbean good practice case studies - key lessons learnt
- Practical Session
CBT Link with Heritage Tourism

- **Tangible** or built heritage e.g. historic sites, public arts, monuments, museums, natural attractions, archaeological sites

- **Intangible** heritage e.g. performing arts, festivals and popular culture forms

- Heritage tourism is often a feature of a CBT approach which is central to attaining sustainable tourism & they share some common goals
Key Elements of Community-Based Tourism

- Collaborative approach to tourism
- Community members exercise control through active participation in appraisal, development, management and/or ownership (whole or in part) of enterprises
- Enterprises deliver net socio-economic benefits to community members, conserve natural and cultural resources & add value to the experiences of local and foreign visitors
Key Elements of Community-Based Tourism

- Encompasses both tourism activities in a community and goods and services supplied to the tourism industry by one or more community members
The importance of community-based tourism is its emphasis on active participation & empowerment of local people in the tourism opportunity.
Extent of CBT

- Enabling national policy framework
- Destination positioning and branding as environmentally & socially responsible
- Technical & financial assistance
- Local entrepreneurship and/or leadership in communities
CTO Regional Sustainable Tourism Policy

Development Goal #5

- Develop & strengthen the links between tourism & other economic sectors nationally & regionally to maximise the multiplier effect on the economy & reduce leakages.
CTO Regional Sustainable Tourism Policy
Objectives

- Provide an enabling framework to realise national & regional inter-sectoral linkages
- Ensure that communities are able to benefit meaningfully from linkages with tourism
Some CBT Benefits

✓ Community engagement and control
✓ Poverty alleviation and more equitable benefit distribution
✓ Natural and cultural heritage resource conservation
✓ Regional and rural development
✓ Product diversification
CBT Good Practice Case Studies

- **Dominica**
  - Portsmouth Indian River Tour Guides Association
  - Giraudel/Eggleston Flower Group Inc.
  - 3 Rivers Community Life Package, Grand Fond Village

- **Dominican Republic**
  - La Ruta del Café

- **Jamaica**
  - St. Helena Women’s Group
  - Walkerswood Jerk Country Tour

- **St. Lucia**
  - Anse La Raye Seafood Friday
  - Plas Kassav

- **Trinidad and Tobago**
  - Roxborough Estate Visitor Services Cooperative (Tobago)
  - Nature Seekers (Trinidad)
Critical CBT Factors

1. **Commercial viability**: Product quality & price, marketing, strength of the broader destination & funding mechanisms

2. **Access to the market**: Physical location, economic elites & social constraints on local producers

3. **Policy framework & land tenure**: land tenure, regulatory context, planning process, government attitudes & capacity

4. **Implementation challenges in the local context**: Filling the skills gap, managing costs & expectations & maximising collaboration among stakeholders
Anse La Raye Seafood Friday

- Tourists & locals congregate on the waterfront on Friday evenings to purchase cooked seafood, beverages & craft and listen to music
- Launched in July 2000
- SLHTP facilitated its development
- Based on Oistins Fish Fry model
- Objectives:
  - to diversify the tourism product
  - to spread the benefits of tourism
ALRSF Socio-Economic Impacts

▪ Employment creation
▪ Income generation
▪ Investment stimulation
▪ Local economic sectoral linkages strengthened – agriculture, fishing, tourism, entertainment, hospitality, craft, transportation
▪ Community development
ALRSF Market Access

- Strategic location of Anse La Raye:
  ✓ Easily accessible & near to tourism-oriented Gros Islet & Soufriere towns
- Rich natural & cultural assets
- Infrastructure development funded by SLHTP
ALRSF Commercial Viability

- **Product:**
  - Adapted into unique event based on Barbados model & traditional livelihood activities
  - Quality is regularly reviewed
  - Safe & healthy environment

- **Market:**
  - Ready market – international cruise & stay-over visitors, locals
  - Attracts more discerning & higher spending markets
ALRSF Commercial Viability

- Funding mechanism:
  - Regional micro-finance organisation (Microfin) provided short-term loans to expand ALRSF vendors’ businesses.
  - ALRSF Committee receives fixed sum from each vendor for admin. & entertainment etc.
  - Other sources.
ALRSF Policy Framework

- St. Lucia Tourism Strategy & Action Plan (2005) encourages CBT business advisory services & economic linkages
- Cabinet support via declaration as a priority economic development area
- Institutional support
  - SLHTP financial & technical support to respective gov’t agencies to dev. ALRSF
ALRSF Implementation

- Multi-stakeholder design & planning (ALR Village Council, wider community, SLHTP etc.)
- Tourism visioning & participatory planning approach used
- Strong community leadership
- Establishment of ALRSF Committee (Council & Assoc. members, community reps.) to manage contribution from vendors & oversee lighting, solid waste management & security
- Skills training to ensure adequate event quality & sustainability & event mgmt. capacity
ALRSF Implementation

- Sensitisation to and measures to mitigate environmental impacts implemented e.g. closed lobster season
- Training provided on food safety & waste disposal measures, protective clothing, garbage bins, improved storage
- Impacts of ALRSF on vendor livelihoods have been documented
Local government can play a central role in facilitating CBT initiatives.

Political support can be critical to the early success of an initiative & the speed at which it develops.

Inclusive consultation, a shared vision of tourism, a holistic approach to product development & building local mgmt. capacity are important.
ALRSF Key Lessons

✓ Skill training is important in establishing a quality tourism product & building the mgmt. capacity to sustain it
✓ Technical & financial assistance & ongoing support from other stakeholders can make or break a project
✓ The combination of market intelligence, consistent product concept & standards & business entrepreneurship are crucial to success
ALRSF Key Lessons

✓ A regular review process to maintain product concept & quality is important
✓ There may be trade-offs between authenticity & income-generating activity, particularly where there is a lack of local craft tradition & imported crafts are retailed
✓ Tourism development does not have to be based on a natural attraction. Well-organized events can create new economic opportunities for a wide cross-section of the community’
✓ Environmental impacts need to be managed.
General Key Lessons

- Advocacy by CBOs can influence national decision making
- Social issues in the wider community can compromise the quality of a tourism product
- CBT is usually an “add-on” activity and does better when the wider destination is doing well
- Good local governance, strong community organization & mobilization are important success factors
General Key Lessons

- Access rights to common property resources and permission to use private land for access can facilitate CBT & requires stakeholder participation.
- A unique CBT product can be developed even if the initial concept is borrowed from local, regional or international experience.
- It is important to promote the product to the domestic market, as the international market is seasonal.
General Key Lessons

- Inclusive consultation, a shared vision of tourism, a holistic approach to product development and building local management capacity are important.
- Skills training is important in establishing a quality tourism product and building the management capacity to sustain it.
- Authentic demonstration of an indigenous production process is an attraction and enriches visitor experience.
- Adaptation of an indigenous product does not necessarily weaken its appeal.
General Key Lessons

✓ Government can play a central role in facilitating CBT initiatives
✓ Partnership building makes resource mobilization easier
✓ Participatory decision-making ensures organizational unity
✓ Linkages need to be made with commercial tourism companies
CBT Opportunities

- Donor assistance for CBT development:
  - EU
  - UK Department for International Development (DFID)
  - Netherlands Development Organisation
  - USAID
  - CIDA
  - Ford Foundation
  - World Wildlife Fund International
  - UNDP GEF – Small Grants Programme
  - UNESCO
Next Steps

✓ Informal networking
✓ Formal networking
✓ Idea & information sharing – successes & failures
✓ Study tours/site visits
✓ Collaboration on CBT initiatives – community, national & regional levels
✓ Documentation of CBT experiences
Useful Resources

- **Websites** (Publications, Conference/Workshop Proceedings and links to other websites):
  - CTO: [www.onecaribbean.org](http://www.onecaribbean.org)
  - CRSTDP: [www.caribtdp.org](http://www.caribtdp.org)
  - CANARI: [www.canari.org](http://www.canari.org)

- **CTO Publications:**
  - Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework
  - Making Tourism Count for the Local Economy in the Caribbean – Guidelines for Good Practice
Useful Resources

CTO Publications:

✓ Competing with the Best: Good Practices in Community-Based Tourism in the Caribbean
✓ Development of a Strategic Business Management Model for the Sustainable Development of Heritage Tourism Products in the Caribbean
✓ Development and Marketing of Cultural Heritage … Ecotourism
Thank you...