

## COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN CAPE VERDE – A CASE STUDY

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### **Abstract**

Community-based tourism is taking its place in the world as an alternative to traditional tourist destinations, especially in developing countries. This form of tourism allows for greater contact with the local community and for the tourist to experience new sensations while enabling the economic and social development of the geographic area. In this paper, the results of fieldwork carried out in the island of *Fogo* (Cape Verde) are presented, assessing the opinion and perception tourists visiting this island have of both the quality of the services offered by community-based tourism enterprises, as well as the potential of the tourism resources in the area. The main results of the investigation endorse the quality of services offered to tourists by local businesses and highlight the hospitality of the local community, a key element for the development of this kind of tourism, particularly in different african countries. Similarly, it highlights the passenger satisfaction with services received and the need to strengthen the training to tourism staff through aid, for example, international cooperation, NGOs and universities. The originality of this research comes from analysis of the demand made on a concrete island of Cape Verde, a country which is producing a huge economic development through the tourism sector.

**Keywords** Community-Based Tourism, Economic Development, International Cooperation, Isle of Fogo, Cape Verde

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the last few years a change has been observed in the behaviour of tourists, who are now looking for another means of discovering locations, demonstrating themselves to be actively involved in their travels. Therefore, they are looking to explore new destinations where local culture, ethics, indigenous customs and the historical heritage are increasingly important, and, in this respect, they are seeking to experience cultural diversity as a means of self-enrichment. Similarly, from the perspective of the suppliers, it is considered possible for tourism to become a complementary activity (but never the only economic alternative) to the traditional economic sectors of the local community, on the premise that it is the community's residents who develop and manage these processes. Undoubtedly, this could favour the progress of local communities, offering tourists the opportunity to learn about its cultural heritage and to enjoy its natural resources, always on the basis of one fundamental central theme: the initiative and the management of the use of these natural and cultural resources for tourism purposes must come from the local community itself, which must also establish the limits of such tourism development.

The coordination of this kind of tourism based on community management offers developing countries vast development opportunities for the creation of cooperatives and other forms of social association. In this sense, tourism is considered to be a basic tool in the fight against poverty, with initiatives in place such as the so-called ST-EP (Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty) programme developed by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO). The WTO (2002) points out that sustainable tourism can be a fundamental tool in socio-economic development and in the reduction of poverty in certain rural areas. Opportunities to sell certain goods and services can be established through the development of the area's cultural, social and environmental resources, thus offering small scale opportunities for job creation (especially for women) and can serve as a complementary (never substitutive) activity to agriculture, livestock farming and fishing. Scientific literature in this field (Novelli and Gebhardt, 2007) highlights that tourism is one of the highest growth sectors in the world economy and that the promotion of tourism development in rural (and urban) areas in disadvantaged parts of developing countries is not, a priori, either bad or good, but rather depends on different social, political, economic and environmental factors. For example, the African continent has experienced an exponential growth in the number of tourists, but this has not led to local communities obtaining economic, social or environmental benefits (Novelli and Gebhardt, 2007). Nevertheless, the impact of tourism must be measured by taking into account two essential elements (Nyaupane *et al.*, 2006): firstly, the local community's level of involvement and level of control over tourism; and secondly, the number and the profile of tourists visiting the area in question. In this respect, tourism can have very positive effects, such as fostering the preservation of local culture, the revival of partially lost cultural elements and the construction of pride in the past (Al-Oun and Al-Hamoud, 2008).

The aim of this paper is to present an analysis of the state of community-based tourism in a specific geographical area, the island of *Fogo* in Cape Verde. This island has not yet structured tourism development on the basis of mass tourism as has happened in the other islands of Cape Verde. The island is reacting to increasingly significant flows of tourists who visit the island by way of small tourism companies managed by the community itself. In this paper, following on from this introduction, the literature on community-based tourism is briefly summarised in part two. In the third section, the geographical area which is the subject of this study is described. The methodology used is presented in part four and, finally, in part five the main results are presented and discussed.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of community-based tourism (CBT) first appeared in the work of Murphy (1985) who dealt with the links between tourism and its management by the local community in developing countries, questions which were later tackled again by the same author in 2004 (Murphy and Murphy, 2004). In addition to these two studies, there have been several research investigations analysing the relationship between tourism and local communities (Richards and Hall, 2000). The concept of CBT puts forward new lines of research and opportunities for tourism development which come together with other existing lines of research. For example, Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT)

fighters against poverty in a certain areas; Community Benefit Tourism Initiatives (CBTIs) deal with the need to search for benefits for the whole community, independent of other socio-political issues, ensuring that the community owns, manages and controls the projects (Simpson, 2008); and donor-assisted community-based tourism (DACBT), developed by Harrison and Schipani (2007) and promoted by international aid agencies, allows many local communities characterised by subsistence economies to obtain money in cash in order to begin creating their own micro-enterprises. In sum, the conclusion drawn from all these initiatives is that it is necessary to include the local community in the planning and management of tourism for three fundamental reasons: it allows the community to adapt to changes, it opens up the community's mentality and finally because the community is part of the tourism product. Scientific literature documents CBT projects in Asia (Nyaupane *et al.*, 2006; Harrison and Schipani, 2007; Okazaki, 2008; Harris, 2009), Oceania (Dyer *et al.*, 2003), Africa (Lepp, 2007; Novelli and Gebhardt, 2007; Manyara and Jones, 2007; Kibicho, 2008) and Latin America (Zorn and Farthing, 2007; Trejos and Chiang, 2009).

CBT is characterised by the fact that it is the community itself which has control over tourism management and it receives a significant proportion of the benefits generated by such activity (Trejos and Chiang, 2009). Thus, this kind of tourism has emerged as a possible solution to the negative effects of mass tourism in developing countries, allowing it to simultaneously become a strategy for social organisation for the local community. The main theme of CBT is to integrate food and accommodation services, additional services and tourism management through the community itself. Further fundamental characteristics should be a subsystem interconnected to other subsystems (such as education, health, infrastructure and the environment), the presentation of a sustainable development project managed by the community and the interrelationship of the local community and tourists (Cioce *et al.*, 2007). In this respect, CBT attempts to respond to the question of how to develop tourism in developing countries. According to Ashely (2000), the development of tourism in developing countries has been structured on the basis of four clearly identifiable and differentiable perspectives (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Conventional approaches to tourism in the developing world

Economists generally see tourism as a route to macro-economic growth, and particularly as a means of generating foreign exchange.	For the private sector, tourism is a commercial activity, so the main concerns are product development, competitiveness and commercial returns.
Many conservationists now see tourism as a way of using wild resources sustainably, and hence as a way to enhance incentives for conservation.	For rural people, and the development of NGOs that support them, tourism is one component of rural development.

Source: Ashely (2000:8)

Nowadays, although the dominant perspective should be the fourth, in many developing countries the three first alternatives take priority. In this sense, CBT attempts to respond to the coordination of tourism development through the fourth of

Ashely's perspectives (2000), that is to say the approach based on the active participation of the local community. For this to work there is a fundamental need to create community events which allow for the promotion of this kind of tourism and at the same time act as a means of structuring the relationship between the local community and its visitors. As regards to the main limitations the community encounters in developing tourism projects, and following on from Nyaupane *et al.* (2006), the local community generally does not have the financial resources necessary to support these kind of initiatives. Furthermore, the local community may have cultural limitations and there may be conflicts between the powers corresponding to different areas of local government. Other key factors in the development of CBT include the inclusion of local residents as shareholders in the local community, the recognition of individual and collective benefits, goal-setting for tourism and the local community's perception of who is responsible for making the decisions to be implemented (Kibicho, 2008). Among the main benefits of community-based tourism are the direct economic impact on families in the community, greater socio-economic and environmental development of the area and the sustainable diversification of lifestyles (Manyara and Jones, 2007). In this sense, CBT is positive as it avoids conflicts between different actors involved in tourism, it implements policy coordination, and it helps create synergies by exchanging knowledge, thoughts and abilities among all members of the community (Kibicho, 2008).

Therefore CBT offers a range of attractions based on the idea that primary sector activities and tourism are complementary, making it possible for tourism to reduce emigration through job creation. Furthermore, tourism could revitalise the local culture itself. In order for this to happen, an absolutely key element is information and communication technologies (ICT) since this reduces transaction costs and facilitates the flow of information from local initiatives (Harris, 2009).

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA**

The archipelago of Cape Verde is made up of ten islands (nine inhabited and one deserted) and eight islets which make up a total area of 4033 km<sup>2</sup>. Arranged in the shape of a half crescent moon, the islands are situated in the Atlantic Ocean, some 640 km from Dakar (Figure 1). Due to its volcanic origins, Cape Verde is included among the group of Macaronesian archipelagos, of which Azores, Madeira, the Savage Islands (Portugal) and the Canary Islands (Spain) also form a part. Cape Verde is currently one of few African countries where progress and democratic stability are a reality. The absence of any serious natural problems (such as hurricanes or epidemics) or social problems (such as ethnic or religious disputes) makes Cape Verde a safe tourist destination. Furthermore, in the last few years, there has been significant economic growth due, in part, to the considerable increase in tourism. All these factors mean that this destination presents an interesting opportunity for investors.

Tourism in Cape Verde is being structured in two completely different ways. Firstly, through the creation of large resorts, funded with foreign capital and mainly developed in two islands (*Sal* and *Boavista*); and secondly, through the creation of small businesses (hotels, restaurants and additional services) by the local community itself.

**Figure 1:** Map of Cape Verde



Source: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/31/Cv-map.png>

With respect to international tourism, in Table 2 the number of tourists and overnight stays in the period 2006-2008 are presented, as is the income generated by tourism. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that approximately 50% of overnights stays take place in the island of *Sal*, where accommodation tends to be hotels belonging to multinational foreign chains. This paper is going to focus on the island of Fogo, which is developing through the development of tourism based on community involvement and the concept of sustainability.

**Table 2:** Number of foreign tourists and overnight stays. Years 2006-2008

	2006	2007	2008
Tourists	241,742	267,188	285,141
Overnight stays	1,261,497	1,307,558	1,711,875
Income generated by tourism (millions of euro)	159.05	213.59	230.31
Income generated by tourism (% of GDP)	16.8%	20.4%	19.4%

Source: Created for this study based on data from the Cape Verde National Statistical Institute INE (2010)

*Fogo's* economy is based mainly on agriculture and fishing. Due to the volcano which dominates island, the soil is very fertile and many different agricultural products are grown, with wine and coffee being the most important. In addition to this, a large

proportion of its residents receive remittances from emigrants living in the United States or other countries. Concentrating on tourism, this represents an important growth sector, with the volcano being the main attraction for foreign visitors. In fact, this volcano is still active and last erupted in 1995. This means that each year, slightly fewer than 7000 tourists (or around 1.5% of the total number of visitors to the country) arrive on the island, with more than 12,000 overnight stays, giving an average length of stay of 1.9 days (NSI, 2010). Together with the draw of the volcano and the lunar landscape which surrounds it, tourism resources are concentrated in the Natural Park which surrounds this area and in incipient wine tourism, generated by the increasing importance of wine production in this area. All these tourism initiatives rely, above all, on the support of the Italian Cooperation, although they are also funded through microcredits and receive financial support from the European Union.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this research investigation is based on fieldwork carried out using surveys completed by foreign tourists during their stay on the island of *Fogo*. The survey was designed with the aim of delimiting, analysing and evaluating the state of community-based tourism on this island. It was completed by tourists in different parts of the island, selected through a simple random sample. Prior to this, a pre-test consisting of 15 surveys was carried out in order to detect any deviations or errors. The total number of valid surveys obtained was 82. The fieldwork was carried out between March and April 2010.

The measurement instrument applied to the surveys was an 18 item questionnaire, with questions relating to the motivation for travelling to *Fogo*, the socio-demographic information of the person surveyed, the use of services offered by community tourism enterprises and their opinion and evaluation of different aspects of the island. This questionnaire was made available in four languages (Portuguese, English, French and Spanish.)

The tabling and analysis of the information obtained was carried out through the design of an appropriate database. Uni-variant and Bi-variant analysis techniques have been applied to obtain the corresponding results.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main socio-demographic characteristics of those surveyed are shown in Table 3.

In accordance with Table 3, it can be seen that the typical profile of an average tourist visiting *Fogo* is a woman between 30 and 49 years old with a university degree. Similarly, the main country of origin is Germany, followed by Portugal and the United States. No link was found between the sex and age of the tourists surveyed (contingency coefficient = 0.401;  $p = 0.098$ ). Similarly, there was no link found between sex and level of education (contingency coefficient = 0.275;  $p = 0.528$ ), nor between sex and country of origin (contingency coefficient = 0.417;  $p = 0.609$ ).

**Table 3:** Socio-demographic characteristics

Variable		Percentage %	Variable		Percentage %
Sex	Male	43.9%	Level of Education	Primary	2.6%
	Female	56.1%		Secondary	23.1%
Age	Under 30	9.8%		Country of Origin	University
	30-39	29.3%	Germany		30.8%
	40-49	29.3%	Portugal		14.4%
	50-59	12.2%	United States		12.8%
	60 or over	19.4%	Switzerland		10.3%
			France		10.3%
		Spain	10.3%		
		Other	11.1%		

In terms of tourist motivation for visiting the island, the main reason is leisure (56.1%) and to visit family and friends (14.6%). Furthermore, the length of stay is also very important: 56.2% stay on the island for more than a week, while 34.1% stay between three and seven days. Furthermore, the independence hypothesis also holds between sex and the number of nights spent on the island (contingency coefficient = 0.222;  $p = 0.546$ ). Finally, for 73.2% of those surveyed it was their first visit to the island.

One of the objectives of this research is to study tourists' use of local tourism services provided by small and medium-sized enterprises managed by the local community and the perception they have of such services. Thus, in Table 4, the results with respect to use of these services are shown.

**Table 4:** Use of tourism services provided by small businesses

Type of Service	Yes	No
Accommodation	59%	41%
Restaurants	81.2%	17.9%
Craftsmanship	17.9%	81.2%
Tourist guides	25.6%	74.4%
Sporting activities	2.6%	97.4%

In accordance with Table 4, the majority of tourists surveyed used restaurants managed by community-based tourism enterprises, followed by accommodation. At the other end of the scale is the use of tour guides and sporting activities. Using contingency tables, no significant differences can be seen with regards to sex and the use of tourism services provided by small businesses. In fact, accommodation is used more by men ( $\chi^2 = 1.072$ ), while restaurants are more used by women ( $\chi^2 = 0.916$ ). With regards to why they chose not to use services provided by community tourism enterprises, there were two main responses noted in the questionnaires. Firstly, tourists said they were not aware of any community-based tourism business (66.7%) and, secondly, they considered them to be more expensive than other companies (33.3%). With respect to the first response, and following on from Harris (2009), in order to facilitate the promotion of local tourism initiatives, it would be necessary to reinforce information

and communication technology (ICT) tools in *Fogo*, keeping in mind the low transaction costs of these initiatives and that fact that they can count on the participation and initial funding of the International Cooperation. Similarly, those who used services provided by community-based tourism enterprises were also asked why they had chosen them. The main responses were that they liked the kind of service provided (58.1%) and that they were aware of these kinds of initiatives (35.5%). There is also a significant level of satisfaction when these services are used. In fact, 93.8% of those surveyed who said that they habitually used services provided by community tourism enterprises stated that as long as these services were available they would select this option since the service provided is of better quality.

Another aspect analysed in this study was the evaluation of a series of key elements for the development of tourism. Thus different aspects related to tourism in *Fogo* are presented using a 5-point Likert Scale (1 – very poor quality, 5 – very high quality). The average evaluation can be seen in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Evaluation of different issues related to quality of tourism

Variable	Result
Hospitality	4.29
Food	4.12
Public safety	4.09
Hiking	4.08
Restaurants	3.83
Accommodation	3.79
Telecommunications	3.66
Transport links	3.59
Cleanliness	3.54
Price of the trip	3.5
Sun and beach	3.08
Ecology	3.04
Conservation	2.96
Shopping areas	2.92
Flora and fauna	2.83
Cultural activities	2.81
Information and signposting	2.72

In accordance with Table 5, the tourists surveyed considered the hospitality, food and public safety as the best elements, in that order. At the other end of the scale, the need for better information and signposting on the island, as well as the development of more cultural activities, are highlighted as elements requiring improvement as regards to tourism development. These results could serve to encourage the different branches of local government on the island and private businesses to strengthen these elements which tourists consider weaknesses, taking into account however the average level of satisfaction of the tourists surveyed (4.13 in a 5-point Likert scale), a figure which reflects the high level of satisfaction which tourists visiting this area have. This



demonstrates that the majority (84.6%) of tourists are either satisfied or very satisfied with their stay.

## CONCLUSIONS

Community-based tourism is developing in different parts of the world as a consequence of tourists' search to discover new destinations instead of traditional ones. This is facilitating the creation of certain tourism products which allow local communities to generate wealth for themselves, considering tourism to be a complementary economic activity and never an economic alternative to traditional activities.

In this paper a study into a specific area, the island of *Fogo* in Cape Verde, has been presented. In this area tourism is becoming one of the key driving forces in the economic development of both the island and the country as a whole. Therefore, diverse community tourism initiatives are being created with the aim of ensuring that the wealth generated through tourism has a direct impact on the residents of island. The main results of the study show that the typical tourist visiting this island is educated to university level, comes from different countries (mainly European Union countries and the United States) and stays on the island for about a week. Moreover, the majority of tourists visit the island for leisure purposes. Furthermore, most tourists use restaurant and food services provided by family businesses and, to a lesser extent, accommodation. However, the use of other community tourism enterprises, such as for example those providing sporting activities and tour guides, is still insufficient. Finally, and most notably, the majority of tourists who use services provided by community enterprises will do so again, since they consider the quality of service to be superior to that provided by other kinds of businesses.

In conclusion, we believe that the various branches of local government, NGOs and universities (both national and international) ought to commit themselves to turning the island of *Fogo* into an example of how well-managed community-based tourism can produce a high level of satisfaction on the part of tourists.

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