

Cooperation between CBT and private tourism sector - Exploring the role of organisational culture and organisational learning

Keywords:

Reasons of failures of Community-based Tourism projects; Blind Spot: Role of Culture (local culture of community/ organisational culture of tourism enterprise); organisational learning

Worldwide Community-based Tourism (CBT) projects became in the past years extremely popular among the international donor organisations. In Latin America, quite often ecolodges have been established without giving the community a clear picture about the threats and problems which can arise by managing a tourism accommodation in their village.

What started in the beginning as a promising project with enthusiastic local people has often turned as a consequence after few years in a sad story due to several reasons. Beside poor marketing and market strategies and other aspects, the role of local culture and the understanding of hospitality and service have been quite often totally ignored by the local and international consultants. As consequence most of the projects have failed.

For this very reason, Nicole Häusler will explain not only the reasons of these failures but will focus her presentation as well on the 'blind spots' within the discussion of CBT and professional linkages to tourism market: the aspect of organisational culture (of the private tourism company) and local culture (of the community and the adaptation process of these two cultures whilst establishing a business cooperation).

Communities, like businesses, are based on complex social systems with existing livelihood strategies that might be at the beginning incompatible with the organisational structure of business tour operators.

Mrs. Häusler will discuss therefore the aspects of exploring the different cultures and the process of organisational learning for all stakeholders involved toward a model of successful transition of business cooperation between CBT-Projects and tourism business partners in the future.

About the author:



Nicole Häusler studied Social Anthropology and Communication/Journalism at the University of Göttingen/ Germany and wrote her M.A. Thesis after a six-month field research in 1990 about the impacts of Tourism in Goa/India. Since 2006 she works as a visiting lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences in Eberswalde near Berlin, Master Programme of Sustainable Tourism Management. Her focus of teaching is on 'Tourism and Poverty Reduction', Responsible Tourism and Intercultural Communication. Since 10/2008 she is PhD Candidate (part-time) at the International Centre for Responsible Tourism – Leeds Metropolitan University, Great Britain. She plans to do her field research in Northern Thailand focusing on business partnerships between ethnic minorities and private tourism sector.

She lived for six years in Bangkok/Thailand and there worked as a consultant for 'Responsible Ecological Social Tours – REST' (renamed to 'Community-based Tourism-Institute' based in Chiang Mai). Her assignment was supported by CIM/GTZ.

In 2002, she was the coordinator of the Regional Conference in Southeast Asia during the 'International Year of Ecotourism' in cooperation with UNEP, TIES and REST.

From 2003 to 2005 Nicole worked in Bolivia as tourism consultant for the 'National Authority of Protected Areas' focussing on CBT and Tourism Management in National Parks.

Since 2005, she is managing director of maslcontour (www.maslcontour.info) and gives short-term consultancies and training in countries like Kazakhstan, Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia.

She has published several books and articles on sustainable tourism issues, among them for example:

- The Complexity of Multi-Stakeholder Dialog in Ecotourism – The example of Southeast Asia. Trialog, 2003
- Traveling to fight poverty. In: D + C – Development and Cooperation, 2004
- Profession: Tourism Consultant – Mission: To say sometimes NO to Community-based Tourism. Beijing, 2006
- Tourism as a Field of Activity in German Development Cooperation. A Basic Overview, Priority Areas for Action and Strategic Recommendations. Eds.: GTZ, Eschborn, 2007
- Pro-Poor Tourism Development in Sri Lanka. Two Year after the Tsunami – Missed Opportunities, Future Potentials. Berlin, 2007

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