

16 Invisible Networks in Community-Based Tourism: Connections and Articulations

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The objectives of this chapter are to:

- ☐ Analyse community-based tourism (CBT) as a sustainable alternative to traditional tourism, stressing community empowerment and preserving resources
- ☐ Explore the changing social connections underlying CBT, categorising main challenges and opportunities.
- ☐ Find the main barriers to CBT development, at the level of public policy, infrastructure and stakeholders.
- ☐ Feature the benefits of CBT, such as social inclusion, cultural appreciation, and income generation.

Introduction

Tourism is not only about having fun. Tourism is a complex network of relationships among a vast number of players that contribute to the visitor's experience. It is through the interaction between visitors and players that the experience arises and has an impact on the local community. Those relations are portrayed as Community-Based Tourism (CBT). A movement that has been increasing in tourism research, with local people at the very centre of the experience in rural or more traditional areas. CBT is grounded in sustainability, respect for local culture, and the principle that communities should have a say and a stake in how tourism impacts their surroundings.

CBT promotes shared decision-making and respects the knowledge and traditions of the local people. The objective is not only to make profits, but also to strengthen community bonds, protect the community, and be aware of the environmental and social impacts of the influx of tourists. This is a smooth alternative