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DES SCIENCES



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**Merging Market with Community:  
Balancing Community Development and Commercial Viability  
within Community Based Tourism Projects, A Possibility?  
An Analysis of Brazil**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Community-based tourism (CBT), according to Dodds, R., Ali, A., & Galaski, K. (2016), has historically been developed based on a host community's assets and objectives due to the fact that the "core of CBT planning has been to determine how best to use it as a development tool." As a result, the established CBT development model typically prioritizes community potential as supply at the expense of the market potential of tourism (demand), disregarding to a certain extent the commercial aspects of tourism. From this perspective, questions regarding product strategy, idea generation, business analysis, and how cross-sectoral knowledge production and exchange can strengthen the sustainability and viability of the CBT product have not yet been fully answered in academic literature. This paper builds on the academic literature regarding market access and is further supported by interviews and participant observation conducted in Brazil. This research indicates that these analyses should be complemented with additional questions about product development, capacity-building, knowledge co-production, collaborative networking, and more. The business life cycle of CBT could be considered a foundational pillar in understanding the business viability of community-based tourism projects, and therefore, the expected findings of this study include the proposal of an amended CBT model and practical recommendations that may be implemented into existing CBT projects.

### **Keywords**

Brazil, Community-Based Tourism, Social Entrepreneurship, Social Enterprise, Marketing, Business Life Cycle, Market Access, Distribution Channel

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>10</b>
i. Research Background and Rationale	10
ii. Research Gaps	14
iii. Aims and Objectives	16
iv. The Study Area: Brazil	17
v. Structure of the Dissertation	19
<b>CHAPTER 1: DEFINITIONS AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND</b>	<b>21</b>
1.1 Community-Based Tourism: Definitions and Intersections	21
1.2 Main Conceptual Approaches to Community-Based Tourism Projects	28
1.2.1 Community-Based Tourism: The Main Issues	28
1.2.2 The Top-down vs. Bottom-up Approach	31
1.2.3 Empowerment, Social Capital, Participation, and a Missing Variable: the Market.	33
1.3 Different Market-Driven Approaches	38
1.3.1 The Traditional Sectoral Boundaries of Tourism Planning	40
1.3.2 A Third Way: Merging Community Supply and Market Demand	42
Communities Are Willing to Participate in the Tourism Market	43
A Triple Bottom Line: People, Planet and Profit	45
1.4 Assessing the Tourism Potential of a Community-Based Tourism Product	48
1.4.1 The Importance of New Product Development	49
1.5 Introducing Products to the Market: Direct or Indirect Distribution Channels	51
1.5.1 Indirect Distribution Channels: A Focus on Collaboration	51
1.5.2 Direct Distribution Channels: eTourism and the digitalization of tourism	53
1.6 Tourism Value Chains: A Collaborative Network between Enablers and Drivers	56
1.6.1 Enablers + Drivers = Cross-sectoral Collaborative Partnerships	60
1.6.2 A Reimagined CBT Approach	62
<b>CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH APPROACH, METHODOLOGY, AND LIMITATIONS</b>	<b>65</b>
2.1 From Theory to a Methodological Framework	66

2.1.1. Positionalities of the Researcher	66
2.2 Study Development, Data Collection and Analysis	72
2.2.1 Data Collection	72
2.2.3 Data Analysis	77
2.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality	79
<b>CHAPTER 3: A CASE STUDY: THE UAKARI LODGE IN BRAZIL</b>	<b>80</b>
3.1 Tourism in Brazil: Supply Considerations	80
3.1.2 The Governance of Inbound Leisure Travel	82
O Plano Nacional Do Turismo 2018 - 2020	84
3.2 Community-Based Tourism In Brazil	86
3.2.1 Turismo Solidário e Comunitário (TURISOL)	86
3.3 The Uakari Lodge: An Introduction	89
3.3.1 The Creation of the Mamirauá Reserve	89
3.3.1 The Creation of the Uakari Lodge	93
A Transition To Full Independence: 2012 - 2022	98
3.3.2 The Mamirauá Communities	99
3.3.3 The Uakari Lodge Product, Visitor Profiles and Marketing Strategies	103
The Lodge and Its Offerings	104
The Uakari Activities	106
Much More Than a CBT: A Unique Selling Point	109
The Financial Feasibility of the Lodge	110
The Uakari Customer Profiles and Marketing Strategies	112
<b>CHAPTER 4: THE CHALLENGES OF MARKET ACCESS IN BRAZIL, A DISCUSSION</b>	<b>116</b>
4.1 The Dichotomy between Development-First and Tourism-First; Community and Market; Research and Practice.	121
4.1.1 Ownership of the Lodge	122
4.1.2 Business Venture or CBT Project?	128
The Development-first Approach: An Unrealistic and Paternalistic Approach	130
Community Members DO Want Individual Economic Benefits	132
Community-Based Tourism is an Economic Activity	133
A Tourism-First Approach: A Lack of a Knowledge-Exchange	136
4.2 Defining the Product	138
4.2.1 A Lack of a Quality Product	139
4.3 Direct vs. Indirect: Does It Matter?	142
Too Much Data, Not Enough Capacity to Implement	143
4.4 A Third Way: Cross-Sectoral Collaborative Partnerships between Community, Enablers and Drivers.	148
Governance and Transfer of Power	149

CBTs Are Businesses	150
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>ANNEXES</b>	<b>157</b>
Annex A: Interviews	157
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>160</b>

# LIST OF TABLES

## CHAPTER 1

Table 1.1	Academic definitions of CBT grouped by themes . . . . .	23-24
Table 1.2	Category of Clusters by Frequency . . . . .	26
Table 1.3	Normative typologies of Community Participation . . . . .	36
Table 1.4	View of Tourism Planning Approaches . . . . .	41
Table 1.5	The Third Way . . . . .	43
Table 1.6	A Description of Enablers and Drivers . . . . .	56

## CHAPTER 3

Table 3.1	Average Number of Families per Community with Direct Economic Benefits from Uakari Lodge and Percentage from the Total Number of Families . . . . .	101
Table 3.2:	Occupancy Rate . . . . .	111
Table 3.3:	Revenues, Expenses and Resulting Balance at the Uakari Lodge (2008-2017). . . . .	112
Table 3.4:	Age Ranges of People Staying at the Uakari Lodge versus Other Hotels Located in the Amazon . . . . .	113
Table 3.5:	Source Channels that Accessed the Uakari Website: Taken from Google Analytics (Jan 1 - June 20, 2014) . . . . .	114

# LIST OF FIGURES

## CHAPTER 1

Figure 1.1	An Outline of the Concepts Needed for eT4D . . . . .	55
Figure 1.2	The Current CBT Approach as Identified by Literature . . . . .	63

## CHAPTER 3

Figure 3.1	Map of Brazil . . . . .	81
Figure 3.2	Protected Areas of the Central Amazon Ecological Corridor . . . . .	91
Figure 3.3	Aerial View of the Uakari Lodge . . . . .	95
Figure 3.4	The Floating Structure at Water Level, Plus a Community Member in a Canoe . . . . .	96
Figure 3.5	Map of the Reserve and the Location of the Communities . . . . .	100
Figure 3.6	Lodge Organization . . . . .	102
Figure 3.7	A Tourist Boat . . . . .	106
Figure 3.8	A Picture of Three of the Floating Lodges at the Pousada Uakari . . . . .	108

## CHAPTER 4

Figure 4.1	The Current CBT Approach as Identified by Literature . . . . .	116
Figure 4.2	One Side of the Visitor Exit Survey . . . . .	145
Figure 4.3	An Adapted CBT model . . . . .	149



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBT	Community-Based Tourism
CBTE	Community-Based Tourism Enterprises
CT	Community Tourism
PPT	Pro-poor Tourism
USP	Unique Selling Proposition or Unique Selling Point
SSE	Social Solidarity Economy
SME	Small and Medium Business
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
SDL	Service-Dominant Logic
CDL	Customer-Dominant Logic
C2C	Customer to Customer
ICT	Information Communication Technology
e-CBT	E-commerce for Community-Based Tourism
VCD	Value Chain Development
VC	Value Chain
ILO	International Labour Organization
ANT	Actor-Network Theory
MTur	Brazilian Ministry of Tourism
TURISOL	Turismo Solidário e Comunitário
MSDR	Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reserve
AAGEMAM	Mamirauá Association of Ecotourism Auxiliaries and Guides
MISD	Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development

## **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past six decades, diversification and expansion have led tourism to become one of the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors in the world (Mihalic, 2014). Tourism is a global phenomenon whose importance "is evident from the fact that its influence thoroughly penetrates society, politics, culture, and, above all, the economy" (Gyr, 2010). According to the 2019 UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international tourist arrivals worldwide in 2018 reached 1.4 billion, two years ahead of forecasts (UNWTO, 2019). In 2018, the global travel and tourism sector grew by 3.9%. That year it contributed USD\$8.8 trillion to the global economy and created 319 million jobs. The tourism sector generated 20 percent of the world's new jobs over the last five years (WTTC, 2018). However, critics argue that mass tourism is not sustainable at the current pace and this type of global tourism is destroying the environment and cultural identities (Pollock, 2013). As a result, new systems for the travel and tourism sector that will simultaneously benefit human health and help preserve the environment must be defined to curtail these negative impacts (Pollock, 2013). Community-based tourism (CBT) is one such system and, therefore, has the potential to diminish these negative impacts, however, issues remain that need to be addressed.

### **i. Research Background and Rationale**

A Nielsen report for Google found that travelers looking for tips spent an average of 53 days visiting 28 different websites over a period of 76 online sessions (Abramovich, 2017). The report also states that travel experts predict that the digital travel space worldwide will expand at an annual rate of 3.8% over the next ten years to reach USD\$11.4 trillion (Abramovich, 2017). Inversini, Rega, Pereira & Bartholo (2015) argue that the diffusion of information communication technologies (ICTs), especially the Internet, are leading to the digitization of the tourism sector. In recent years, consumers have become more active, influential, and directly engaged in developing travel plans due to ICTs, resulting in a shift away from the traditional company-led relationship (Ramaswamy 2009) in favor of a co-creation process. In the co-creation mindset, consumers instead of the travel company drive the experience (Bikhorst & Den Dekker 2009), which, in turn, places the focus on the consumers' needs, wants, and desires (Ramaswamy & Gouillart, 2008).

This relationship transforms supply-chain to a demand-value chain where the flow of marketing starts with the consumer and ends with the company (Moutinho, Ballantyne & Rate, 2014). As products and services become interchangeable, the notion of experiences within travel also gains momentum. Consumers are increasingly looking for hyper-local, unique, and transformative experiences — in short, experiences that will change their world perspective (Skift, 2018). These

tourism experiences are co-created by customers and producers, and supported heavily by technology (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009), giving way to *technology-enhanced tourism experiences* (Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin, 2014). As a result, innovative technologies are increasingly critical for the "management and marketing of tourism organizations and destinations. They also determine tourist consumer behavior as they affect his or her entire decision-making process from product search to consumption and memories" (Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010, p. 267). The evolution of tourism demand, the emergence of a more skilled and demanding traveler, supported by transport developments, and the Internet, have all demonstrated a need for destinations and travel organizations to be closer to their potential markets (Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010).

Tourism is a commercial industry that is market-driven; it is a *buyers' market* (Goodwin, 2007). CBT, on the other hand, emerged during the 1970s and originated from the participatory and empowerment development models as a response to the negative impacts of mass tourism (Cater, 1993; De Kadt, 1979; Hall & Lew, 2009). The original ethos of CBT was a focus on community first. Although there are academics that argue for the continuance of a community-centric approach (Sin & Minca, 2013; Beeton, 2006), other academics (Dodds, Ali & Galaski, 2016; Armstrong, 2012; Lucchetti & Font, 2013) argue for a market-centric approach. The reasoning behind this argument is that CBTs require a dual strategy that addresses both *tourism potential* (demand), such as product highlights and markets, as well as *community potential* (supply) or local capacity and cooperation (Richards, Suansri & Van Hee, 2018). Therefore, although CBTs must produce community benefits and encourage social development and ownership at a community level, projects also need to be market-oriented.

Development of a CBT is a complex process (Simons & de Groot, 2015) and as Moscardo, (2008, p. 175) states "the reality in practice has not often matched the ideals in principle." Many internal and external factors influence the success of a CBT. Since its inception, development agencies, donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have invested a lot in promoting the CBT as the ideal development model, "whereby the social, environmental and economic needs of local communities are met through the offering of a tourism product" (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009, p. 4). However, in recent years there has been growing skepticism of the value of CBTs in delivering poverty reduction (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Simpson, 2008; Pluss & Backes, 2002). Empirical studies suggest that even in the best cases "between a fifth and one-third of the total tourist turnover in a destination is captured by the *poor* from direct earnings and supply chain" (Ashley & Mitchell, 2009, p. 2). Richards, Suansri and Van Hee (2018) argue that historically, CBT failure has been due to insufficient preparation, weak internal management and a lack of attention towards market feasibility, planning, and partnerships, while several other authors (Mitchell & Mukosy, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Zapata, Hall, Lindo & Vanderschaeghe, 2011; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009) have argued that

failure is often due to lack of access to markets and poor governance. Despite criticism, CBT case studies reveal that positive results are achievable given certain conditions such as the continuous flow of funds, sound business plans, good technical support, or inventive market linkages (Ashley & Mitchell, 2009). Nevertheless, CBT critiques persist and should be addressed.

Along with questions about whether CBT projects drive neoliberal and neocolonial agendas, wherein Western agendas and ideologies have appropriated, commodified, objectified, and consumed the culture and identity of the *other* for the tourist or *privileged* (Ruiz Ballesteros & Hernández-Ramírez, 2010), academics (Mitchell & Mukosy, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Zapata, Hall, Lindo & Vanderschaeghe, 2011; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009) have pointed primarily to the lack of governance and a lack of access to markets as two substantial barriers to the viability of the CBT model.

Poor governance is one of the main obstacles to creating a successful CBT project and is borne out of a disconnection between what a community understands and needs versus what is provided. Blackstock (2005) argues that CBT projects can be perceived as an example of a community development *imposter* driven by economic imperatives and a neo-liberal agenda, rather than promoting the values of empowerment and social justice. Furthermore, CBTs are criticized as having too much of a focus on the tourist, which can lead to negative effects such as loss of community cultural identity, economic and social loss, dependency on NGOs or external organizations, or non-recognition of community agency in tourism and its activities (Ruiz Ballesteros & Hernández-Ramírez, 2010).

Indeed, the application of the CBT model can be problematic: full community participation can be time-consuming; local control does not automatically lead to participatory decision-making; capacity-building can be challenging to accomplish if stakeholders do not participate in governance, and collective management structure can be too complex to work effectively. Nevertheless, the literature shows that CBT projects that focus on the principles of sustainable development, empowerment, community development, and social capital (Mitchell & Mukosy, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Zapata et al., 2011; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009) — hereinafter referred to as *bottom-up* projects — have been relatively successful in addressing the academic critique that CBT projects fail because of poor governance.

Another obstacle is overcoming the mindset that CBT enterprises have social and educational functions that take precedence over their viability as commercial businesses (Goodwill & Santilli, 2009, p. 4). Dodds, Ali & Galaski (2016) argue that since CBTs are seen as a development tool, many projects are developed based on the community's assets and objectives. This focus on the supply means that projects are created based on what the community has to

offer and not by the market demand. Therefore, failure of CBT projects is often due to a product that is not market-ready and does not account for "tourism demand at all levels, the unique selling points of the area, target markets, trends and motivations of tourists, the political situation and arguable most important, the community's location" (Dodds, Ali & Galaski, 2016, p. 17). For instance, a large majority of CBT projects are focused on the development of community-managed and owned lodges and/or home-stays. Failure to assess the viability of a lodge or home-stay before starting construction has led to high failure rates for said projects. A Rainforest Alliance/Conservation International survey of 200 CBT projects across the Americas "showed that many accommodation providers have only 5% occupancy" (Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008, p. 102). Along with non-market-ready products, Mitchell & Muckosy (2008) argue that CBT failure is due to a lack of long-term marketing strategies to create financially sustainable and independent CBT projects once (or if) funding dries up.

Unlike governance, the issue of market access is still a divisive topic in academic and grey literature. The literature has also identified other market-related issues that preclude market access, which include, but are not limited to, commercial viability (Font, 2013), lack of market-ready products, a focus on marketing exclusively to foreign visitors, and a failure to empower local communities (Dodds et al., 2016). According to Dodds et al. (2016), identified barriers can be grouped into specific themes, which can include financial viability, marketing, product development, capacity-building, and land management/governance.

Along with balancing the dual objectives of commercial viability and community development (Carr et al., 2016; Lemelin, Koster, & Youroukos, 2015; Manyara & Jones, 2005), and addressing the demands of the market and the needs of the community, literature also questions the roles and relationships of various stakeholders throughout the CBT process, from inception to distribution. Armstrong (2012) believes that collaboration between communities and the mainstream tourism sector is vital from beginning to end. She states "strong and collaborative relationships, partnerships and strategic alliances with the private sector will offer access to its knowledge of the market and its ability to find the best route to it" (p. 28), and adds that demand-driven product development is the key to success. Ngo, Hales & Lohmann (2018a) argue that a multiple stakeholder approach can be an effective management tool to promote the sustainable development of a CBT project, while Mielke & Pegas (2013) argue that the presence of NGOs is essential in CBT implementation.

In terms of distribution, academics differ on whether direct or indirect distribution channels are ideal. Epler Wood & Jones (2008) suggest that intermediaries or *commercial liaisons* should be introduced to connect projects with international markets, while others (Iversi, Rega, Pereira, Bathrolo, 2015, Heeks, 2010; Roman & Colle, 2003) support the community's participation in information communication technology (ICT) and for communities to "sell and promote their

services on a worldwide market, building direct rapport with customers and bypassing intermediaries" (Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010, p. 275). Yet, problems with access and/or training can hinder community members' ability to use ICTs and, therefore, intermediaries and/or *commercial liaisons* can provide the much-needed business skills to create that market access.

In their article, "*A misguided quest: Community-based tourism in Latin America*," Mitchell & Muckosy (2008) recommend that development agencies, NGOs or governments remove barriers to enterprise, identify blockages to local participation, or work to find ways of removing market access barriers (p. 102). However, removing barriers to market access could be insufficient. In this new era of the digitization of tourism and the proliferation of alternative tourism, the question of how to develop the demand — or the "tourism potential" (Richards, Suansri & Van Hee, 2018) — of the CBT coin remains largely unanswered. The criticism is also still not quite clear; although many academics point to market access as a barrier to CBT success, this critique does not sufficiently address all potential limitations. Therefore, questions regarding market access may need to be precluded with questions regarding commercial viability, market demand, collaborations, and partnerships.

## **ii. Research Gaps**

This thesis is an extension of the recent publication of three specific articles that address marketing and distribution channels for community-based tourism projects. The first article published by Christian Schott & Sochea Nhem (2018) addresses "detailed and nuanced insights into the neglected field of distribution channels for CBT" (p. 368). The authors argue that intermediaries have a substantial presence in the distribution structure in the Banteay Chhmar CBT and identified five key factors that underlie that distribution structure which include a commissionable product, product characteristics and market access, information and communication technologies, partnership issues and community capacity (p. 363). The second and third articles, published in 2018, are both written by Ngo, Hales, and Lohmann. The articles address stakeholder inclusion in CBT collaborative marketing for business sustainability (Ngo et al., 2018a, p. 1338).

In their paper "*Collaborative marketing for the sustainable development of community-based tourism enterprises: voices from the field*," Ngo et al. (2018a) argue that three collaborative marketing approaches prevailed among the CBT stakeholders that were interviewed in Vietnam, which were categorized as commercial viability-driven, community development-driven and balanced approaches (p. 1325). In their Conclusion, the authors argue that, out of the three approaches, a balanced approach can lead to more sustainable CBTs and that "under this approach, marketing is employed as not a conventional economic tool but a strategic mechanism to achieve CBT sustainability" (p. 1339). Questions of stakeholder collaboration, business

sustainability, social entrepreneurship, and marketing are further elaborated in their subsequent article (Ngo et al., 2018b), which seeks to implement a knowledge co-production approach to reconcile diverse perspectives on CBT collaborative marketing for sustainable development.

The dichotomy between commercial and community interests is identified by a number of authors other than Ngo et al. (2018a/b). Burns (2004) argues that there exists a traditional division of the economy into public, private and non-profits sectors, which, as Phi et al. (2017) have argued, have limited cross-sectoral interactions and knowledge exchange, thus restricting the development of innovative solutions (p. 3). Traditional sectoral boundaries in tourism — between tourism potential (demand) and community potential (supply) — are also identified by Richards, Suansri & Van Hee (2018). However, although the literature has identified a need for a dual strategy, it has been unclear whether the needs of the community and the demands of the market can be met simultaneously and how that would work in reality.

As previously mentioned, Ngo et al. (2018a), argue for a balanced approach between community needs and market demands, however, they identify a knowledge gap in their study between theory and practice. The authors argue that CBT stakeholders in their study placed more emphasis on commercial viability over community development, which led the authors to conclude that "academic knowledge of CBTE sustainability developed through Indigenous tourism research does not correspond to the perspectives of practitioners" (p. 1339). Therefore, a research-practice gap may need to be overcome. In their subsequent paper, the authors (2018b) argue that a knowledge co-production approach can bridge the research-practice gap that has been extensively identified in academic tourism studies (Mair, Merton, & Smith, 2014; Whitford & Ruhanen; Ngo et al., 2018a).

Another limitation of these three articles is that they primarily address market access. For example, when Ngo et al. (2018b) discuss social entrepreneurship, the authors focus on the role of tour operators as social enterprises when marketing a destination. Although a stakeholder collaboration to support CBT marketing is still an under-researched topic (Ngo et al., 2018a, p. 1328), market access is at the end of the business life cycle and is one of the last steps in the CBT process (Mielke, 2009). Therefore, while questions regarding market access are essential, they should be precluded by questions about product development.

Ngo, et al. (2018a) state that one of the limitations of their study was that the business life cycle of CBT development was ignored (p. 1340). As a result, the authors acknowledge that this limitation "may affect perspectives relating to central linkages and facilitators of CBTE collaborative marketing" (p. 1340). The identification of market access as a barrier has dominated the conversation about CBT limitations, even though issues with market-ready products have been identified in multiple case studies. Trejos, Chiang & Huang (2008), for



example, identify that in Costa Rica "the operators pointed out that although the supply was attractive, it was not yet ready for the marketplace" (p. 21). This is because there were issues related to quality standards; in 2005, out of 35 community-based rural tourism projects, 79% did not have the minimal requirements of cleanliness and comfort (p. 21).

Dodds et al. (2016) argue that CBTs are often developed based on the community's objectives and assets. Community-based tourism is seen by some as a development tool (Scheyvens, 2002) and rather than a business. This has resulted in a focus on the supply side, based on what the community has to offer, and not what is demanded by the market, whether it be tourists or intermediaries, like tourism operators, that have an established client base (Dodds et al. 2016, p. 17). As previously stated, tourism is a commercial industry and yet, it seems as if literature has not adequately focused on the business side of the CBT, from new product strategy to idea generation and business analysis all the way to commercialization and the ways in which cross-sectoral knowledge production and exchange can strengthen the sustainability and viability of the CBT product.

Questions regarding market access are plentiful in academic literature (Dodds et al., 2016; Mitchell & Hall, 2005; Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008; Forstner, 2004; Tasci, Croes, & Jorge, 2014; Iorio & Corsale, 2014; World Bank, 2009), and they should be complemented with additional analysis regarding product development, capacity training, knowledge co-production, collaborative networking, and more. This thesis will show that the business life cycle of CBT development should be considered a foundational pillar in determining the business viability of community-based tourism projects and that is one of the gaps in the literature that this thesis would like to address.

### **iii. Aims and Objectives**

*Therefore the question remains:*

Is it possible to develop the tourism potential and/or the business side of community-based tourism initiatives, allowing for the creation of products that the market demands, while providing social and economic benefits to the local communities?

#### **More specifically:**

- What are the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in developing and maintaining a project's commercial sustainability?
- How can cross-sectoral knowledge production and exchange between public, private, and third sectors strengthen the viability of the CBT product and narrow the research-practice gap?



These issues will be framed by a case study approach tested and supplemented through additional methodologies, thus allowing for a multi-method case study in the specific context of Brazil. The thesis will provide two separate CBT models, one created after a thorough analysis of the literature, and another CBT model based on an analysis of a case study.

#### **iv. The Study Area: Brazil**

For the past 20 or so years, community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives have been under development throughout specific regions in Latin America, such as the Andean highlands and Amazon lowlands of South America (Paredes, 2018) and in specific Central American countries like Costa Rica. In 2002, for example, Ecuador created the Tourism Act, which enshrines the right of Indigenous, rural (montubia) and Afro-Ecuadorian community initiatives to participate in tourism as service providers and to be part of the Tourism Advisory Council, a subset of the Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR) (Maldonado, n.d, p. 39). Community-based tourism projects are also prioritized in Costa Rica. In 2007 an executive power decree, signed by the President of Costa Rica and his two ministers, declared that community-based rural tourism (CBRT) was an activity of public interest (Trejos, Chiang & Huang, 2008, p. 19). Conversely, Brazil still lacks a strong push towards an inclusive CBT structure that involves the public and private sectors. However, this does not mean that these types of initiatives do not exist.

According to Fabrino, Nascimento & Costa (2015), the reflection on CBTs in Brazil, for many years, brought with it a peripheral sense, far removed from reality and from national and international political tendencies. During this period, few professionals immersed themselves in the field of investigation of CBTs. This reality lasted until the late-1990s when a movement of researchers from different parts of the country took this discussion and created Encontro Nacional de Turismo com Base Local (ENTBL) (National Encounter Regarding Local Tourism). The first ENTBL was organized in 1997 by Professor Adyr Balastereri Rodrigues and was held in the Department of Geography at the Universidade of São Paulo. This particular meeting demonstrated the demand for forums of this nature and enabled the consolidation of non-formal research networks. The engagement of researchers around community-based tourism facilitated the development of research, projects, and publications on the subject.

Along with the ENTBL, the Turismo Solidário e Comunitário (TURISOL) and the Rede Cearense de Turismo Solidário e Comunitário (Rede TUCUM) deserve special mention due to their roles in the development of community-based tourism in Brazil. TURISOL, (which translates to the Brazilian Solidarity and Community Tourism Network), emerged in 2003 from the articulation of seven Brazilian community tourism initiatives that, with the support of the French Embassy in Brazil, participated in the FITS (International Forum of Solidarity Tourism) in Marseille, France. In 2008, the Ministry of Tourism (MTur) supported Projeto Bagagem in the

management and coordination of the first Rede TURISOL national meeting held in 2010 and a subsequent publication that featured the seven founders of the network: Projeto Bagagem, Acolhida na Colônia, Rede Tucum, and the CBT projects Casa Grande, Saúde e Alegria, the Uakari Lodge, and Associação de Silves pela Preservação Ambiental e Cultura.

In the context of public policies, the Ministries of the Environment (MMA) and Agrarian Development (MDA) have been creating space in their actions to promote organized community-based groups in or around Conservation Units in the case of MMA or linked to the Family Agriculture Program (PRONAF) in the case of MDA. Between 2008 and 2011, the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism (MTur), through Edital 01/2008, invested US\$4 million in the development of 50 CBT projects with a priority given to those projects that had already begun or were in progress (TURISOL, n.d.). The Ministry of Tourism has also supported several meetings, conferences, and events held by the various CBT networks in Brazil, including, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Rede Turisol national meeting held in 2010. However, such isolated actions are far from establishing a public policy of stimulation and structuring for this type of tourism in Brazil.

In the end, the specific case of Brazil, and the community-based tourism network and initiatives in the country, were chosen primarily because:

- Brazil is an emerging economy and the nation is one of the most multicultural and ethnically diverse in the world. It is home to various types of communities, from Indigenous to quilombo<sup>1</sup> to caiçara<sup>2</sup>. This heterogeneity paired with the fact that Brazil is known for its diverse wildlife, ecological systems, and extensive natural resources, makes it an ideal location for the development of community-based tourism initiatives.
- Research on this specific tourism topic in the context of Brazil remains underdeveloped, however, two Brazilian examples are used continuously in grey and academic literature—the Uakari Lodge and Prainha do Canto Verde.
- Feasibility and funding constraints demanded a focus on a single destination. Brazil is the largest country in South America; its sheer size hindered this researcher's ability to focus on another destination. As a result, some of the conclusions about Brazil may be generalized to specific social contexts.

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<sup>1</sup> Quilombos are communities that were organized by fugitive slaves. During the era of the Atlantic slave trade, due to its proximity to Africa, Brazil received more African slaves than any other country.

<sup>2</sup> Caiçara are the traditional coastal inhabitants of the southeastern and southern regions of Brazil, formed from the miscegenation between Indians, whites and blacks and who have, in their culture, practiced artisanal fishing, agriculture, hunting, vegetal extraction, crafts and, most recently, ecotourism.

## **v. Structure of the Dissertation**

This thesis intends to consolidate knowledge on the under-researched subject of the business life cycle of community-based tourism initiatives and the role of collaboration, partnerships and cross-sectoral knowledge exchange in fully merging tourism potential (demand) and community potential (supply) of CBTs. Therefore, in addition to this introduction, the dissertation is divided into two parts and four chapters. Part One, composed of Chapters One and Two, is focused on the research methodology, literature review, and theoretical framework. Part Two includes Chapters Three and Four plus the conclusion and pertains to the case study of Brazil, to the study results and conclusions.

Chapter One is an examination of how existing theories have approached the idea of community-based tourism (CBT). What is the definition of community-based tourism? Does it work? What are its main principles? What are the critiques and how are they challenged? What kind of role does product development, commercialization, marketing, or distribution channels play in the sustainability and viability of a CBT product? To this end, the chapter starts by defining the key concepts of the research problem as they are understood in the dissertation. Section two provides the CBT essentials and identifies the key variables that are needed for a sustainable CBT project. The literature is then examined from different perspectives to cast light on specific questions related to the research problem. These questions are related to the business side of community-based tourism. Section three includes conclusions and an introduction to the analytical framework that has been used to address the research problem. It also introduces a model of the current CBT approach, as identified by the literature.

Chapter Two outlines the case study approach and the methods used in the study. More specifically, Section 2.1 highlights the reasons for the adoption of a qualitative approach and a case study research strategy. It also includes a discussion of the influences of the author's positionalities and the political-temporal framework of the study, embedding the research in a critical realism approach. Section 2.2 outlines the way the study developed over time, addressing the multiple methods and techniques employed for collecting data and for analysis. Section 2.3 is devoted to issues relating to anonymity and confidentiality.

Chapter Three is divided into three specific sub-chapters. Section 3.1 aims at providing a contextual framework concerning the unit of analysis, Brazil, as a leisure travel destination. It provides a picture as accurate as possible of Brazil's inbound leisure-travel industry and of how it has evolved over the past few years. More specifically, the chapter addresses the supply side, including Brazil's major draws and attractions, tourism governance, accommodation, transport, and incoming operating sectors. Section 3.2 addresses community-based tourism within Brazil,

which includes the history behind the largest and oldest CBT network in Brazil, Turismo Solidário e Comunitário (TURISOL). The last section specifically focuses on providing an in-depth look at the Uakari Lodge including its creation; its community-based employees; its product; visitor profiles; and marketing strategies.

Chapter Four begins with a juxtaposition of the current CBT model, as identified in the literature, against the information collected from the Uakari Lodge. As a result of the subsequent questions that have been raised due to this juxtaposition, the chapter provides a discussion and analysis of the Uakari Lodge, supplemented with participant observation and content analysis regarding the overall CBT movement in Brazil. The chapter concludes with the presentation of an adapted CBT model.

The Conclusion recapitulates and discusses the results of the study. The chapter highlights the study's contributions to research on destination development, in terms of both theory and practice. It also reflects upon the study limitations. The chapter concludes by briefly summarizing the study and by suggesting future research avenues.

# CHAPTER 1: DEFINITIONS AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Chapter One intends to determine how existing theories have approached the idea of community-based tourism (CBT). To this end, the chapter starts by defining the key concepts of the research problem, as understood in the dissertation. Section two provides the CBT essentials and identifies the variables needed for a sustainable CBT project. The literature is then examined from different perspectives to cast light on specific questions relating to the research problem. These questions are related to the business side of community-based tourism. Section three draws conclusions and introduces the analytical framework, which has been used to address the research problem.

The literature review presented hereafter was last updated in May 2020. Consequently, the thesis does not include any relevant material that could have been published after that date.

## 1.1 Community-Based Tourism: Definitions and Intersections

Alternative tourism is an alternative to mass tourism or main tourism and has been considered, by many researchers (WTO, 1992; WWF-UK, 1992; Komilis, 1993; Middleton & Hawkins, 1998; Scheyvens, 1999) an ideal model that can support communities in a socially- and environmentally-sustainable way. Brohman (1996a) acknowledges that there are five recurring features of alternative tourism: small scale development, local ownership of businesses, local involvement in tourism development planning, environmental sustainability, and preservation of local culture. Nowadays, numerous tourism products can be classified under the broad umbrella term 'alternative' or 'sustainable tourism,' such as ecotourism, ethical tourism, volunteer tourism, and community-based tourism.

The beginning step to defining community-based tourism starts with defining *community* and also *tourism*. Phillips & Pittman (2009) describe the community as a reference to a location (communities of place) or a collection of individuals with a common interest or tie whether in close proximity or widely separated (communities of interest) (p. 5). "Community" is often defined in terms of geography: an area, such as a municipality where people live. Beeton (2006) found that community, in its most basic form, is an "amalgamation of living things that share an environment" (p. 6). However, per Beeton (2006), a community is delineated by the "acts of sharing, reciprocity, and interaction" (p. 6) and that the definitive driver of community is that all individual subjects in the mix have something in common (p. 7). Geography is, therefore, not the sole indicator of that which constitutes a community, as many elements of community can revolve around emotional, rather than physical commonalities, such as the shared sense of

belonging, heritage, place, and social organization (Beeton, 2006, p. 6). *Community spirit* or *sense of community* relies on fellowship, the feeling of belonging within a group, and a common belief that community members' needs will be met. McMillan (1996) identifies four factors of community: membership, influence, shared emotional connection, and integration and fulfillment of needs. The notion of empowerment is also central to a *sense of community*. In sum, the essential elements of community can be seen as including empowerment, the existence of mutual interdependence among members, a sense of belonging/connectedness, and a common interest or goal.

Along with the term "community," *tourism* can also be seen as a fluid concept. It is defined by the (UNWTO, 2005/2007) as "a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors, and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure." The recognition of the role that the host community, or the destination community, plays in the creation and delivery of tourism experiences, has led to the combination of the two terms (Beeton, 2006).

Community-based tourism (CBT) emerged during the 1970s as a response to the negative impacts of the international mass tourism development model (Cater, 1993; De Kadt, 1979; Hall & Lew, 2009). While, initially, "most CBT programmes were related to small rural communities and nature conservation through ecotourism, the concept has been extended to a range of different tourism products (e.g., local culture and folklore, gastronomy, traditional handicraft) and managerial models around the world" (Zapata, Hall, Lindo & Vanderschaeghe, 2011, p. 730).

Although the term has been used for over four decades and has essential elements and characteristics, community-based tourism has no universally accepted definition and is used flexibly. CBT has been and still is, defined in many different ways. As a result, this author outlined some of the key definitions (see Table 1.1) found in literature while also outlining the cross-cutting themes throughout these definitions:

**Table 1.1: Definitions of CBT by various academics grouped by themes**

Theme	Author	Definition
<b>Local ownership, participation &amp; benefits</b>	Brohman, J. (1996b)	"Community-based tourism development would seek to strengthen institutions designed to enhance local participation and promote the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the popular majority." (p. 60)
	Zapata, M.J. et al., (2011)	Located within a community, owned by one or more community members and is managed by community members.
	Spenceley, A. (2008)	Local community ownership; full community involvement; and the community is the main beneficiary of the business.
	Häusler, N. & Strasdas, W. (2003)	"CBT is a form of tourism in which a significant number of local people have substantial control over and involvement in its development and management." (p. 3)
	Giampiccoli, A. (2015)	"...local control (rather than mere involvement), decision making at all the stages of the project's life cycle..." (p. 675)
	Goodwin, H. & Santilli, R. (2009)	"Tourism owned and/or managed by communities and intended to deliver wider community benefit." (p. 12).
	Ruiz-Ballesteros, E. & Hernandez-Ramirez, M. (2010)	Communities have control over tourism activity.
	Ngo, T., Lohmann, G. & Hales, R. (2018a)	Community ownership, management, and benefits are funneled back to the community.
	Yanes A., Zielinski, S, Cano M.D & Kim, S. (2019)	Use Spenceley's definition for CBT, however, they do note that "participation is a key concept in CBT development" (p. 2).
	López-Guzmán, T., Sánchez-Cañizares, S., & Pavón, V. (2011)	"CBT is based on the active participation of the local community" (p. 72). The authors also argue that one of the objectives o CBT includes community ownership
Phillips, R. & Pittman, R.H. (2009)	The <b>process</b> develops the communities to act collectively; the <b>outcome</b> is taking collective action for community improvement.	

Theme	Author	Definition
<b>Empowerment</b>	Ngo, T., Lohmann, G. & Hales, R. (2018a)	Can facilitate empowerment.
	Scheyvens, R. (2002)	Empower the host community at four levels – economic, psychological, social, and political.
	Brohman, J. (1996b).	Promote the economic, social, and cultural capital of community members, which empowers communities.
	López-Guzmán, T., Sánchez-Cañizares, S., & Pavón, V. (2011)	Empowerment is one of the objectives of CBT.

Theme	Author	Definition
<b>Collective Benefits</b>	Mitchell, J., & Muckosy, P. (2008)	CBT generally involves "collective ownership and management of tourist assets" (p. 102).
	Lucchetti, V.G., & Font, X. (2013)	One of the common themes of CBTs is "the general of individual and collective benefits within the "community." (p. 2)
	Giampiccoli, A. (2015)	"...equitable sharing of the collective benefits, within the context of a holistic, bottom-up approach to community development." (p. 675).
	Häusler, N. & Strasdas, W. (2003)	"...the major proportion of the benefits remains within the local economy" (p. 3)
	Goodwin, H. & Santilli, R. (2009)	Provide collective benefits, for example, "through contributions to community funds for the development of community assets such as schools" (p. 12)
	Fernandes, C. (2012)	"... it works toward balancing power within communities so that conservation and communal well-being, not individual profit, are emphasized..." (p. 1021)
	López-Guzmán, T., Sánchez-Cañizares, S., & Pavón, V. (2011)	"...the evaluation of individual and collective benefits..." (p. 72)

Theme	Author	Definition
<b>Commercial &amp; Economic Viability</b>	Ngo, T., Lohmann, G. & Hales, R. (2018a)	The authors use the term CBTEs, which is an enterprise-based approach. But the authors do not identify how this approach will be different as there is no mention of business or commercial viability.
	Lucchetti, V.G., & Font, X. (2013)	"Other common themes are the involvement of external support from a donor agency or NGO" (p. 2).
	Ruiz-Ballesteros, E. & Hernandez-Ramirez, M. (2010)	Address the commercial side of CBTs stating that it should be "viewed as a product that targets a certain consumer segment with a specific profile" and should have a marketing strategy.
	Mearns, K. (2003)	Economically viable – the revenue should not exceed the cost.

Theme	Author	Definition
<b>Environment</b>	Sakata, H., & Prideaux, B. (2013)	<i>Community-based ecotourism</i> - "enterprise-based conservation approach" (p. 881) wherein the environment is maintained and used to generate economic benefits for the local community.
	Suansri, P. (2003)	"CBT is tourism that takes environmental, social, and cultural sustainability into account" (p. 14)



As seen in the above table, even though community-based tourism projects exist in different socio-cultural and political spaces, literature has demonstrated that common objectives and benefits can be found (Sakata & Prideau, 2012; Iorio & Corsale, 2012; Dangi & Jamal, 2016). Community-based tourism shares the same goals as **sustainable development**; it strives to be ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially equitable (Dodds et al., 2017). It also demonstrates parallels with broader **community development and participatory planning** philosophies, which advocate greater community control of processes at the local level (Ife, 1996). As seen in the literature, CBT concerns and cares remain highly local as community development, community survival, community involvement, and local benefits are among the foci here (Dangi & Jamal, 2016, p. 425).

Although cross-cutting themes can be found throughout CBT definitions, it is also interesting to note that the objectives and benefits outlined can be weighed differently depending on the individual. Goodwin and Santilli (2009), for example, asked various CBT practitioners (identified by the authors as funders, conservationists, and development workers):

- How they would define a successful CBT initiative,
- What criteria would they use and;
- To define the main characteristics of these identified successful CBT projects.

Four hundred twenty-five reasons were cited by the respondents, an average of 3.6 reasons per respondents. The reasons were then put into clusters, which include:

- Improved Livelihoods/Standard of Living
- Local Economic Development
- Commercial Viability
- Collective Benefits
- Social Capital and Empowerment
- Sense of Place
- Education
- Conservation & Environment
- Tourism
- Other

A number of these themes were identified in Table 1.1. Goodwin and Santilli (2009) categorized the clusters into tables, which included categories of clusters by frequency, ranked success categories, and success categories mentioned first and second.

**Table 1.2: Category of Clusters by Frequency**

Category of Description	Frequency	%
Social Capital and Empowerment	81	69.8
Improved Livelihoods & Standard of Living	78	67.2
Local Economic Development	68	58.6
<b>Commercial Viability<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>47</b>	<b>40.5</b>
Conservation/Environment	46	39.7
Education	34	29.3
Sense of Place	26	22.4
Tourism	18	15.5
<b>Collective Benefits</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12.1</b>
Other	13	11.2

Source: Goodwin & Santilli (2009)

Goodwin's and Santilli's (2009) study is of particular interest for two specific reasons:

1. It demonstrates a potential gap between a practitioner and an academic definition of CBT. Social capital and empowerment was the most cited category (70%), which corresponds with definitions outlined in the literature. **Collective benefits**, which are often also cited as a key element in the literature, was rated as one of the least important concepts, with only 14 respondents (12%) choosing it as a reason. Moreover, when respondents were asked to rank the categories, less than 7% of respondents mentioned collective benefits amongst their first three reasons. The study seems to highlight that although the literature has identified the concept of collective and communal benefits as an essential factor in the definition and success of a CBT project, community members managing or working within these projects may prioritize individual over collective benefits.
2. **Commercial viability** did not appear of particular importance to respondents, a concept often omitted from literature when discussing CBTs. When respondents ranked the categories, approximately 27.6% of respondents mentioned commercial viability amongst their first three reasons identifying a successful initiative. As stated in the introduction, the author argues that CBTs, at their core, are businesses, and, therefore, it is interesting

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<sup>3</sup> When respondents were asked to rank success categories mentioned 1st and 2nd, commercial viability moved to the 5th spot (22.4%) and was overtaken by Conversation/Environment (25.9%)

to note that neither academics nor practitioners identify commercial viability as an important factor in CBT success.

In any case, both Tables 1.1 and 1.2 highlight that there is no consensus regarding the definition of CBT. Literature has even used different terms to explain the concept, such as CBET (*community-based ecotourism*), CT (*community tourism*), turismo comunitario, and CBTE (*community-based tourism enterprise*).

The author believes that the meaning needs to be clear if the words are to be used. **As a result, in this particular study, CBT will be defined as a tourist attraction that is:**

- Located within a community.
- Owned by one or more community members for the benefit of one or more community members.
- Managed by community members that can influence the decision-making process of the enterprise.

Before addressing the main conceptual approaches of CBT projects, the idea of *success* should be addressed. As evident from the above discussion, success can be a controversial topic and can largely depend on expectations, definitions, and perspectives (Kontogeorgopoulos, Churyen, & Duangsaeng, 2014, p. 107). As a result, this thesis does not define a successful CBT project. Instead, it focuses on CBT projects that have identified themselves as being sustainable in the long-term. The reason for this is that success can be defined in many different ways. As outlined by Goodwin and Santilli (2009), "there are a wide range of reasons given for identifying particular CBT success" (p. 45).

There is no universal consensus in defining CBT, nor is there widespread acceptance of a specific set of criteria that would lead to a successful community-based tourism project. Even the concept of *success* can be heavily debated. *What constitutes success?* Although the author has already outlined the specific definition that will be used in this particular study, the author suggests that most of the aforementioned definitions and discussions about CBT fail to recognize one crucial detail: a CBT is a business. At its core, the goal of a CBT project is to create a product that can be sold to either a domestic or international market in exchange for money. As stated in the introduction, tourism is a market-driven commercial industry; it is a *buyers' market* (Goodwin, 2007). Therefore, along with discussions regarding the social imperatives of job creation, empowerment, social capital, social responsibility, and the environment, the author suggests that other concepts, like growth, liquidity, solvency, profitability, and sustainability, should also be included in the overall conversation (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016, p. 163). At the present moment, definitions seem to focus heavily on the community development aspect of

CBT, with little to no mention of the business side. As this thesis is also addressing the business of community-based tourism, these ideas and concepts will be further elaborated later on in the next sections of this chapter.

## **1.2 Main Conceptual Approaches to Community-Based Tourism Projects**

### **1.2.1 Community-Based Tourism: The Main Issues**

CBT "is a complex process" (de Groot, 2015, p.72), and as Moscardo (2008, p. 175) states, "the reality in practice has not often matched the ideals in principle." These failures include the lack of access to markets, lack of market-ready products, too much focus on marketing directly to foreign visitors, and a lack of empowerment of local communities (Dodds et al., 2016, p. 14). Several failures are documented in the CBT literature, but the most prevalent is the inability of CBT ventures to be financially viable. Tangible examples of these failures have been documented in the research of Dixey (2005) who found that only three of the twenty-five CBT projects that the author studied in Zambia were sustainable and Goodwin and Santilli (2009) who found only six of the fifteen CBT initiatives surveyed to be economically viable. CBT associations and enterprises also often lack financial sustainability; most often, this is due to the following (Forstner, 2004; Gascón, 2013; Kontogeorgopoulos et al., 2014):

- Lack of governance;
- Lack of strong links to the market and;
- Lack of business expertise among members.

As a result, several authors (Mitchell & Mukosy, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Zapata et al., 2011; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009) have questioned the viability of the CBT model, collectively agreeing that their failure is often due to two factors: a lack of access to markets and poor governance.

#### **1. POOR GOVERNANCE**

The strength of management, governance, leadership, and decision-making structures, and whether they are accountable and transparent, is frequently determinative of success or failure for many projects (Dixey 2005; Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008; Townsend, 2006; Spenceley, 2008). Haywood (1988) defines community participation as a "process of involving all stakeholders in such a way that decision-making is shared" (p. 106). Community participation, as stated previously, is an essential element of any CBT project. However, Okazaki (2008) argues that communitarianism is seen as a romanticized idea, not based on reality. Other authors argue that

collective management structures are too complex to work effectively and that consensus is hard to obtain when many individuals and subgroups often pursue their personal interests instead of the interests of the collective (Iorio & Corsal, 2014; Novelli & Gebhardt, 2007; Manyara et al., 2006; Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008).

Moreover, a participatory approach is time-consuming. Other barriers (ex., lack of education, business inexperience, insufficient financial assistance, and conflicting vested interests) also have to be overcome before public involvement can be embraced (Addison, 1996). Furthermore, involvement in participatory planning might seem like a luxury for people more concerned with survival.

In addition to being an inefficient business model, CBT is not participatory in many cases, as Muckosy & Mitchell (2008) argue. The Rainforest Alliance, for instance, found that 40% of CBT projects in developing countries did not involve communities in decision-making (Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008). Thus, such an approach is often ineffective because of its high transaction costs in terms of getting the program started and its maintenance (Getz & Jamal, 1994).

## **2. LACK OF ACCESS TO MARKET**

Along with a lack of governance, a weak market strategy can lead to project failure. In reality, for many of these communities, marketing and access to key markets is usually an issue due to a lack of know-how and resources (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013; Gascón, 2013). There is also a lack of customer awareness about CBT as a product. Due to poor marketing capabilities, CBT destinations face economic survival challenges, even if they have products and services that are in demand (Harrison & Schipani, 2007).

Unfortunately, foreign markets are challenging to attract (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013) as not many of these CBT initiatives are connected to the broader tourism sector, which creates limited market access (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). This issue is compounded by the fact that these communities do not possess the skills or capacity necessary to reach their target markets (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009).

Additional problems include lack of concern with and knowledge of demand factors, lack of skills with regard to product presentation, limited understanding of market demand, lack of a market-ready product, limited knowledge of relevant markets, and limited development of cooperation and marketing networks, all of which create "barriers to market access" (Mitchell & Hall, 2005; Forstner, 2004; Tasci, Croes, & Jorge, 2014; Iorio & Corsale, 2014; World Bank, 2009). Epler Wood & Jones (2008) deem that "these projects often lack a proper demand-driven

approach to development" and are not fully integrated with the "existing, local tourism supply chain" (p. 1).

In the literature, CBT projects have been sharply criticized as having low economic impact in terms of: jobs and income; small-scale interventions; the low viability after external funding ends; the monopolization of benefits by local elites; and the lack of business skills to make it operational (Zapata et al., 2011, p. 777). Academics have relied on key reports to strengthen the argument that CBTs often fail due to a lack of **governance** and **market access**.

In 2006, ResponsibleTravel.com, an online travel agency, collaborated with Conservation International and identified, through desk research, recommendations and direct contact with projects, 150 CBT organizations that they could work with to improve their marketing. Of the 150 CBT organizations identified, 25 (16.6%) had a non-functioning email address, a further 72 (48%) did not return a questionnaire. Of those 53 (35.3%) who returned a questionnaire, only 27 (18%) qualified as CBT organizations. The conclusions of the study found that although some CBT projects did have a high occupancy rate, classifying them as *successful* projects, the majority had an average of 5% occupancy rate. At the end of the report, the authors state: "the jury is still out on whether community-based tourism can actually be profitable enough to create sustainable lifestyles and support conservation and local economic development." Mitchell & Mukosy (2008) reported research from a Rainforest Alliance/Conservation International survey of 200 CBT projects across the Americas, which also showed that many accommodation providers had only 5% occupancy. Citing the Siecoya CBT project in Ecuador as an example, the authors write that "despite heavy subsidies from an oil extraction company, only generated \$200 for the community fund after nine years of operation (p. 1). They concluded from their review that "the most likely outcome for a CBT initiative is collapse after funding dries up" (p. 1).

Nevertheless, it is also important to note that some of the aforementioned data might not be entirely accurate. Although Mitchell & Mukosy (2008) use the Rainforest Alliance and Conservation International research in their paper, they provide no link or reference to this report. While no such link exists, many academics (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Armstrong, 2012; Asker, Boronyak, Carrard & Paddon, 2010; Dodds, Ali & Galaski, 2015; Nhem, 2016; Goodwin, Santilli & Armstrong, 2014) have also used the 5% occupancy rate statistic as an argument against the CBT model. Furthermore, Mitchell & Mukosy (2008) have even been erroneously quoted as the primary researchers of this report (Stone & Stone, 2011, p. 100). With no link or reference present within the document, the author went a step further. After a Google search resulted in zero findings, the author reached out to both the Rainforest Alliance and Conservation International. Rainforest Alliance stated in a private Twitter conversation dated January 23rd, 2017, that *"unfortunately, the response from our VP of Sustainable Tourism is that this is a mistaken reference. It seems as though this study was either never conducted or was conducted*

*without the Rainforest Alliance. I have been informed that in the past, we have reached out to the authors of the article for a correction, which was apparently not made.*" Furthermore, the use of the Secoya tourism project in Ecuador by the same authors seems to be over-simplified. In the paper "*Meeting the Global Challenge of Community Participation in Ecotourism: Case Studies and Lessons from Ecuador*" (1998), author Epler Wood states that community members received payments from the oil industry and these oil companies employed others as the Secoya territory was being tested for oil. It was never mentioned that these oil companies directly funded the CBT project, an insinuation made by Mitchell & Muckosy (2008). In the document, Epler Wood (1998) states that "the most interesting aspect of this project is the lack of support for ecotourism as an option for community development in Secoya" (p. 100) and mentioned that "the Secoya project is typical of what many community ecotourism projects are facing: a lack of understanding of the international travel market, inadequate linkages to the existing inbound travel sector in Quito, and an inability to make direct contact with that sector of the travel market that may be interested in visiting their projects." (p. 100). Finally, the paper was published in 1998. These two examples quoted heavily in several academic papers as examples of CBT failure, demonstrate an urgent need for more accurate and current research about the viability of CBTs as a pro-poor development approach.

Along with outdated and erroneous data, it can also be argued that many of the main CBT critiques reflect a *top-down* CBT approach.

### **1.2.2 The Top-down vs. Bottom-up Approach**

The practice of *going local* and caring for distant and less-privileged communities can raise questions of power imbalances, appropriation, and morality. The infiltration of Western ideologies, such as capitalism, has promoted the creation of specific social groups and two specific sub-groups: the privileged and the other. In this context, critics argue that CBTs can be a neocolonial strategy, wherein the *other's* culture and identity are appropriated, commodified, objectified, and consumed by and for the *privileged*. A focus on the tourist (*privileged*) detracts from the agency of the *other*, and as a result, CBTs are criticized as having an uneven relationship between the tourist and toured. This focus on the tourist can lead to adverse effects such as loss of cultural identity, economic/social loss, dependency on NGOs or external organizations, or non-recognition of community agency in the tourism and its activities (Ruiz Ballesteros & Hernández-Ramírez, 2010).

The arguments listed above are often seen within a *top-down* initiated CBT project. These projects are often externally initiated by entities like the private sector, NGOs, or the government. Zapata et al. (2011) describe top-down projects as being funded or created by external actors with a focus initially on international markets and with a healthy level of



dependence on the support of mediator organizations. The authors also argue that these top-down projects often have low or stagnated growth. Manyara and Jones (2007), corroborate this claim after they reviewed six CBT enterprises (referred to as CBEs) and concluded that, based on partnerships with white investors, these CBEs did "not adequately address the priorities of local communities" and that they consequently reinforced a "neocolonial model, whereby control of tourism resources is vested in the hands of a few foreigners." They also reported that the CBEs were "not perceived to have made a significant impact on poverty reduction at an individual household level" (p. 642)

Literature tends to identify the top-down CBT approach as imperialistic, hegemonic, and exploitative. It is a perceived loss of *the original community*, according to Esposito & Campbell (2009) that triggers a need for Westerners<sup>4</sup> to protect traditional communities from the threat of modernity (p. 134). External stakeholders that seek to protect *communities* have often adopted a capitalist ideological lens. This lens can also lead stakeholders to adopt a paternalistic mentality that robs community members of their agency through victimization. Through this act, stakeholders ascribe labels to the community, failing to consult with members on their needs and instead focusing on issues, such as environmental concerns, rather than the community's economic and social needs (Manyara & Jones, 2007). In doing so, these community members, who often do not have the time, skills or resources to engage in the participatory process fully, are not seen as equal partners by these key stakeholders (Sin & Minca, 2014; Novelli & Gebhardt, 2009; Manyara et al., 2006; Okazaki, 2008). Simultaneously, tourists are invited into this communitarian realm without a clear sense of place and time, while interacting with individuals with no agency other than their ascribed label as being *local* (Minca, 2009). Sofield and Birtles (1996) echo this statement by suggesting that "there is a growing desire by millions of travelers for access to 'primitive' societies, a hunger to taste if only briefly their traditional ways of life, a wish to see, experience and photograph their 'exotic' practices" (p. 396). Criticisms of this CBT approach, moreover, point out that a *top-down* project often creates a reliance on the external entity, which can lead to project failure if funding stops or if the external agency decides to leave the project.

On the other hand, literature has identified that the *bottom-up* approach, which focuses on local control, ownership, and participation, provides different and more "hopeful" results (Zapata et al., p. 725). The main idea of this approach is for local communities to set their own goals and make decisions about their resources and future (Theerapappisit, 2012, p. 269). Zapata et al. (2011) have argued for this specific approach, stating that projects born and funded by locals,

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<sup>4</sup> Authors like Esposito & Campbell (2009) and Sin & Minca (2013) specifically refer to "the West." However in today's globalized world the author believes that new terminologies need to be employed to clarify global power differentials. The author would argue, for example, that the notion of North versus South or West versus East is no longer relevant and would rather use terms like urban versus rural.



with an initial focus on the national market, experience accelerated growth and the most significant rates of arrivals. They further write that bottom-up projects often have "longer life expectancy, faster growth, and more positive impacts on the local economy" (Zapata et al., 2011, p. 725).

Nevertheless, whether it is a *top-down* or *bottom-up* approach, it is also important to note, as Mtapuri & Giampiccoli (2016) argue, that CBT projects can be (and have been) initiated from both within and outside the community. Both approaches can offer pros and cons depending on the type of partnership that stems from the community-stakeholder(s) relationship. Therefore, partnerships have a significant role to play in community development and empowerment. In fact, "each partnership model prioritizes and/or favors specific actors and therefore offers both advantages and disadvantages to the affected communities" (Giampiccoli & Mtapurior, p. 39). The approach, whether top-down or bottom-up, is not an essential factor. Instead, there should be a focus on stakeholder(s) partnerships that contribute towards community development, social capital, participation, and empowerment.

### **1.2.3 Empowerment, Social Capital, Participation, and a Missing Variable: the Market.**

Since its inception, development agencies, donors, and NGOs have invested much in promoting CBT as the ideal development approach (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009, p. 4). Nevertheless, as stated above, the approach has been widely criticized concerning low life expectancy in terms of jobs and income, the result of small-scale interventions, its non-viability after external funding ends, questions of authenticity and power, the monopolization of benefits by local elites, and the lack of business skills to make it operational (Zapata et al., 2011). As mentioned previously, Blackstock (2005) argues that advocates of CBT diverge from the ethos of community development in three ways. First, CBT projects lack the transformative intent of community development, focusing on the tourism industry rather than empowering residents. Second, local communities are presented as homogeneous blocks, devoid of internal power struggles, or competing values. Third, CBT accounts ignore the external constraints of local control. As a result, CBT can be perceived as an example of community development "imposter" driven by economic imperatives and a neo-liberal agenda, rather than values of empowerment and social justice (Craig, 2003).

However, literature has demonstrated that these critiques can be addressed by implementing several key concepts that play an essential role in creating a sustainable and successful CBT project. After reviewing six CBT projects, Manyara and Jones (2007), for example, clearly state

that the positive impacts of these projects would be more significant if they were able to "emphasize independence, address local community priorities, enhance community empowerment and transparency, discourage elitism, promote effective community leadership and develop community capacity to operate their enterprises efficiently..." (p. 47). These characteristics are often seen, as argued by literature, in locally initiated or *bottom-up* projects that implement the core values of the term *community-based tourism*, specifically empowerment, social capital, and participation; as such they can better address the critique (Mitchell & Mukosy, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Zapatal et al., 2011; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009) that CBT failure is often due to poor governance.

Empowerment is "both a value orientation for working in the community and a theoretical model for understanding the process and consequences of efforts to exert control and influence over decisions that affect one's life, organizational functioning and the quality of community life" (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 43). Rowlands (1997, p. 14) clearly states that "empowerment is more than participation in decision-making; it must also include the processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions."

To reach an active participatory role, community members must first understand the concept of tourism and how it will benefit not only the individual but also the community as a whole. Members have explicit knowledge of tourism, its benefits and risks, and a clear vision of its goals, objectives, and limits (Mielke, 2009). The members must be united and cohesive with a strong identity (WTO, 2006, p. 259), well-organized (Townsend, 2006, p. 43), able to work together, overcome power inequality (Hall, 2007, p. 308-9) and manage any conflicts/disputes (Rozemeijer, 2001, p. 58; Dixey 2005, p. 46 & 55; Moscardo, 2008, p. 5) to avoid vulnerability and the possibility of exploitation (Southgate, 2006, p. 80-96). Participatory planning, although criticized as unrealistic (Iori & Corsale, 2014; Sin & Minca, 2013; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Blackstock, 2005; Okazaki, 2008), is feasible. However, it requires a long-term investment (Mielke, 2016) where expectations must be managed (CTO, 2007), and a process of preparation/formation of leadership and decision-making must be legitimized by the community as a whole (Mielke, 2016).

In short, community ownership means that members understand what tourism is (Mielke, 2016, p. 100), freely choose whether to develop it (Townsend, 2006, p. 53) and, if they choose to do so, decide the type of development (Bursztyn, Bartholo & Delamaro, 2009, p. 116), which they can manage themselves (Scheyvens, 2002, p. 248) and which does not disrupt the community's way of life (Fennell & Przeclawski, 2003, p. 145).

However, tourism should not be the primary focus (Roe, Grieg-Gran & Schalken, 2001, p. 33), and members should re-evaluate the project if it is not generating real benefits or if it is

appropriate (Townsend, 2006, p. 53). Furthermore, "effective community participation implies identifying the required external support which can facilitate the outcome of the community effort" (Choguill, 1996, p. 432). Intermediaries can be instrumental in the development of a successful CBT project, and with local empowerment comes the decision to choose which intermediaries communities wish to work with, thereby controlling their tourism product. Private companies, membership organizations, public sector institutions, and non-governmental organizations are needed to facilitate market access. However, CBT initiatives should be focused on a clear strategy, agreed and understood by all stakeholders, particularly the local community, and should work within existing social structures (WWF, 2001).

A range of very different intentions and possibilities can underpin the inclusion of stakeholders in tourism development: Tosun (2006, p. 494) identifies "normative typologies of community participation," Arnstein (1969, p. 216) addresses the ladder of citizen participation; and Pretty (1995) focuses on a typology of community participation, which ranges from "manipulative participation" to "self-mobilization." However, Arnstein's, and Pretty's typologies are developed within the context of developmental studies, while Tosun's typology has been explicitly created for tourism (Novelli & Gebhardt, 2007, p. 448). These typologies may be a useful tool for identifying the spectrum of community participation, from the more common passive, manipulative, or token forms towards those that are more authentic and interactive. "This accords well with the superimposed nature of tourism activity that is frequently grafted on to an economy and society in a 'top-down' manner" (Faulkner, Laws & Moscardo, 2003, p. 229). Spontaneous participation is described by Tosun (2006) as bottom-up, active, authentic, and direct participation in decision making and self-planning, which is in stark contrast to coercive participation, often a top-down method.

Giampiccoli (2010) proposes three strands, Community-Based Tourism (CBT), Community-Based Partnership Tourism (CBPT), and Community Tourism (CT). He argues that CBT represents the "original concept of community-based tourism within alternative development approaches" and states that CBPT and CT are examples of how CBT has been reformulated in the context of neoliberalism (p. 66), "jeopardizing its original potential" (p. 69). Giampiccoli (2010) also argues that facilitation allows for the promotion of empowerment and self-development, stating that facilitation can be seen in the final three steps of Arnstein's ladder of community participation (Arnstein, 1969) and within Tosun's (2006) spontaneous participation typology, where local communities hold all the decision making power.

**Table 1.3: Normative typologies of community participation**

Citizen control ----- Delegated power ----- Partnership	Degrees of Citizen Power	⇒	<u>Spontaneous Participation</u> Bottom-up; active par.; direct participation; par. In decision making, authentic participation; self-planning	<u>CBT</u> Community full owned (control), and managed	Alternative ↓	<u>Empowered Participation</u> Top-down; bottom-up; participation in decision-making; understanding what tourism is and benefits
Placation ----- Consultation ----- Informing	Degrees of Citizen Tokenism	⇒	<u>Induced Participation</u> Top-down; passive; formal; mostly indirect; degree of tokenism, manipulation; pseudo-participation; participation in implementation and sharing benefits; choice between proposed alternatives and feedback	<u>CBPT</u> Bottom-up; advantages partnership. Full control of assets and decision making.  <u>CBPT</u> Top-down; 50/50 arrangement. Formal consultant role. Assets and benefits equally shared; Top-down.		Whether it is top-down or bottom-up communities need to feel empowered to be able to make decisions that benefit them as individuals and the communities in general.
Therapy ----- Manipulation	Non-participation	⇒	<u>Coercive Participation</u> Top-down, passive; mostly indirect, formal; participation in implementation but not necessarily sharing benefit; paternalism, non-participation, high degree of tokenism and manipulation	<u>CT</u> Top-down; passive; exploitative; assets are seen as a private investment	Neoliberalism	<u>Coercive Participation</u> Communities are not empowered; no decision-making power; paternalistic, manipulation
Arstein's (1969) typology of community participation.			Tosun's (1999a) typology of community participation.	Giampiccoli's (2010) CBT typology	The author's suggestion (2020)	

Source: Adapted from Tosun (2006, p. 494); Giampiccoli (2010, p. 84-85)

Sofield (2003) argues that "without empowerment, sustainable tourism development by communities is difficult to attain" (p. 7). Furthermore, there should be a shift from participation to empowerment (Sofield, 2003). Although empowerment is a necessity, the author of this thesis argues that participation can be seen as a malleable and flexible concept. Mtapuri & Giampiccoli (2016) argue that CBT "should not be seen as a linear evolutionary pattern but is guided and informed by the aim and purpose of the model and the specific issues it attempts to address" (p. 156). The creation of specific participation typologies, such as the ladder of participation, is difficult, primarily because many different approaches and definitions of what constitutes a CBT

exist. Literature defines CBT differently, as seen in Table 1.1 and 1.2. Therefore, consultation, which Tosun (1999) refers to as induced participation, can, by others, be seen as interactive participation. Choguill (1996) supports the idea that community participation, "implies also an identification of the required external support, be it from the government or from NGOs, which can facilitate the outcome of the community effort" (p. 432). Each CBT has been created to serve a specific purpose and can be seen as multi-faceted (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016), thus there needs to be a fluid understanding of the key concepts that make up a CBT. Dodds et al. (2016), for example, argue that "placing too much importance on the community-owned and managed forms of CBT, may inhibit a project and preclude opportunities to join forces with other organizations such as tour operators or hotels that can provide other benefits" (p. 10).

Literature (Armstrong, 2012; Zapata et al., 2011; Dodds et al., 2016) has demonstrated that given the right conditions, CBTs can overcome governance issues to become a viable pro-poor development option. Unlike the issue of governance, access to markets, although identified as a barrier, is still an under-researched topic.

However, it seems as if the problem might be more complex than just addressing market access. On page twenty-eight, listed alongside a lack of governance and market access as two key barriers to the implementation of a successful CBT project, literature (Forstner, 2004; Gascón, 2013; Kontogeorgopoulos et al., 2014) also identified a third barrier: a lack of business expertise among members. This type of business expertise, as outlined by Choguill (1996), can be gained through the identification of external support — in short, through partnerships, often private partnerships. As outlined in Chapter 2.1, literature has often failed to discuss the business side of the CBT, preferring to treat it as a development project, and thus, the question of business expertise and professional training has also gone relatively unmentioned.

Definitions favor words like empowerment, social capital, participation, local ownership, and collective benefits but tend to turn away from anything market or business-related. Beeton (2006) argues that the focus of CBTs must remain on the supply side, specifically the community; Zapata et al., (2011) argue that the focus on the achievement of quantitative economic indicators, by NGOs, donors, and other international actors, reflects hegemonic neoliberal ideologies (p. 728); and Giampiccoli & Mtapuri (2012) argue that "contemporary CBT, as managed and organized within the neoliberal framework, jeopardizes the CBT's possible contribution to holistic community development, by shifting the priority to neoliberal, private sector imperatives and often private, external investment prerogatives" (p. 40). Within the literature, then, there is an argument present that positions the community against the market and argues that the two are possibly incompatible. As a result of this, the next section will try to address the specific question: *is there a possible incompatibility between a market and a community-oriented approach?*

### 1.3 Different Market-Driven Approaches

The digitization of the travel and tourism sector has changed consumer behaviors and expectations, which has led to the modernization of the marketing mix, shifting the focus from product-first to consumer-first. In recent years, consumers have become more active, influential, and connected thanks to information communication technologies, resulting in a shift away from the traditional company-consumer power relationship (Ramaswamy, 2009) in favor of a co-creation process. There has been a fundamental shift in tourism marketing towards the *co-creation of technology-enhanced tourism experiences* (Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin, 2014), all of which revolve around the customer. Nevertheless, is this shift towards customer-first, incompatible with the ethos of community-based tourism? The author believes that it is essential first to examine the definition of *experience co-creation* and *the role of technology* to answer this question.

Co-creation represents a new paradigm for marketing (Neuhofer & Buhalis, 2014, p. 126), which Vargo and Lusch (2004) advanced through the *value-in-use* concept in service-dominant logic (SDL). The overall premise of SDL is that value is co-created between a company and a consumer. The authors argue that companies can only offer *value propositions*, resulting in the *value-in-use* being determined by customers. Co-creation is therefore seen as a participatory and interactive activity that involves different actors, while the value is defined as "value-in-use"; that is, "the value for customers, created by them during their usage of resources" (Grönroos & Gummerus, 2014, p. 209). As a result, the company's strategic role is to support the customer's value creation process by providing service activities and goods that render those services (Gummesson, 1993, p. 205; Vargo and Lusch, 2004). At its core, SDL is consumer-focused (Sheth, Sisodia & Sharma, 2000), market-driven (Day, 2014), and implies that value is defined by and co-created with the consumer.

SDL has recently been challenged by Heinonen, Strandvik, Mickelsson, Edvardsson & Sundström (2010), who argue that SDL is not customer-focused. The authors advocate for a Customer Dominant Logic (CDL), which refers to a viewpoint that positions the customer in the center, rather than the service provider/producer, the interaction, and the system (p. 4). Customer Dominant Logic has recently gained further traction because SDL does not necessarily account for customer to customer (C2C)<sup>5</sup> value co-creation, which is often invisible to the organization and, therefore, outside its scope of influence (Medberg & Heinonen, 2014). Nevertheless, the

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<sup>5</sup> The rise of the Internet means that co-creation no longer occurs only between companies and consumers (B2C) but can also occur between consumers themselves (C2C) (Neuhofer & Buhalis, 2014). Heinonen, et al. (2010) also argue that value can go beyond the interactive process and can emerge outside the *visibility of companies* (Heinonen, et al., 2010, p. 9). For example, value can be created before, during and/or after a holiday trip. Value can also be re-negotiated through customer's discussions about shared experiences; as in fashion, which is more or less socially constructed (DeBerry-Spence, 2008)

incorporation of CDL in tourism literature is still limited as Rihova, Buhalis, Gouthro & Moital (2018) argue that recent customer-centric developments in service marketing research and the contributions of the Customer Dominant Logic have not yet been fully incorporated in tourism literature.

In any case, the core of experience co-creation is to acknowledge the tourist as the central point. Co-creation challenges the classic top-down marketing method where companies *market to consumers* and instead focuses on a bottom-up approach wherein "the consumer can become a more active participant in the overall brand experience as opposed to a passive receiver waiting for new products and services" (Moutinho, Ballantyne & Rate 2014, p. 564). This new consumer or "prosumer" simultaneously produces and consumes goods, services, and experiences in close collaboration with companies in exchange for a direct say in what gets produced, developed, and designed. This relationship transforms supply-chain to a demand-value chain where the flow of marketing starts with the consumer and ends with the company (Moutinho, Ballantyne & Rate, 2014). This shift towards co-creation means that goods, services, and experiences can not be simply designed and delivered. Rather, the individual tourist is the dynamic hub, around which stakeholders, companies, destinations, and other consumers orbit (Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin, 2014).

In recent years it has become evident that consumer empowerment and co-creation have been particularly fostered by technology. The Internet has enabled consumers to become "co-marketers, co-producers and co-designers of their service experiences by providing them a wide spectrum of value" (Sigala 2009, p. 1345). The range of tools, including social media channels, videos, blogs, chat rooms, and podcasts, have encouraged individuals to generate their content and share their experiences online. Due to the proliferation of the Internet, the constant connectivity of mobile technologies, and the engaging nature of social media, co-creation between individuals has exploded (Rihova, Buhalis, Moital, Gouthro, 2015). As mentioned previously, co-creation no longer occurs only between companies and consumers (B2C) but can also occur between consumers themselves (C2C) (Rihova, Buhalis, Moital, Gouthro, 2015). Experiences constitute the essence of the tourism industry, and in today's connected world, co-creation of tourism experiences cannot exist without technology. Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin (2014) argue that since information communication technologies (ICTs) constitute an integral part of tourism experiences, a change of perspective in marketing is needed, focusing on the potential of technology on the co-creation process. As a result, it is not sufficient for tourism marketing and organizations to focus solely on co-creation, but it is equally important that they take advantage of the potential of ICTs for experience creation. These *technology-enhanced tourism experiences* allow organizations to increase their value proposition, reduce commodification, and gain a competitive advantage (Neuhofer & Buhalis, 2014, p. 131). Buhalis and Law (2008) state that technology is an integral element for the competitiveness of businesses



in the tourism industry, which is supported by Cetinkaya (2009) and Zach, Gretzel & Xiang (2010) who affirm that the adoption of emerging ICTs provides the primary source of competitive advantage.

Whether it is customer dominant logic, Lauterborn's 4C's of Marketing or Hall's Tourism Market System, academic and grey literature has argued that the contemporary tourism industry should focus on the needs and desires of the customer, placing the tourist at the central point of the system (Beeton, 2006, p. 34). As a result, the supply (product) exists simply to satisfy the demand (traveler). Along with literature arguing for the importance of the tourist as the central point in the tourism value chain, some academic literature that questions whether this tourist-centric approach is beneficial for the community. Focusing on the tourist, according to these scholars (Sin & Minca, 2013, and Manyara & Jones, 2007), renders the toured into an object to be commodified and consumed, which reinforces the social, political, and economic dominance of the West.

In light of these two conflicting points of view, the author wishes to ask the questions:

- Can CBT projects adopt a bottom-up marketing approach, wherein the customer is an active participant in the co-creation of value and the overall brand experience, further enhanced by emerging technologies while at the same time addressing the needs, desires, and objectives of the community?

Häusler & Strasdas (2002) argue that participation and empowerment play a significant role in CBT management. However, it should "be taken into consideration that CBT must be commercially profitable if it is to be sustainable" (p. 16). Tourism is a commercial industry (Hitchins & Highstead, 2005, p. 21); therefore, a for-profit business model is a key to a sustainable project (WTO, 2006, p. 190; WWF, 2001, p. 10). Financial feasibility, market knowledge, and commercial viability are essential (Armstrong, 2012; Dixey, 2008, p. 4,7,12; Murphy & Halstead, 2003, p. 17). However, there still seems to be a sharp dichotomy between a community-first and a market-first approach in literature.

### **1.3.1 The Traditional Sectoral Boundaries of Tourism Planning**

Burns (2004) argues that there exist traditional sectoral boundaries that have created a bipolar view, segmenting a leftist "Development First" approach from a rightist "Tourism First" approach (see Table 1.4). According to Burns, this binary delineation tends to oversimplify the tourism planning process, thus creating an unrealistic classification system that forces projects into an either/or. A project is, therefore, either industry-focused, centering around the private



sector, the market, industry expansion, and economic growth, or development-focused, which campaigns for sustainable human development. However, Burns (2004) argues for an alternative, which he calls the Third Way, where various stakeholders, including the government as well as the public and the private sectors, work together in the tourism planning process.

**Table 1.4. View of Tourism Planning Approaches**

The Leftist “Development First”	The Rightist “Tourism First”
Sustainable human development Tourism-as-system Tourism-as-culture Modern world systems Periphery Underdevelopment <i>Aiming for an independent, differentiated destination with minimal dependency on the core. Focus on sustainable human development goals as defined by local people and local knowledge. The key question driving development is “what can tourism do for us without harming us?”</i> Holistic	Economic enlargement Tourism-as-industry Tourism-as-consumerism Globalization Core Modernization <i>Aiming to maximize market spread through familiarity with the product. Undifferentiated homogenized product with a focus on tourism goals set by outside planners and the international tourism industry.</i>  Economistic

Source: Burns (2004)

In 2019, the author listened to an audio recording of Dr. Pauline Sheldon's keynote speech at the University of Victoria. Dr. Sheldon called for a reformulation of the current *growth is good* discourse and argued that there are three divisions in society today: the ecological, the cultural, and the socio-economic. The author of this thesis wants to focus on the last divide, which relates to the issue of wealth. In the talk, Dr. Sheldon stated that eight people in the world have more wealth than 50% of the poorest people and argued that self-interest drives typical human behavior. She quoted Naomi Klein's new book *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. Climate*, which she said: *“to drop the addiction to pure free-market ideologies, put an end to greed and corporate powers and restructure local economies and strengthen democracies.”* She then continued to argue that we, as a society, are addicted to growth, and to GDP and that not only do individuals need to make a move from the “me” to the “we,” but individuals must also look at how tourism contributes to greed and me-ness. According to Dr. Sheldon, the neoliberal and capitalist model is crumbling.

Similar to the presentation given by Dr. Sheldon, development-first CBT rhetoric tends to use the same words when discussing the *business-side* of CBTs. Words that are often used include hegemonic, imperialistic, capitalist, and neoliberal. It seems as if the literature wants to focus exclusively on the community development aspect of CBT. This argument can be corroborated by the fact that most CBT definitions found in literature tend not to discuss the commercial

aspect of the tourism product. Moreover, if they do, there seems to be a hesitation in terms of private-sector partnerships or involvement. For example, Giampiccoli & Mtapuri (2012) argue that if external actors, like the private sector, are included in the CBT process, they should only be ascribed to a facilitative role that helps the community develop their ideas and plans or grants them access to the market. Giampiccoli (2010) further argues that these facilitators "should not remain in possession of any material benefits (for example, economic benefits) or non-material aspects (for example, decision-making powers) of the tourism facilities under CBT" (p. 85). However, as outlined by the German Development Agency (GIZ) (2015), market actors (the private sector) will usually only get involved in development initiatives when they are in the driver's seat and have worthwhile incentives (e.g., more stable income) (p. 9). It seems that involving the private sector may bring questions regarding community participation, empowerment, and involvement, which the author touches upon in Chapter 1.2.3.

In the end, CBTs are businesses; however, this does not mean, as Häusler & Strasdas (2002) argue, that CBTs should be reduced only to business activity. Instead, CBTs must create socially and environmentally responsible products while also being commercially viable within a competitive industry (p. 15). Schilcher (2007) argues that community members often cannot participate effectively in the tourism industry because they cannot "compete with capital-intensive, vertically integrated multinational enterprises, and they have limited, poor bargaining power and face huge market-entry barriers (p. 62). Moreover, most of the time, NGOs and local governments are often not equipped with practical business expertise to develop commercially viable tourism products (Phi et al., 2017, p. 3). CBT is no different from other types of business; thus, it "should be treated like any other business" (Mielke, 2012, p. 31). "Growth, liquidity, solvency, profitability, and sustainability are key elements for survival, besides the social imperatives of job creation and social responsibility and caring for the environment" (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016, p. 163).

Nonetheless, recent literature has demonstrated that it can be possible to include the needs of the community, and the demands of the market and tourists — in essence, a Third Way. It may seem that CBTs can be economically viable and market-ready while promoting the principles and values of community development. A further study of the literature has demonstrated that a market-oriented approach might not necessarily need to be separate from sustainable and community development principles.

### **1.3.2 A Third Way: Merging Community Supply and Market Demand**

As explained by Burns (2004), *The Third Way* "would seek to develop several systems, each supported by appropriate social institutions that encourage inter- and intra-sectoral cooperation and the development of tourism that can satisfy a full range of actors. The approach would

integrate the idea of forcing the types of systems (such as the range of business and cultural relationships) that allow for equity in benefit allocation" (p. 36).

The approach (see Table 1.5) has six separate steps or "bubbles" that advocate for the inclusion of the left and right sides from inception until implementation. For example, Step 1 argues that the left and right need to agree on tourism goals at local, regional, and national levels, while Step 6 argues that the private sector needs to develop tourism while being assisted and monitored by a variety of social institutions. *The Third Way* advocates for a mutually beneficial relationship between multiple sectoral actors, including community, public and private actors. These actors work together to create a tourism product that will ultimately allow for an equitable distribution of economic and cultural benefits.

**Table 1.5: The Third Way**

The Leftist "Development First"	The Third Way	The Rightist "Tourism First"
Sustainable human development; holistic; culture; community-focused; focus on the local;	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Community + Public + Private</b> <i>Equitable distribution of benefits.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tourism is a private sector activity that needs to operate within a regulatory framework that enables fair competition and a fair deal for the local inhabitants (Burns, 2004, p. 37)</p>	Economic enlargement; neoliberalism; consumerism; globalization;

Source: Adapted from Burns (2004)

### Communities Are Willing to Participate in the Tourism Market

Literature has argued against a tourism-first approach primarily due to the notion that neoliberalism and capitalism prioritize profits over community development.

As stated in Chapter 1.3.1, capitalism has been identified by literature as being hegemonic, imperialistic, and exploitative. Giampiccoli & Saayman (2016), for example, argue that a neoliberal framework shifts the priority towards neoliberal, private sector imperatives, which includes private external investment prerogatives. In short, the neoliberal framework jeopardizes "CBT's possible contribution to holistic community development" (p. 8). Community development and collective benefits are often highlighted as core components of community-based tourism. However, there seems to be a gap between research and practice. Ngo et al. (2018a) identify this gap by stating, "academic knowledge of CBTE sustainability developed through indigenous tourism research does not correspond to the perspectives of practitioners" (p. 1339).

Moreover, as noted in Chapter 1.2, collective benefits might not be as important to CBT practitioners. Practitioners may value individual economic benefits over collective ones. Furthermore, if the community is seen as the primary agent within a business, then the market can potentially promote the collective (Ruiz-Ballesteros & Hernandez-Ramirez, 2010, p. 223).

Before addressing the argument that the reformulation of CBT within a neoliberal framework jeopardizes the "achievement of its potentialities" (Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2012, p. 41), there needs to be a discussion on whether or not community members want to participate in the market. A development-first approach seemingly does not include the voices of the community members, some of which have no issues with the commodification of their culture, as long as they are in control of the market process. This sentiment is echoed by Ruiz-Ballesteros & Hernandez-Ramirez (2010), who argue that there is a need to demystify the notion that the market is "something intrinsically and solely negative for indigenous communities and to think of it — albeit cautiously — as an opportunity" (p. 211). In providing the example of the Garifuna people of Roatan, Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos (2004) note that these communities have an awareness of their culture and environment, but do not have control over its commodification. As a result, they do not complain that their culture is being sold, but rather that they are not in control of the selling/market process. According to the authors, the community wants "to redirect the tourist gaze upon itself and thereby control it, enjoying not only the material benefits but also, and perhaps primarily, the sense of empowerment that characterizes agency and ownership itself" (Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos, 2004, p. 153).

Communities can exercise control over production and commercialization. As a result, the market (demand) could potentially create awareness of a culture and an environment, allowing community members to control the commodification of their tourism product by participating in its objectification for tourism consumption. Communities can influence the channels and forms of appropriation while also undergoing a process of self-reflection to participate in tourism, therefore constructing, through objectification, tourism products connected to their everyday lives (Ruiz-Ballesteros & Hernandez-Ramirez, 2010, p. 214). The market can act as a catalyst, wherein community members not only sell a product but also show themselves, be recognized, and make their demands heard. It is "turning our gaze towards tradition, towards the authentic, which is promoted and enhanced by the outside" (Ruiz-Ballesteros & Hernandez-Ramirez, 2010, p. 222).

As a result, while one needs to address the possible negative connotations ascribed to the idea of the market, there is also a need to challenge the seemingly paternalistic Western and urban framework, wherein community members are not seen as agents in their own development. Phillips & Pittman (2009) argue that literature views community development as a process, not as an outcome; therefore, there is an emphasis on developing and enhancing the communities'

ability to act collectively, instead of looking at physical, social, and economic improvements in a community. However, the question that the author believes must be asked is: *does this correspond with the community's needs and wants?* In the case study presented by Iorio & Corsale (2013), for example, community members seemed to have approved the "network's approach which aims at promoting material and social benefits in the early stage and proceeding towards participation in later stages" (p. 249). Another example is the Garifuna, who wanted to see themselves as the owners of their collective image and presentation, and who believed tourism would be a financially profitable investment (Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos, 2004, p. 152)

Therefore, do community members want to participate in the market actively and sell their products, and are they being blocked from doing so by a paternalistic notion that they cannot, or are not able to, access the market without being exploited by private sector imperatives? Moreover, if they do wish to participate in tourism, why is there such seemingly strong opposition to the market?

Although scholars argue that CBTs can be seen as a neo-colonial strategy (Sin & Minca, 2014, p. 98), literature writing on the topic of CBTs might have also adopted a postcolonial lens, in a phenomenon known as the *ventriloquist fantasy*. Hawkesworth (2006) defines this fantasy as an urban voice forced upon a subaltern subject (p. 124). Zapata et al. (2011), as mentioned previously, note that economic growth is not equal to socio-economic development and that prioritizing quantitative economic indicators reinforces neoliberal ideologies (p. 728). These statements echo development-first rhetoric, which distrusts the market and sees it as exploitative (Mielke & Pegas, 2013). Again we see an example of the traditional sectoral boundaries of tourism planning. In the development-first perspective, the rightist "tourism-first" approach jeopardizes community development, creating clear distinctions between neoliberalism, profits, market, and the community. However, multiple case studies have demonstrated that community members want to engage with the market and enjoy the many benefits, monetary and otherwise. Furthermore, community members' participation in the market does not necessarily mean that they will be exploited by the system, an idea which will be explored in the following section.

### **A Triple Bottom Line: People, Planet and Profit**

Free-market capitalism is often seen as a zero-sum game, where someone's gain is the product of another person's loss. Development-first CBT literature often insinuates that individuals cannot be driven by their own self-interest while also thinking about the collective. Samuel Gregg, Director of Research from Acton Institute, argues that the zero-sum game is one of the greatest economic fallacies, as it assumes that if one person gets rich, that means that someone else gets poorer. However, he argues that this is reliant on a static view of wealth. "It's like a pie," he states, "there is this idea that there is just one pie and that pie cannot grow. In market economics

and dynamic open economics, what you find is that the pie grows" (Gregg, 2013). Academic and grey-literature can provide arguments both for and against the idea that capitalism is a zero-sum game. The author of this thesis argues that although capitalism is not a perfect system (that can also be said for communism, socialism, and many, if not all, other systems). Capitalism is, at its core, a positive-sum game. Trade can, for example, lower prices and increase product variety, a win-win for importers and exporters.

The past two decades have seen a dramatic increase in businesses adopting a triple bottom line: *people, profits, and planet*. In an article published in March 2019, Forbes writer Gretchen Fox argues that individuals, companies, and the education system have "all perpetuated this version of heartless, soulless capitalism since the Industrial Revolution. Not only does it not have to be this way, it frankly cannot continue this way." She argues that there has recently been a new wave of entrepreneurs and executives leading their companies with passion, conviction, purpose, **and** increased profitability. For example, Patagonia, known as one of the most "well-known conscious companies in the world" (Fox, 2019), has seen its revenues quadruple in the last ten years due to sales growth and brand loyalty. As their profits have soared, they have kept sustainability and the environment at the core of their business model. Their mission statement reads, "We are in business to save our home planet." It seems that the company practices what it preaches as 70% of Patagonia's products are made from recycled materials, and they plan to use 100% renewable or recycled materials by 2025. The company also only uses hemp or organic cotton.

From corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives to the concept of "creating shared value" (CSV) to the rise of new hybrid business models, it seems as though there has been a shift in how the role of business in society is viewed. One of these new hybrid business models is social enterprises, which are businesses with an embedded social purpose (Cukier, Trenholm, Carl & Gekas, 2011). Although scholars and practitioners have yet to come to a consensus on a precise definition, social enterprises focus on the aim of simultaneously achieving economic efficiency and social purpose and can be either for-profit or nonprofit. The central pillars of the businesses themselves are generally threefold: the production and sale of goods or experiences; priority on social value rather than financial capital; and some form of social ownership (Allan, 2005).

Social enterprises are different from traditional businesses that act in a socially responsible way in that "their earned income strategies are tied *directly* to their mission" (Boschee and McClurg, 2003, p. 3), which can be social, environmental or sometimes both (Pearce, 2003, p. 33). The movement is seen as a combination of capitalism and altruism; it uses market forces for social aims (Spenceley & Meyer, 2017). Social entrepreneurs must understand social and economic processes (Chell, 2007) so that entrepreneurs can maximize profits, which are then funneled into the social aims or the mission of the organization. In short, they build an economically viable and



sustainable business whose primary mission is not only financial but also social or environmental values — they merge profits with purpose

One example of a social enterprise is the Planeterra Foundation, a nonprofit organization established in 2003 by adventure travel company G Adventures' founder, Bruce Poon Tip. Planeterra's focus is to connect underserved communities to opportunities in the travel industry. They provide startup grants for infrastructure and equipment, train and build capacity for community members, and integrate community experiences into the travel itineraries of travel company partners, like G Adventures. A Planeterra project starts with an assessment of market potential. The organization first identifies a location with lots of travelers, departures, and a distinct community need. If there are a limited number of travelers or departures, Planeterra does not invest in a project, even if there is a community need (Planeterra, 2019). As Goodwin & Santilli (2009) argue, successful CBTs are usually located in prime areas near established tourism routes, with links to the private sectors and narrower ownership structures. Once the identification of the location is made, the next steps include market research, introduction calls, and site visits. After this is all completed, the NGO tests the project and invests. When an investment is made, Planeterra "continues to monitor the partnership, having regular calls and annual impact evaluation surveys while taking in feedback from travelers about the experiences" (Planeterra, 2019). G Adventures, a small group adventure travel company, has integrated 68 of Planeterra's projects into their tours, sending almost 100,000 travelers to visit projects in 2018 alone. The travel company also contributed CAD\$500,000 towards Planeterra's work in 2018, which covered all operational and administrative costs "while supporting investment in new community businesses around the world" (Planeterra, 2019). Planeterra's 2018 Impact Analysis, which the NGO commissioned and wrote itself, says that the NGO impacted 58,656 lives through 68 projects in 42 different countries.

Benefit Corporations, or B Corps, are another example of a hybrid business model. B Corps operate much like traditional corporations but with elevated standards of corporate purpose, accountability, and transparency (BCorporation, 2018). B Corps are similar to traditional commercial businesses in that they sell a product or service to generate profits. The difference is that the B Corp model places importance on the sustainability or community-driven values or goals embedded within the organization. The B Corp certification distinguishes for-profit companies that voluntarily meet social sustainability and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency standards (Hiller, 2013). In 2015, 1,358 certified B Corps operated across 121 industries in 41 countries throughout the world (Harriman, 2015). B Lab, the nonprofit behind the movement, has established partnerships with sister organizations in South America, Australia, and Europe, each working to grow and support the movement in their region. The rise of B Corp on the global stage is a phenomenon that can redefine success in business and create a more social and environmentally beneficial economy (Harriman, 2015).

Both academic and grey literature have demonstrated that together with a demand for CBT projects from those interested in responsible tourism and businesses that follow a triple bottom line, communities can focus simultaneously on supply and demand, creating products that are market-ready, consumer-focused and community-led. Ultimately, we should not lose sight of the fact that community-based tourism is both an alternative strategy to the tourist market (in the form of local development) and a sophisticated product of the market itself (Ruiz-Ballesteros & Hernandez-Ramirez 2010, p. 201-202).

That said, there remains a gap in the literature regarding how this Third Way can be achieved in a practical sense, since examples of successful CBT projects that respond to market demand are rare. As stated earlier, although the literature has identified issues with market access as one of the key limitations to a viable and sustainable CBT, the problem may originate a little earlier in the business life cycle of CBT products. As Mielke & Pegas (2013, p. 7-8) identified, low market access is a key reason why CBT projects do not become sustainable after the investment period. Nevertheless, the problem does not originate with market access; the problem exists because either the community offers substandard products or establishes late-stage business relationships with intermediaries. Therefore the next section will address product development, specifically the creation and implementation of non-market ready products.

#### **1.4 Assessing the Tourism Potential of a Community-Based Tourism Product**

In response to the harm of mass tourism, community-based tourism surfaced in the 1970s, originating from the participatory and empowerment development models (Cater, 1993; De Kadt, 1979; Hall & Lew, 2009). The original ethos of community-based tourism prioritized, above all else, *the community*; however, as more CBT projects fail, recent academic and grey literature has shifted to a more market-focused approach. Dodds et al. (2016) have stated that issues with non-market ready products have been "mirrored in lessons learned" in the evaluations of past development projects. These evaluations argue that the first activity before going forward with CBT planning needs to be complete market research to determine if the community is appropriate for CBT development, or if other businesses opportunities should be pursued (World Bank, 2009; Häusler, 2006; WWF, 2001; Dodds et al., 2016). Although CBTs must produce community benefits and must encourage social development and ownership at a community level, projects also need to be market-oriented to succeed.

In Chapter 1.3, the thesis addressed the traditional sectoral boundaries of tourism planning and introduced, albeit briefly, Burton's (2004) and the author's take on the Third Way, which argues that the bi-polar delineation of tourism planning needs to be replaced with a system that includes both tourism and development-first rhetoric. This thesis argues that the first step is to accept that



economic sustainability and business-focused dimensions are critical to CBT sustainability, which Schott & Nhem (2018, p. 357) also argue. From that point onwards, it is important to understand that CBT products should not be supply-led or donor-drive (Dixey, 2008, p. 4), and should instead focus on market potential and demand. A focus on supply, rather than demand, perpetuates a “build it, and they will come” mentality, which grey literature, like Entrepreneur Magazine (Chait, 2013), argues often fails. A successful product, regardless of the industry, is seldom supply-led. Instead, it includes rigorous market testing and continuous engagement with the projected target audience, and whereas companies must ask themselves, "who are we building this product for? And do we have information to back up our theory?" (Chait, 2013) Furthermore, product ideas should be developed and tested with the private sector from the earliest stages of planning possible in order to understand the market in terms of potential and access (Hitchins & Highstead, 2005, p. 14).

### **1.4.1 The Importance of New Product Development**

Market evaluation, analysis, testing, and prototyping are all part of product development. Although identified as an essential step in creating a sustainable and economically viable tourism product, it seems that this particular step in the tourism product life cycle has received limited attention from tourism scholars.

The economist Raymond Vernon developed the product life cycle in the 1960s, and it is still widely used in marketing and economics. The original theory included four stages: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline (Vernon, 1979). Since then, new product development has become included in either the original theory or as a prerequisite to the implementation of the product life cycle. Product development can be a prerequisite for meeting the needs and demands of the market and ensuring profitability. However, new product development in tourism businesses has been, according to Komppula (2001), an overlooked theme in tourism marketing literature, with the majority of the research concentrated on destination development (p. 1).

Before addressing the theory of new product development, it is important to define the term "product." As defined by Gurbuz (2018), a product can be a physical object or a service and should satisfy the customer's needs and demands while simultaneously offering value. A product also has to include other specific elements, like providing customer services (Gurbuz, 2018, p. 57). At its core, new product development is the process of bringing an original product idea to market. It can include various stages, including idea generation for new products, idea evaluation, concept development and testing, marketing strategy, business analysis, product development, test marketing, and commercialization. At the end of each stage, businesses need

to assess whether they should continue to the next stage, reanalyze their product development, or look for more information (Gurubuz, 2018, p. 61).

Häusler (2006) argues that sometimes it is necessary to say no to community-based tourism. She gives the example of funding given to four villages in Thailand in 2001, all of which were located away from tourist centers, with some of them located in remote areas. In the project proposal, the business aspect was not addressed; instead, the donor organization asked the applicants to emphasize *gender* so that the proposal could be approved (p. 5). Epler Wood (2003) echoes this by stating:

"In a current study that my firm is undertaking for a development agency, my firm's team is finding that green loan funds, that fund only triple bottom line projects, receive dozens of ecotourism business proposals that are not viable because of a lack of understanding of business development and the marketplace. These green funds look at hundreds of proposals from a variety of industries and find the ecotourism industry, in particular, is churning out a large number of business proposals that cannot be considered at all for loans due to poor business planning." (p. 7)

In the end, a community need does not necessarily mean that a CBT project should be implemented. Häusler (2006) argues for a set of criteria that would allow for a general framework to evaluate a CBT tourism project idea before implementation. Her conditions include, but are not limited to, an appropriate infrastructure, good flight connections, experienced local tour operators, and a stable political system. This specific point can be seen in the journey of a Planeterra project. As mentioned earlier, the first step is identifying the location, because if the project is too far off the tourist trail, they will not engage or invest in that specific initiative (Planeterra, 2019).

The creation of a tourism product can be a complex process. CBT is a business, and it is part of a demand-driven value chain. Products cannot be simply designed and delivered. As a result, it is important to determine if the community is appropriate for CBT development or if other business opportunities should be pursued (Dodds et al., 2016). Once a product has been developed, the last step is market access or commercialization, which introduces the tourism product into the market. The following section finally discusses distribution, which is a part of the commercialization process and can help overcome problems with market access, one of the main CBT barriers identified by literature.

## **1.5 Introducing Products to the Market: Direct or Indirect Distribution Channels**

Distribution is regarded as one of the most critical managerial decisions, determining a company's competitiveness and profitability. In essence, distribution "is what makes the product available" (Wahab, Crampon & Rothfield, 1976, p. 96), and provides "the link between the producers of tourism services and their customers" (Gartner and Bachri, 1994, p. 164). According to Middleton (1994), "a distribution channel is any organized and serviced system paid from marketing budgets and created or utilized to provide convenient points of sale and/or access to consumers, away from the location of production and consumption." (as cited in Buhalis, 2000, p. 114). Unfortunately, this definition is not sufficient. It does not address channel members involved within various distribution channel models and focuses primarily on the traditional distribution system from the supply side (Buhalis, 2000). It also tends to overlook the different roles of intermediaries, ignores promotion and marketing research functions, and underestimates local distribution channels, such as destination-based inbound travel agents (Buhalis, 2000). Furthermore, the definition does not consider the emerging role of ICTs and the explosion of social media channels, which makes knowledge sharing easier. The decision to select either direct or indirect channels is dependent on the supplier's attitude towards different channels, the incurred costs, and the needs of the target markets (Stuart, Pearce & Weaver, 2005)

A study on distribution channels for cultural and heritage tourism by Pearce and Tan (2004) indicates that there are three significant factors determining suppliers' distribution channel choices: breadth of product appeal, capacity issues, and commission-related issues (p. 28). The first refers to the product's appeal to channel members and consumers since product popularity determines whether a product is included in tour packages. The second refers to the capacity issues of suppliers when dealing with the market. The last factor is linked to indirect distribution channels and dependent on financial interests (Nhem, 2016, p. 28). Nhem (2016) adds, "commission and/or markup are relatively common in indirect distribution channels, and it plays a critical role in determining the preference of channel usage" (p. 28). Many successful forms of marketing by CBT's are partnerships or networks with outside tour operators, emphasizing the importance of collaborations. As a result, there is a need for "linking the activities of different marketing intermediaries in such a way that they complement each other and maximize the benefits for CBT initiatives" (Forstner, 200, p. 511)

### **1.5.1 Indirect Distribution Channels: A Focus on Collaboration**

Collaborations or joint ventures with intermediaries or stakeholders are an example of an indirect distribution channel, and they represent only one part of the distribution system for

community-based tourism projects. Indirect distribution channels include an intermediary within the tourism supply chain and "refers to a point of sale where one or more intermediaries are involved in facilitating the sale process." (Nhem, 2016, p. 39). Cruz (2005) has identified the following functions which intermediaries perform on behalf of producers:

"Intermediaries can, through specialization, achieve better results in the field of distribution and selling than the producer himself. They have direct contact with the markets and potential customers which would be difficult and more costly for the producer; Intermediaries assemble the heterogeneous service of different producers into a "package" of services that are meaningful and attractive to the customer; Intermediaries not only create a complete package of tourist services but also are sources of information about destinations, types of services, their advantages and disadvantages, thus giving the potential tourist a wide range of choice and alternatives." (p. 99)

It is important to note that there can be multiple indirect distribution channel scenarios that can include multiple intermediaries within the value chain. Typical intermediaries can include (but are not limited to) travel agents, which can be divided into wholesalers and retail travel agents, specialty intermediaries, or tour operators. Furthermore, each specific stakeholder can contain subgroups.

Since tourism is dependent on many external factors, indirect distribution channels can include multiple stakeholders (Getz & Jamal, 1994), from public-private sector partnerships to public-private-community sector partnerships to community-private sector partnerships. Intermediaries can be an essential part of the development of a successful CBT project. The overall tourist experience includes a combination of interactions with various stakeholders, ranging from community members to private organizations, public actors, and even the general public, which help balance "dichotomous objectives of CBTE sustainability" (Ngo, Hales & Lohmann 2018b, p. 3). These linkages can help CBTs overcome their marketing challenges and find long term success (Dixey, 2008). CBTE collaborative marketing "refers to the involvement of stakeholders on the basis of their marketing resources, working with other stakeholders and with CBTEs to assist CBTEs in achieving their marketing objectives" (Ngo, Hales & Lohmann 2018b, p. 3). At the center of CBTE, collaborative marketing is the involvement of stakeholders through the tourism value chain. Accordingly, numerous studies have identified potential stakeholders who can assist CBTEs in marketing and promotion, which can include but are not limited to, tour operators, NGOs, development agencies, community-designated associations, local authorities, policymakers, and social institutions (Forstner, 2004).

Although the literature seems to have deemed intermediaries essential, debates still exist on the community benefits of these arrangements (Halstead, 2003). The first issue raised in the

literature is the possibility of an unequal power relationship between stakeholders and the community (Gray, 1985; Hardy & Phillips, 1998). Nevertheless, as outlined previously, a bottom-up approach that focuses on social capital, empowerment, or participation has demonstrated that significant results can be achieved. In these instances, local empowerment is essential, as it allows the community to decide which intermediaries they wish to work with autonomously, and therefore they can control their tourism product. As mentioned, participation should be bottom-up, active, and authentic; communities should be empowered to make decisions; and strategy should be clearly understood and outlined between all stakeholders, including the local community. Private companies, membership organizations, public sector institutions, and non-governmental organizations are needed to facilitate market access; however, CBT initiatives should be focused on a clear strategy agreed and understood by all stakeholders, in particular, the local community, working within existing social structures (WWF, 2001). In short, collaboration can overcome power imbalances by involving all stakeholders in a process that meets all of their needs.

The second issue with the introduction of indirect intermediaries is the price. Although intermediaries' involvement is "critical in market access, marketing and information provisions, bundling and packaging and finally booking and payment" (Schott & Nhem, 2018, p. 358), introducing intermediaries leads to commissions which impact the profit margins of the business. Intermediaries that do not work on commissions often mark up the CBT product's price, which can also lead to issues. Nhem & Schott (2018) explain in the case of the Banteay Chhmar CBT, the community has no control over the level of markup and often does not know the final product price. The cost of the final product is often inconsistent and can be made even higher, which can render the CBT product uncompetitive in the market (Schott & Nhem, 2018).

Issues of prices and the possibilities of power imbalances have been met with another solution: **direct distribution channels**. The recent growth and advancement of technology has empowered multichannel distribution and given tourism organizations the ability to bypass intermediaries and sell their services to the world-wide market, directly to their prospective consumers. Information communication technologies (ICTs) have become driving forces for local growth and cooperation between different stakeholders.

### **1.5.2 Direct Distribution Channels: eTourism and the digitalization of tourism**

The age of the Internet has given rise to the neo-consumer, an emerging breed of consumer that represents only a quarter of the population in developed countries, but controls half the

discretionary spending power of the economy. Neo-consumers are characterized by their tendency to travel, spend more than the average tourist, look for more authentic and experiential tourist opportunities, and use the Internet widely and often (Honeywill, 2002). With its suitability for the neo-consumer market segment, e-CBT represents a potentially strong influence in tourism development (Davison, Harris & Vogel, 2005, p. 1398).

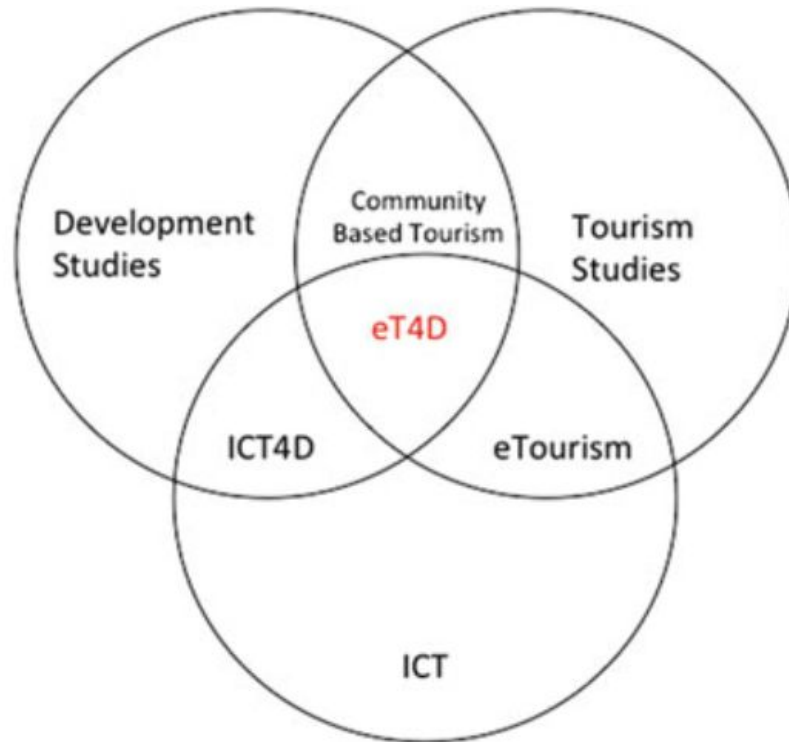
e-CBT is a term used by Davison et al., (2005) in their paper *E-commerce for Community-Based Tourism in Developing Countries*. E-commerce for community-based tourism (e-CBT) is defined as a mechanism for local development and involves promoting CBT activities across the Internet by the community using a locally-based telecentre. In essence, it advocates for direct community access to information communication technologies (ICTs) and, therefore, direct access to markets, thus fostering rural development. Commercialization and promotion, through the use of ICTs, can be an important step in CBT project implementation.

The empowerment that ICTs bring can also, as Ashley et al. (2001) have stated, mitigate tourism-related economic leakages in disadvantaged countries. Davison et al., (2005) argue that CBT has the potential to satisfy many of the lifestyle needs of neo-consumers and e-CBT represents an appropriate form of engaging with them, from promotion and marketing to sales transaction processing. In "its suitability for the neo-consumer market segment, e-CBT represents a potentially potent force in tourism development since the search for new and novel experiences is one of the major engines driving the tourism life cycle and CBT opens up new experiences that match those sought by neo-consumers" (p. 1398). The concept of e-CBT, merges development, tourism, and ICTs (see Figure 1.1), and this convergence can, according to Inversini, Rega, Pereira & Bartholo (2015), disrupt the imperialistic and postcolonialism tradition in developing countries, which means that CBT projects can accommodate alternative tourism demand and use the Internet to market and sell their products directly online. The authors also argue that local entrepreneurs can not only directly participate in the market, but they can also enhance their economic and social status through ICTs, thus generating socio-economic development (Inversini et al., 2015).

Direct distribution channels connect the supply directly with the demand without the need for intermediaries. There are two types of direct distribution channels: office (phone and walk-in) and online (brand website, email, social media, internet booking engines) Direct distribution channels play a key role in the consumer's travel experience, from how they research and book their holiday, to ongoing engagement while they are traveling on social networks, to posting reviews on sites like TripAdvisor or Yelp. The Digital 2019 report from Hootsuite and We Are Social reveals that as of January 2019, there were 4.388 billion internet users and 3.484 billion active social media users. That means that more than 50% of the world population is now online.

As a result of this, the reality in the tourism industry today is "that if you are not online, you are not on sale" (WTO, 1999).

**Figure 1.1: An Outline of the Concepts Needed for eT4D**



*Source:* Inversini, Rega, Pereira & Bartholo (2015)

Although the advantages seem attractive, problems can occur in terms of access to resources and services, issues with capacity building and training, or a possible information overload wherein community members suffer from a technological culture shock (Davison et al., 2005, p. 1399). Critics argue that ICTs can create a digital divide, leading to digital and social gaps between people who already have computers and access to the Internet and those who do not. For tourists and destinations with no access to the Internet, this means being unable to participate in the emerging digital marketplace or benefit from arising opportunities (Minghetti and Buhalis, 2010), thus creating or deepening economic and social disparities between those who have access to ICTs and those that do not. In fact, according to Davison et al., (2005) "to push a community from an uninformed, Internet-free world into an information-overloaded, Internet surrounded world in a matter of a few weeks or months must constitute an immense culture shock and a threat to traditional values and ways of life" (p. 1399). As a result of this, if e-CBT is pursued, the transition must be treated with care. Minghetti & Buhalis (2010) argue that from the destination side, these issues, which include lack of knowledge and low accessibility, can mean that the organizations will be more dependent on external intermediaries in accessing the global market. According to Warschauser (2004), "what is most important about ICTs is not so much

the availability of a computing device or the Internet line, but rather the people's ability to make use of that device and line to engage in meaningful social practices." (p. 38).

In conclusion, this sections looked at the efficacy of direct and indirect distribution channels in overcoming the literature identified barrier of CBT success — market access (Mitchell & Hall, 2005; Forstner, 2004; Tasci et al., 2014; Iorio & Corsale, 2014; World Bank, 2009) — and attempted to take a step back from questions about commercialization. Instead, this chapter discussed the implementation of new product development as a prerequisite to the product life cycle. However, whether the thesis addresses market-ready products or market access, one of the common cross-cutting themes discussed throughout the chapters is the importance of networks and collaborative partnerships in creating a successful CBT. As a result, the next section will address these transversal topics through the theoretical lens of actor-network theory and stakeholder collaboration theory, and how these two theories, in tandem, appear to aid in the implementation of successful CBT initiative.

## 1.6 Tourism Value Chains: A Collaborative Network between Enablers and Drivers

A value chain describes "the full range of activities that are required to bring a product or service from conception, through the intermediary phases of production and delivery to final consumers, and final disposal after use" (Kaplinsky, 2004, p. 75). Activities of a value chain include design, production, marketing, distribution, and support services up to the final consumer. The International Labour Organization (ILO) Value Chain Development (VCD) approach, although not explicitly developed for tourism, can be useful in understanding market dynamics and the relationships between different actors in the tourism value chain. The VCD approach takes a closer look at how products go to the market and the roles of different actors in that specific process. There is a need to interact with different market players, comprehend their roles and needs, and identify bottlenecks or obstacles to understand the way the market works. Once obstacles are identified, market-led solutions are provided, such as the introduction of private sector actors with links to the market to create a mutually beneficial partnership (Nutz & Siever, 2015).

**Table 1.6: A Description of Enablers & Drivers**

ENABLERS	DRIVERS
<p>Actors that <i>enable</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The "Gatekeeper" = knowledge brokers who make decisions in determining how knowledge is introduced, explored, and</li> </ul>	<p>Actors that <i>drive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The "Boundary Spanner" = connecting local knowledge with market insights (Phi et al., 2018).</li> </ul>



<p>utilized on a local level (Phi et al., 2017).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This includes the government, public institutions, NGOs, and service providers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This includes private sector organizations and individuals, such as entrepreneurs, tourism operators, tourism experts</li> </ul>
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As argued by the ILO, the key to success is unearthing the root cause of the problem by understanding the system and finding solutions alongside the major players in the value chain. The ILO VCD approach understands that this network or chain should include — from the beginning up until the implementation of the value chain development process — actors that 'enable' (government, service providers), as well as actors who 'drive' (private sector actors) economic growth, assure commitment and ownership (GIZ, 2015) (See Table 1.6). Furthermore,

"value chain (VC) development initiatives will only succeed when market actors (the private sector) are in the driver's seat and have worthwhile incentives (e.g., more stable income). Projects do not create markets and economic growth, value chain actors do. The role of development agencies and projects is to facilitate market change. Such a change could be, for example, improving the quality and availability of services to enterprises, which in turn improves the performance of VC actors" (GIZ, 2015, p. 9).

The VCD approach and the above quotation highlights the importance of the private sector in facilitating economic growth and addresses the need for cross-sectoral collaborative partnerships in the development and maintenance of a value chain. This idea is echoed in Phi et al. (2017), who argue that actors and their contexts are significant factors in shaping knowledge dynamics (p. 6). In their specific case study of the CBT process in Mai Hich, Vietnam, the involvement and knowledge contributions of different actors across private, public, and third sectors were essential in the CBT innovation process (p. 11). Iorio & Corsale's (2013) case study in Viscri, Romania, demonstrates that synergies created by networking pushed Viscri towards a form of CBT that needed the inclusion of outsider actors and the mediation of a local leader (p. 249). This local leader, which they also call the "cosmopolitan local" (a resident with external exposure), was a respected and trusted community member that also knew how to build social capital. In this specific case study, this local leader built a network of stakeholders while simultaneously preventing the community from feeling as if they were being ruled by outsiders (p. 252).

As mentioned in Chapter 1.3, Burns (2004) has argued that traditional sectoral boundaries are clear in tourism, creating a dichotomous separation between development-first and tourism-first projects, an issue also identified by Richards, Suansri & Van Hee (2018). They argue that CBTs require a dual strategy that addresses both tourism potential and community potential. The problem is that this separation between supply and demand or community and market, cannot

and should not exist in the CBT value chain. According to Phills, Deiglmeier, and Miller (2008, p. 1), "the most difficult and important social problems cannot be understood, let alone solved, without involving the nonprofit, public, and private sectors." Social innovation rarely occurs in isolation but is rather driven by collaborative ecologies that transcend sectors (Phi et al., 2017, p. 1); therefore, collaborative and cross-sectoral knowledge dynamics play an essential role in understanding each step in the value chain process of community-based tourism.

Collaboration is often used as a synonym for cooperation and provides for a flexible and dynamic process that evolves, enabling multiple stakeholders to address problems jointly (Gray, 1989). Based on an examination of the literature and through the adaptation of Gray's (1989) definition, Getz & Jamal (1994) see collaboration for CBT planning as a process "of joint decision-making among autonomous, key stakeholders of an inter-organizational community tourism domain to resolve planning problems of the domain or to manage issues related to the planning and development of the domain" (p. 188). Stakeholders are actors with interest in a common problem or issue and can include individuals, groups, or organizations "directly influenced by the actions others take to solve a problem" (Gray 1989, p. 5).

Throughout academic and grey literature, there have been multiple mentions of multi-sector, inter-organizational collaborations, from the public to private sector partnerships to joint ventures, and the role that stakeholders play within these partnerships. Through case study research in Zambia, Dixey (2005) argues that joint ventures between communities and private companies can be successful and that "the government needs to view CBT as a private sector activity in which it has a critical facilitation role to create a conducive environment" (p. 104). Halstead (2003) advocates community ownership and management from the outset with only a slight external touch. Zapata et al. (2011) advocate for training, policy advocacy, and joint marketing with a specific focus on domestic markets instead of international markets. Dodds et al. (2016) agree that domestic markets are becoming more feasible for countries with a rising middle class. However, the authors also state that most tourists do not buy a CBT experience as a stand-alone product. Instead, tourists rely on tour operators or accommodation providers to include a CBT experience as one part of an overall packaged trip. Other models of ownership encourage joint public and private sector partnerships, as private sector members might be hesitant indirectly partnering with a community. Mielke (2009) argues that NGO participation is essential, while Forstner (2004) argues for an inclusive and supportive framework that includes a range of stakeholders.

Although there is no overall consensus in the literature regarding the ideal collaborative partnership or the different roles that stakeholders can assume, the value of government, public or private sector support for CBTs is highlighted as an essential factor in developing a sustainable CBT project. In short, backing is necessary, whether from the public or private

domains (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013). Since the literature agrees that a collaborative network of partnerships is essential in the creation and diffusion of any CBT product, a stakeholder theory of collaboration could be implemented in this context as the theory involves analyzing linkages between multiple stakeholders (Dixey, 2008; Mbaiwa, Stronza, & Kreuter, 2011). Many different stakeholders have a part to play, including mainstream tour operators, tourists, government, NGOs, external investors, tourism organizations, and other public bodies. Townsend (2006, p. 14) points out that "each sector should focus on using its skills and experience to promote CBTs, rather than do everything." Therefore, a stakeholder theory of collaboration could integrate all of these players, including the local community, intermediaries, and the market. Power relations are included within collaborative theory; however, it is frequently assumed that collaboration can overcome power imbalances by involving all stakeholders in a process that meets their needs (Reed, 1997, p. 567).

Tourism is also a multidimensional spatial practice, "involving cultural, material and social elements and in order to understand its development one must look into the ordering relations of tourism" (Jóhannesson, 2005, p. 140). In an attempt to intersect tourism and actor-network theory (ANT), Van Der Duim (2007) introduces a new concept called "tourismscapes." In this framework, tourism is seen as a heterogeneous collective network of actors in continuous motion, in which the network includes three actants: actors, non-human entities, and interactions.

The first group, the actors, includes both the visitors/tourists who consume tourism services/products as well as producers who provide them. The second group, the non-human entities, is diverse and includes objects, natural environments, means of communication, technologies (Facebook, TripAdvisor), services (e.g., sports activities, financial services), and others. The third group, the interactions, connects these human and non-human entities. Accordingly, from the ANT perspective, Van Der Duim (2007, p. 967) re-conceptualizes tourism through the idea of tourismscapes as "actor-networks connecting, within and across different societies and regions, transport-systems, accommodation and facilities, resources, environments, technologies, and people and organizations" (Van Der Duim, 2007).

ANT creates space for understanding and appreciating the role of nature, materials, and technologies in creating tourism products. Humans are not isolated; they have developed these technologies that create flows of languages, cultures, and communication mediated by the tools they use. Technology and social media have tremendously affected tourism development and social interaction within the last couple of years. Thus, the tourism industry consists of different networks, consisting of human and non-human actants that are intertwined through collaborative arrangements (Jóhannesson, 2005).

Savage, Bunn, Gray, Xiao, Wang, Wilson, & Williams (2010), argue that three sets of factors can influence collaborative advantage:

- "Appreciative linkages, e.g., the extent of shared goals,
- Structural features of the collaboration, e.g., how tightly coupled and institutionalized it is and the power differential among partners and,
- Processual issues, e.g., the degree of trust among partners and the quality of leadership" (p. 24)

Phi et al. (2018) mention that knowledge dynamics should include the involvement of multi-sectoral actors at multi-levels, wherein knowledge exchange, being fluid and dynamic, can move in an upward and downward direction. These collaborations, networks, and partnerships help shape information and knowledge flow, thus strengthening the overall process. However, it is also important to note that there is no one-size-fits-all CBT value chain, as different actors will take on different roles in the network. In the Mai Hich CBT, in Vietnam, for example, the local NGO was seen as the "gatekeeper" who "initiated and was responsible for CBT development in the area" (Phi et al., 2017, p. 13).

Although theories like the stakeholder theory of collaboration or the actor-network theory can be used to explain specific topics and themes addressed within this chapter, they still do not adequately tackle all the topics, themes, and questions raised within this literature review. Although the roles of stakeholders can differ, the literature has demonstrated the importance of a market and community co-evolution perspective (Ruiz-Ballesteros & Hernandez-Ramirez, 2010, p. 213). Both enablers and drivers, and how they interact with non-human actants, like technology, are included in the network.

### **1.6.1 Enablers + Drivers = Cross-sectoral Collaborative Partnerships**

As explained throughout this chapter, after a thorough analysis of CBT literature, there are specific steps that need to be completed before addressing the literature identified barrier of market access:

- **Refine the definition of CBT.** The first step is to redefine the concept of CBT. As previously mentioned, literature has primarily focused on the community development side of the CBT, however, at its core, a community-based tourism product is a commercial product and "a community-based tourism product cannot sustain itself without tourists" (Mtapuri, Giampiccoli & Jugmohan, 2015, p. 2).

*thus allowing for*

- **Acceptance of the Third Way.** The acceptance that CBT products can be demand-driven while simultaneously addressing the needs of the community will allow for products that are community-led, market-ready, and consumer-focused.

*which will help*

- **Create and maintain cross-sectoral collaborative partnerships.** According to Scheyvens (2002), collaboration lowers the risk of failure for CBT, and it is rare to find a CBT project initiated and controlled entirely by the community. The redefinition of the term and the acceptance of a Third Way will allow for more possibilities of partnerships with the private sector. As mentioned previously, literature has argued that public organizations, government, and NGOs often do not have the practical business expertise to develop commercially viable tourism products, so the inclusion of the private sector will allow for the integration of business acumen within projects (Phi et al., 2016, pg 3).

Before addressing questions regarding market access or product development, there should be a fundamental shift in the way literature perceives and discusses community-based tourism products. Authors like Armstrong (2012) and Ngo et al., (2018a) have adopted the term "community-based tourism enterprises" to demonstrate that projects need to have a commercial mindset and plan for financial viability from the beginning. Nevertheless, as demonstrated throughout this chapter, there remains a gap between development- and tourism-first approaches. A third way allows for the consolidation of these two approaches, which can create a CBT product that simultaneously focuses on the needs of the community while still being demand-driven. Once steps one and two are finalized, the third step requires the inclusion of enablers and drivers in the CBT process from the very beginning.

As Burns (2004) argued, tourism is a private sector activity that needs to operate within a regulatory framework that enables fair competition and a fair deal for the local inhabitants (Burns, 2004, p. 37). The community should work in unison with multiple sectoral actors to create a tourism product that will ultimately allow for an equitable distribution of benefits between all actors. Social innovation is driven by collaborative ecologies that go beyond sectors (Phi et al., 2017, p. 1); therefore, collaborative and cross-sectoral knowledge dynamics play an essential role in understanding each step in the value chain process of community-based tourism.

At the moment, there seems to be no consensus in the literature regarding:

- Who are the key actors;

- What different roles they could assume, and;
- At what points in the value chain do these actors need to be inserted?

For example, NGOs might be needed to develop the community potential of a CBT project, which lies at the beginning of the process. They can help community members understand what tourism is and prepare them to participate in the industry. From that point on, private actors can be included in the process, in a variety of different roles, from capacity-builders to intermediaries to full-blown partners.

Various models of CBT initiatives exist, ranging from public to private sector partnerships and joint ventures. Debates exist on the community benefits of these arrangements, and some feel that external agents should not be heavily involved (Halstead, 2003). However, without these external arrangements, a CBT project may never produce results and intended benefits. Rebecca Armstrong (2012) argues that early-on engagement with the private sector is imperative, and "strong and collaborative relationships, partnerships and strategic alliances with the private sector will offer access to its knowledge of the market and its ability to find the best route to it (p. 29). However, Armstrong does not specify the type of partnership, whether a joint venture or more informal collaboration would work best. Zapata et al., (2011) believe that market strategies, with a focus on ICTs, need to be developed alongside a "shift in the attention of donors and policy-makers toward redistribution politics that strengthen the skills, resources and conditions of micro, community-based and family entrepreneurship, together with a stronger orientation towards the domestic markets" (p. 11). Forstner (2014) argues for the inclusion of multiple stakeholders, such as government and NGOs, as well as the private sector. Harrison and Schipani (2007) along with CTO (2006) also assert that partnerships with private sector tourism enterprise are crucial to the economic success of most CBT projects along while others (Ivers, Rega, Pereira, Bathrolo, 2015; Heeks, 2010; Payton, Morals, and Heath; Roman & Colle; 2003) argue for the community's participation in the ICT revolution and for the opportunity for communities to "sell and promote their services on a worldwide market, building direct rapport with customers and bypassing intermediaries" (Minghetti & Buhalis, 2010).

Regardless of the structure of the value chain, it seems as if the only constant need is the inclusion of both enablers and drivers that can facilitate cross-sectoral knowledge exchanges to create multi-sector collaborative partnerships that will, in the end, facilitate viable CBT projects.

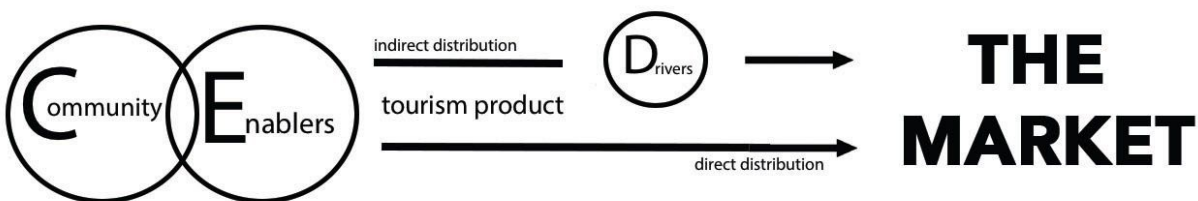
### **1.6.2 A Reimagined CBT Approach**

The literature has identified two main barriers to CBT success, (i) a lack of governance and (ii) a lack of market access. Literature has mostly focused on discussing solutions to overcoming the former barrier, governance. As outlined in Chapter 1.2, meaningful participation in all stages of decision-making, community empowerment, local ownership, benefit-sharing mechanisms, and social capital can help overcome ineffective governance. The literature argues that this is often seen in *bottom-up* projects, but the author argues that these initiatives can be implemented in either *top-down* or *bottom-up* projects.

Although the other issue is identified as market access, literature has demonstrated that the problem is much deeper than deciding whether to use direct or indirect distribution channels when marketing a CBT product. Figure 1.2 outlines the current CBT approach outlined by the literature and as analyzed by the author. The literature seems to demonstrate that once **enablers** overcome governance issues, they also tend to create a total tourism product without much consultation or interaction with the market or private organizations, also known as **drivers**.

Häusler (2006), who worked as a consultant for the Bolivian Department for Protected Area Management from August 2003 to July 2006, gives the example of Bolivia, which at the time, was receiving a lot of international support from organizations like the WWF and Conservation International to create their community-based tourism projects. Häusler (2006) noticed that more than 80 projects were created, all of which had the same characteristics (construction of a lodge) and lacked a fundamental understanding of the CBT project's ideal target group. In Figure 1.2, there is an apparent connection between the community and enablers; however, the drivers are found much later in the value chain and are not always consulted — this is because choosing direct distribution might mean that, in some situations, drivers are not present in the value chain.

**Figure 1.2: The Current CBT Approach as Identified by Literature**



In conclusion, this chapter deals with two different divergent literature reviews, which focus on the two reasons why community-based tourism projects have often failed: **governance** and **market access**. The Chapter has led to the question of whether it is indeed feasible to include both enablers and drivers within all steps of the community-based tourism value chain. As

referenced extensively throughout this thesis, community-based tourism has primarily been developed based on a community's assets and objectives because the "core of CBT planning has been to determine how best to use it as a development tool" (Dodds et al., 2016, pg. 1561). As a result, there has been a strong focus on the supply side and a lack of focus on demand.

Today, community-based tourism is still used mainly as a development tool, and the same questions regarding governance and market access are being researched and written about, still without the inclusion of the drivers of the CBT value chain. However, literature has also demonstrated that if **drivers** are not included in the CBT project's overall planning process, the projects often end up lacking a demand-driven approach, which can lead to CBT failure. The Third Way advocates for a mixture between a development- and tourism-first approach, and as a result, the author believes that another CBT model needs to be constructed that includes both sides of the community-based tourism coin. The arguments and assumptions drawn from this specific literature review, which includes the current CBT model outlined in Figure 1.2, will be examined with insights gathered from a case study, tested and supplemented through additional methodologies, thus allowing for a multi-method case study. The methodologies used, outlined in the next chapter, will allow for the topics, themes, and questions raised within this thesis to be explored and later analyzed in Chapter 4, the discussion section of this thesis.



## CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH APPROACH, METHODOLOGY, AND LIMITATIONS

This thesis strives to understand the current situation of community-based tourism, specifically in the context of Brazil. In this chapter, the researcher has chosen to speak of herself using "I" as, just like Hall (2003), she believes that it suits a discussion that focuses on one's reflexivity.

It is impossible to define the CBT network in Brazil as a homogenous group of individuals with a shared problem. Multiple CBT organizations and networks within the country draw on their own experiences. As a Canadian woman with European roots, I possessed a limited amount of first-hand knowledge about the intricacies of this network in Brazil. As an academic researcher, my research objectives have often reflected my subjectivities (Jaggar, 2008, p. 196). Moreover, I had been to Brazil only once before as a tourist and had never previously interacted with community-based tourism projects or members within these types of organizations. Until I arrived in Brazil, most of my opinions and research objectives were drawn from secondary research.

As a Westerner, I understood that power imbalances existed between myself and the individuals that I wished to interview in Brazil. As Wolf eloquently states, the most central dilemma in fieldwork "is power and the unequal hierarchies or levels of control that are often maintained, perpetuated, created and re-created during and after the field research" (Wolf, 1996, p. 2). These power structures can become apparent through power exerted during the research process, power differences due to the different positions of the interviewees, and the possibility of power exerted on post-fieldwork conclusions through the writing process (Wolf, 1996, p. 2).

As such, this chapter outlines how I attempted to overcome the process of implicating myself in the Self/Other dichotomy and describes the approach and the methodology that I applied during my research. More specifically, Section 2.1 highlights the reasons for adopting a qualitative approach and a case study research strategy. It also discusses the influences of my positionalities as a researcher. Section 2.2 outlines how the study developed over time, addressing the multiple methods and techniques employed for collecting data and for analysis. Section 2.3 is devoted to issues relating to anonymity and confidentiality. It is important to note that although no section examines the methodological limitations of the study, these limitations are outlined in each particular section, often at the end.

## **2.1 From Theory to a Methodological Framework**

Just like Alice in Wonderland, I wanted to fall down the rabbit hole. As a scholar, I acknowledge that I have research objectives created by my preconceived notions, which in turn were shaped by my subjectivities. These objectives were also formed through the ideas and arguments presented within the secondary research that I had read beforehand. Consequently, I decided to move to Brazil, with no clear plan of action to broaden my horizon about the topic. I wanted to let my environment and my interviewees guide me in searching for answers. As a result, I believe that spontaneity in my fieldwork allowed for a profound understanding of the problem that my thesis wishes to solve.

Before setting foot on Brazilian soil, I decided that I would adopt an exploratory research approach, applying in-depth semi-directive interviews and complementary participation observation. I believed that this method would encourage individuals to "explain how they viewed their circumstances, to define issues in their terms, to identify processes leading to different outcomes and to interpret the meaning of their lives to the researcher, rather than merely identifying the outcomes" (Cuadraz & Uttal, 1999, p. 160). I also wanted to apply a case study approach as "in general, case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events" (Yin, 2003, p. 1). Lastly, although I had written a proposal outlining my limited and preconceived ideas of Brazilian community-based tourism projects, I wished to follow a grounded theory approach to discover new topics and ideas from the collection of data that I would later analyze.

Adopting a qualitative and case study approach meant that I needed to consider my influence on the research process and the possible outcomes. I understand and accept that my subjectivities can be reflected in the research design, the formulation of the questions, and the overall implementation of the project. As a result, my various positionalities in the research process are examined below, accompanied by discussions and explanations.

### **2.1.1. Positionalities of the Researcher**

I, as the researcher and author of this thesis, acknowledge that knowledge can be seen as a social product (Mannheim, 1952). A reflective approach to the creation of knowledge allows the researcher to think about how their role and environment shape their research. To achieve this type of self-awareness, the researcher must begin a self-reflection process, wherein they question what they bring with them into the field. Analyzing one's own identity implies an understanding of "the self." Several authors have suggested that "the self" is a social and political construct, and consists of multiple subjectivities, of many "I's" (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004; Wearing &

Wearing, 2001). Following the path and methodology of another researcher and her self-reflexive exercise in defining and addressing the various "I's" present within her research process, I have decided to focus on how I, the researcher and author, have been "active in the construction of interpretations of [the] experiences" (Goodson & Phillimore, 2004, p. 40) which I had in the context of my "engagement with Others" (Galani-Moutafi, 2000, p. 222).

### **"I" as a culturally embedded individual: cultural background, gender, age, class, race, values**

I am a thirty-three-year-old Canadian woman who began this process back in 2014, at the age of twenty-seven. Although I was born in Toronto, I was raised in a European household. Both my parents immigrated to Canada in their late twenties. My mother and father came to Canada in the 80s and had to work from the bottom up. They spoke no English and entered into a foreign country with the belief that it would allow them to have a better life than the one they had left behind. They had only one child, me. I was raised in a middle-class household, never introduced to poverty nor the upper-class. Both my mother and father worked full-time to support the family. Although we were not rich, my European heritage, combined with the fact that my mother had made sure that I had dual citizenship (Polish and Canadian), meant that I spent many of my summers traveling to Europe. Traveling ignited my passion for languages, as well as my sense of adventure. I continued to travel in my teens. In my twenties, I spent time abroad, as a student, as a trainee or job seeker, in various countries, including France, Belgium, Panama, Chile, and, later, Brazil. Some of the strong values that were passed on to me either by my family, or other people I met in my life, are open-mindedness, curiosity, and respect. My travels taught me to adapt to several different cultures. Although at the time, this was a frustrating experience, in retrospect, I recognize that it has been a valuable lesson in the difficulties, as well as the significance of understanding *others*.

**Implications for the study:** I am aware that my age, gender, race, and the country I have come from may have influenced the research process. However, I believe that my status as a Canadian or more accurately, an *outsider*, had the most significant impact on the research process, more so than my age, gender, class, or race.

Many of the individuals I interviewed possessed a similar profile to my own; they were either academics or in the development field, in their 30s or early 40s, spoke English as a second language and were mostly female. As a result, I do not believe that my gender, age or the color of my skin had a real impact on the research process. However, this observation is solely based on my impression, and therefore I cannot provide evidence to the contrary.

Before traveling to Brazil, I understood that my status as a Canadian or an *outsider* might make potential respondents hesitant to speak with me or include me in the Brazilian CBT network. I

already had prior experience as an *outsider* when I was completing my MA research about feminist movements and abortion in Chile; my experience in Chile informed my experience in Brazil. I expected that my presence in Brazil would define me as the *outsider* or the "gringa" who is trying to understand the complexities of the movement within a completely different context than that of her own. My academic training has taught me about the dangers of perpetuating the Self/Other dichotomy, wherein the Western researcher gives a voice to the Third World individual. To minimize the possible hegemonic and disempowering construction of the "other" I wanted to apply two methods. First, I drafted an entirely open-ended research problem, allowing for an aspect of discovery. I intended to "enter the field with no preconceptions or structuring of the data, including sampling groups" (Cuadraz & Uttal, 1999, p. 166). My research questions also followed a semi-structured format to allow for new themes and topics to be addressed. Second, as an outsider with little preconceptions of the CBT network within Brazil, I wanted to become an informed researcher. Similar to my experience in Chile, I decided to step back and become an observer within the country before I even started my research. This role allowed me to learn about Brazilian politics, cultural practices, and perfect my Portuguese language skills. I spent over two years in Brazil — six months in São Paulo, studying at the Universidade de São Paulo and learning Portuguese and one and a half years living in Rio de Janeiro.

### **"I" as a researcher in tourism studies**

My academic curriculum includes a B.Soc.Sc (a bachelor's in social sciences) in International Studies and Modern Languages and an MA in International Development and Globalization with a focus on Women's Studies. My interests as a Master's student were primarily born out of a keen fascination with the culture and identity of societies adapting and growing within the era of globalization. As I strongly identified (and still identify) myself with the women's movement and labeled myself as a third-wave feminist, I decided during my two years at the University of Ottawa to focus my research thesis on women's rights in Chile.

Up until I started my doctorate, my academic career had been focused on politics and international development. After spending more than six years within this discipline, I decided to focus on tourism as I believed that it perfectly merged my two passions: international development and travel. I also believed, and still do, that done correctly, tourism can influence real change on a community-level, more so than development-only initiatives. As a result, disciplines, like tourism studies, can "draw upon all sorts of knowledge that may illuminate them" (Henkel, 1988, p. 188). I also wished to draw upon my background in politics, development, and women's studies throughout my doctoral journey. My desire to merge my passions was further strengthened in 2015 when I noticed that international development rhetoric had included discussions about the impacts of tourism on development.

*Among other features of my profile as a tourism researcher are:*

(1) I worked on and off during my Ph.D. journey in various full-time and part-time positions, which delayed thesis submission and graduation. During my time as a doctoral candidate, I did receive some funding, which included a mobility scholarship in 2015.

(2) the context in which I did the research, and time and place in particular. I spent over two years living full-time in Brazil, working, volunteering, and interacting with individuals working within tourism and, more particularly, community-based tourism in Brazil.

**Implications for the study:** Although I do not have an academic background in tourism, I believe that my multidisciplinary bachelor and masters in international studies, international development, and women's studies have had a profound impact on my research. Many might assume that the absence of specific specialization in an academic discipline is a weakness; however, I believe that it was an asset that allowed me to look at the complexity of tourism through multiple viewpoints. I believe that an absence of specialization feeds and shapes the inquiry process as my researcher's mind is open to all theories and possibilities. In reality, tourism does not deal with only one particular theme; it is a fusion of different fields brought together and touched upon by all disciplines. Moreover, for this reason, I believe that a multidisciplinary approach allows for creativity and enhances critical thinking. That said, I also believe that a lack of specialization can also place a junior researcher in an uncomfortable position, making them continuously struggle with a range of uncertainties regarding the validity of their work.

Furthermore, my time in Brazil shaped the pace of my research progress and was not limited to short academic holidays filled with periods of intense work. I had the freedom and the ability to submerge myself in the CBT network in Brazil and understand its successes, issues, and intricacies.

### **"I" as a marketing manager**

Along with beginning my Ph.D. journey in 2014, I also began a new professional path as a social media strategist at Social Lab. After leaving my position at Social Lab, I was able to work online as a freelance marketing manager at multiple positions. Upon my return to Brussels in March 2018, I continued to work as a marketing manager in various positions while simultaneously writing my thesis dissertation.

**Implications for the study:** Upon my arrival in Europe in March 2018, I attended the Tourism Intelligence Exchange Forum (t-Forum) in Mallorca, Spain. The t-Forum states that it has one single mission: the transfer of knowledge or intelligence to and within tourism; in short, to bridge the gap in tourism between theory and practice. As mentioned, there has been a research-practice gap that has been extensively identified in tourism literature (Mair, Merton, & Smith, 2014;

Whitford & Ruhanen, 2010). Although I was aware of this gap, my experience at the t-Forum allowed me to comprehend better that there is still minimal cross-sectoral knowledge production and exchange between industry and academia in tourism. I believe that theory and practice must go hand-in-hand when discussing tourism; however, I also believe that very few individuals can see both the industry and academic perspective simultaneously. Tourism is practical by nature, and there is a need for more academics that also have real-life practical experience. As a result, I believe that my practical experience in marketing, my time as a marketing manager for various for-profit, nonprofit, and government institutions and my background in academia allows for an industry and an academic perspective that, when merged, create a dissertation with results that can be implemented on a practical level. The importance of practical knowledge has also led me to present a dissertation that is informed by both grey and academic literature to present ideas and arguments from both theory and practice.

### **"I" and how I relate to Brazil**

I had been to Brazil once before I started to work on the study. My interest in Brazil emerged years before conducting the study. I first visited Rio de Janeiro when I was living in Santiago, Chile, where I completed my MA in International Development and Globalization with a specialization in Women's Studies at the University of Ottawa.

I was acquainted with the country through a Brazilian male friend that I met several years prior in Paris. As I arrived in Rio de Janeiro, I was introduced to Brazilian life through the eyes of a local — his way of life, his perceptions of Brazil, traditions, myths, and issues regarding governance, safety, tourism, and development. The city of Rio de Janeiro had a profound impact on me and was one of the reasons I decided to focus on the country for my thesis dissertation. In addition to the stories shared with me by my Brazilian friend and his circle of friends and family, my knowledge and preconceptions of the country, before I returned, were based on TV documentaries, online news stories, and Brazilian movies, specifically the movies *City of God* and *Elite Squad*, both of which depict violence and drug dealings in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro.

**Implications for the study:** My relationships have influenced my decision to select Brazil as a case study, but they also determined my research interest. Indeed, based on Habermas' work, Tribe (2004) explains that the pursuit of knowledge is never free of interest. My primary motivation was to understand the process through which tourism develops in a South American destination. As stated beforehand, I have always had a specific affinity for Latin American countries. Once I started to research the topic of development and tourism, specifically looking at community-run tourism projects in the context of South America, I realized that there existed a significant gap between the reality of the community-based network in Brazil and the existing literature about tourism in Brazil.

Several reasons might explain this gap. First, previous research has demonstrated that there exists a limited amount of information about tourism in Brazil. Studies have shown that although Brazil is the largest country in Latin America, travelers only visit specific cities and regions. Valente (2019) reported that Rio de Janeiro continues to be the favorite destination for leisure tourists, representing 32.2% of this group, followed by Florianópolis (17.9%), Foz do Iguaçu (13.2%) and São Paulo (9.1% ). Furthermore, "Sun and Beach" tourism continues to be the main attraction for tourists coming to Brazil, responsible for 68.8% of the motivation for leisure travel. Although present in Brazil, the sustainable travel movement is quite small, and therefore gathering information about rural and community projects outside of the tourist circuit proved to be challenging and time-consuming. There was thus a need to gain insight from the perspectives of all tourism stakeholders to understand how the tourism system worked (and still works) in regards to community-based tourism in Brazil and how it shapes the industry's development.

### **"I" as a tourist and permanent resident of Brazil**

I originally arrived in Brazil in January 2016 with a student visa that would allow me to study at the University of Sao Paulo for 12 months. I spent a limited amount of time on campus, and after six months, I decided to move permanently to Rio de Janeiro. In June 2016, I moved into a hostel called Favela Experience, located in the Vidigal favela. For the next three months, I was a volunteer at the hostel, which promoted community development and tourism in the favela, and a permanent resident within the community. In January 2018, I married a Brazilian man and began my permanent residency application, which was granted in May 2018. I am currently a permanent resident of Brazil.

**Implication for the study:** As stated in "I" as a culturally embedded individual, I understood that my status as a Canadian or an *outsider*, might make potential respondents hesitant in speaking with me or including in me the CBT network. As a result, I wanted my profile to be more substantial than that of a regular tourist profile. During my time in Brazil, I was a tourist before becoming a permanent resident; I lived in a favela where I would hear gunshots outside my window and lived in Ipanema, one of the most affluent neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro. I believe that my lived experiences allowed for a deeper understanding of not only tourism in Brazil but the culture, traditions, politics, and language. This understanding was also born out of the fact that I ended up marrying a Brazilian man.

My time in Brazil allowed for "extended immersion in a culture and participation in its day-to-day activities" (Calhoun, 2002). There are four stages of participant observation: establishing rapport, immersing oneself in the field, recording data, and then consolidating the information that has been gathered (DeWalt, DeWalt & Wayland, 2008). Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte (1999) refer to participation as a means of almost total immersion in an



unfamiliar culture to study others' lives through the researcher's participation as a full-time resident of that culture. I understood that several things could potentially affect whether I would be accepted in the community, including my age, gender, class, or ethnicity, again touched upon in 'I' as a culturally embedded individual. Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte (1999) further point out that all researchers should experience a feeling of exclusion at some point in the research process, usually during the beginning (p. 18). As a researcher, I understood that I needed to recognize what the exclusion would mean for the research process and that I would face particular barriers as an outsider.

My time in Brazil allowed me to build a rapport, become friends with, and ultimately be, in my opinion, somewhat accepted in the Brazilian CBT community. Nevertheless, I also acknowledge that one of the limitations of participant observation can be the Hawthorne effect, where people modify their behavior once they realize that they are being watched or studied (Oswald, Sherratt, Smith, 2014, p. 53). However, I would argue that the Hawthorne effect would have been primarily isolated to the conversations that I had with individuals within the Uakari Lodge as my time was incredibly limited at that particular location. I believe that the rapport I established with the other individuals I interviewed, some of which I had known for over two years, meant that they were more comfortable sharing their thoughts and perspectives about the realities of the CBT network in Brazil. These assumptions are based on some of the interview responses, some of which were very honest and raw.

## **2.2 Study Development, Data Collection and Analysis**

Before providing further explanations on the study development, data collection, and analysis, it is essential to point out that the research is presented as a case study that leads to an open discussion on the general community-based tourism network within Brazil. The case study is of the Uakari Lodge located in the Amazon. As will be discussed further in Chapter 4, the Uakari Lodge and the issues pinpointed within that specific CBT are catalysts, sparking discussion, and identifying systemic problems within the community-based tourism network in Brazil.

### **2.2.1 Data Collection**

After spending my first few months in Brazil familiarizing myself with my surroundings and the Portuguese language, I began disseminating the field and the type of sampling I would apply. Due to the limited amount of academic literature on CBTs in Brazil, my investigation, in the beginning, was limited to observation to understand the issues, problems, and successes of the network and identify the key decision-makers within that network. In the end, data were collected by using four different techniques:



- A Case Study;
- Content Analysis and Informal Discussions;
- Semi-Structured Interviews; and
- Direct and Participant Observation

The application of each technique is briefly described and discussed below. So as not to make this section cumbersome to read, full details are not provided here but are given elsewhere in the dissertation, where they were deemed most appropriate.

### ***Case Study: The Uakari Lodge***

In the case of this thesis, I applied a case study approach which allowed me to "obtain place-specific conceptual insights" (Beeton, 2005, p. 39) that then can be tested for broader applicability through additional methodologies, which are listed below, allowing for a multi-method case study.

I chose the Uakari Lodge, located in the Amazon, as a case study because, to the outside eye, the Uakari Lodge seemed (and still does to an uninformed individual) to be the perfect example of what a thriving community-based tourism project should (and does) look like. The project itself has won countless awards, such as the Silver in the Best for Poverty Reduction category at the 2015 World Tourism Awards. It is listed by Lonely Planet as the "Best Lodge in the Brazilian Amazon." It has been visited by Bill Gates. Additionally, it has been the focus of many different national and international documentaries. Representatives of the Lodge have even started to travel to other CBT projects across Brazil to start a knowledge exchange and pass on their lessons learned and best practices. The picture that the Uakari Lodge paints is that of a community-based tourism project that has achieved financial sustainability, profitability and has successfully reduced poverty within the communities involved in the project.

I visited the Uakari Lodge from December 5th-15th, 2017. During my time at the Uakari Lodge, I was granted the opportunity to experience the Lodge as an employee and a guest. I participated in all the activities and ate some meals with guests, but slept in the employee quarters, and when there were no guests, I ate with community members in the staff canteen.

During my time at the Lodge, methodologies implemented included;

- **Participant observation** was undertaken during the length of the stay. As mentioned above, I experienced the lodge as both a guest and an employee, which allowed for a dual local/outsider perspective.

- **Informational discussions** were carried out with Uakari staff, community members, and tourists staying at the Lodge. I participated in a community visit with other tourists. I also attended a local event in the small town of Alvarães organized by the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development and only attended by institute staff and local community members.
- **In-depth interviews** were carried out with tourists staying at the Uakari Lodge, staff employed by the Mamirauá Institute, and community members who were comfortable enough to speak with me. After leaving the Lodge, I also corresponded with Mamirauá Institute staff via email and Skype when additional or supplemental information was needed.
- **Secondary data** was incorporated in a **content analysis**, which included research and papers written by and published by the Mamirauá Institute of Sustainable Development, some of which were available online and others that were photocopied when I visited the Institute's library during December 2017.

The objectives of the interviews and discussions were different depending on the interviewees. Guest interviews were often quick and lasted around ten to fifteen minutes. Questions were limited to the reasons behind their choices to stay at the Lodge and whether they understood that the Lodge was a community-based tourism project. Staff and community member interviews were meant to understand whether the Lodge was financially sustainable, questions regarding community ownerships and whether the community members were prepared to take over the Lodge's responsibility. Individual interviews were conducted so that individuals could speak confidentially, which allowed for more honest and open answers to questions of financial sustainability and community ownership. Community members working at the Lodge were often hesitant to speak while on the job; however, the opportunity of the local event, in a non-work setting, sparked informal discussions with approximately four local community members who worked for the Lodge. At the Uakari Lodge, interviews and conversations were conducted with five community members from the Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reserve, five employees of the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development (MISD) provided an outsider perspective, and ten travelers visiting the Uakari Lodge.

Finally, a frequent criticism of the case study methodology is that its dependence on a single case renders it incapable of providing a generalizing conclusion (Tellis, 1997, p. 4). As a result, I acknowledge that the lack of a second case study to use as a comparison with the Uakari Lodge presents a significant gap. Therefore, conclusions are indicative of and limited to the opinions of those represented in this study. However, as mentioned earlier, insights gathered during this case study were tested and supplemented through additional methodologies, listed below, thus allowing for a multi-method case study.

### ***Content Analysis***

Kolbe and Burnett (1991) define content analysis as "an observational research method that is used to systematically evaluate the symbolic content of all forms of recorded communications" (p. 243). It is a methodology that can be seen as a systematic examination of a specific body of material to "identify patterns, themes, biases and meanings" (Camprubi & Coromina, 2016, p. 134). Content analysis can also be used qualitatively to highlight similarities and differences between analytical categories (Landry, 1997). Furthermore, an analysis of documents, research papers, websites, and online social media sites were used to obtain an understanding of specific topics regarding community-based tourism.

Content analysis was used in this study for several reasons. An analysis of the Uakari Lodge's digital presence, for example, was used to gain a clearer idea of the information that was being published by the Lodge online and feedback provided by past guests. Since few reports exist on community-based tourism in Brazil, and the same academics and experts were publishing those found, content analysis was used to obtain additional insights to supplement these reports.

As a result, I undertook,

- A content analysis of the Uakari Lodge's online presence, including a look at their social media sites, website, and reviews left on TripAdvisor and Google Reviews.
- A content analysis of emails and documents shared between members of the TURISOL network, including a Google Doc that 50 members were invited to edit to outline the main problems, strengths, and potential opportunities for CBTs in Brazil from 2017 and onwards;
- Moreover, as mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, a content analysis of research and papers written and published by the Mamirauá Institute, some of which were available online and others that were photocopied when the researcher visited the Institute's library during December 2017.

The two of the main limitations of this methodology include (1) the use of a non-probabilistic sampling method, and (2) the difficulties in appraising the reliability of the information materials used for the analyses (e.g., last updates, quality of data) (Landry, 1997).

### ***Semi-structured interviews***

Semi-structured interviews were used rather than structured interviews as they offered "sufficient flexibility to approach different respondents differently while still covering the same areas of data collection" (Noor, 2008, p. 1604). Furthermore, this methodology also allowed for an informal and conversational tone between interviewer and interviewee.

As mentioned in the case study subchapter, semi-structured interviews were conducted with Uakari lodge guests, staff, and community members. However, to supplement insights gathered in Brazil and at the Lodge, additional interviews were conducted with various informants that possessed some knowledge regarding this dissertation topic. The vast majority of semi-structured interviews were conducted during my stay in Brazil. During the research phase of this dissertation, I came across numerous CBT networks, like the TURISOL network, that seemed to be either defunct or barely functioning. Therefore, these supplementary interviews' overall objective was to gather information and provide an understanding of the current state of affairs of community-based tourism within Brazil.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from a variety of research participants, which included:

- Key decision-makers, informants, or employees who were part of the community-based tourism network in Brazil, including members of the TURISOL network (the first CBT organization with the country established in 2003) or experts in the field of CBT within Brazil and;
- Academics specialized in community-based tourism initiatives and recognized experts in the field of CBT within Brazil, and;
- One individual that was not located in Brazil, but offered an experienced market perspective.

In total, three participants of the CBT network, three Brazilian academics, and one market expert were interviewed during fieldwork. Due to the limited information available online on community-based tourism projects in Brazil, snowball sampling, usually applied "when samples with the target characteristics are not easily accessible" (Naderifar, Goli & Ghaljaie, 2017, p. 1), was used to identify these interviewees. Articles, and books, for example, published by Dr. Mielke and Dr. Bursztyn, led to interviews with these academics, which led to the introduction to other individuals within the Brazilian CBT network. Therefore, the decision was made to "collect data from small, non-random samples identified through purposive sampling" (Cuadraz & Uttal, 1999, p. 163). These individuals constitute the official interviewees. The interviews took place at their offices or in a public space, with a tape recorder and a certain amount of predetermined, albeit open-ended, questions were asked. This aforementioned list of interviewees does not include the informal interviews that were carried out during conversations and discussions had with a variety of individuals during CBT conferences and events, during the author's time volunteering at Projeto Bagagem, or during her time working as a marketing manager at Vivejar.

Interviews were carried out in either English, Portuguese, or a mixture of the two languages. Audio-recording is encouraged in qualitative research (Poland, 2003), and the majority of

interviews were recorded; however, there were some cases in which audio was not recorded to avoid jeopardizing the prospects of a good rapport with participants. In some cases, I recorded myself summarizing the conversation and its main arguments once the conversation with participants was over, so crucial information would still be recorded, and the rapport would not be jeopardized. Although one of the limitations of semi-structured interviews may be the varying reliability of the information provided by participations (Savoie-Zajc, 1997), the multiplication of sources of evidence can be seen as a way to overcome this limitation.

### ***Direct and participant observation***

As mentioned above, direct and participant observation was used to complement the reliability of the data collected from the interviews and literature analysis. Observed people were always informed of my research; I also always introduced myself as a Ph.D. student studying community-based tourism and verbalized my intentions to learn as much as possible about the network during my stay within the country. Participant observation lasted from January 2016 to March 2018.

Participant observation was of particular importance for the study. The amount of time spent in Brazil enabled a more accurate and in-depth understanding of the country's politics, culture, and tourism. It also enabled the observation of various CBT stakeholders and participation in the community-based tourism community within Brazil. The main limitations of observation as a data collection technique are the biases involved in the observer's subjectivity. Indeed, such subjectivity guides the way a social situation is navigated (Laperrière, 1997).

### **2.2.3 Data Analysis**

For this research, a grounded theory methodology was applied to analyze and organize the data collected during my time in Brazil. Glaser and Strauss (1967) write that grounded theory aims to generate or discover a theory "from data systematically obtained from social research (p. 2). Thus, the basic idea of the approach is "to read (and reread) a textual database (such as a corpus of field notes) and "discover" or label variables (called categories, concepts, and properties) and their interrelationships" (Borgatti, 2005). Grounded theory was the ideal methodology for the research process as it allowed for the exploration "of integral social relationships and the behavior of groups where there has been little exploration of the contextual factors that affect individuals' lives" (Crooks, 2011, p. 15). The primary data collection method used was a case study approach, coupled with in-depth interviews and observation methods, leading to theoretical sampling to find a distinct theory.

Theoretical sampling is "the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyses his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop a theory as it emerges" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967 p. 45). Initial data collection allowed for the discovery of key concepts, including the lack of focus on creating demand-driven CBT products. Several themes and topics were consistently repeated during the interview process, and as a result, theoretical sampling was applied to generate more data to either confirm or refute the categories that had been discovered. One limitation that needs to be acknowledged is that twenty-six interviews, while substantial, is not a fully representative sample. Therefore, corresponding claims, while informative and indicative of many complex realities within community-based tourism networks in Brazil, cannot be widely generalized.

After completing and transcribing all the interviews, in either Portuguese or English, the analysis was started by employing three distinct grounded theory methods: open, axial, and selective coding. I accumulated over 10 hours of recordings; therefore, an individual was hired to help with the transcription of the interviews conducted. After the recordings had been transcribed, open coding was applied as a "part of the analysis concerned with identifying, naming, categorizing and describing phenomena found in the text" (Borgatti, 2005). The text of all the interviews was read and reread to find abstract categories, which were then noted in a Word document. Then, axial coding was used, which is "the process of relating codes (categories and properties) to each other, via a combination of inductive and deductive thinking" (Borgatti, 2005). Common threads were thus found. The key points were marked with a series of codes extracted from the text that were then grouped into similar concepts to make them more workable. These concepts lead to the formation of categories that were the basis of the creation of a theory. Lastly, selective coding was applied, a "process of choosing one category to be the core category and relating all other categories to that category" (Borgetti, 2005). The core category is one of the most important aspects of grounded theory, as "the generation of theory occurs around a core category. Without a core category, an effort of grounded theory will drift in relevancy and workability" (Glaser, 1978, p. 93). Throughout the analysis, several new themes were addressed that had previously not been anticipated.

During my initial desk research, I found that a "lack of access to markets" was listed by numerous academics as one of the main barriers to CBT success (Dodds et al., 2016; Mitchell & Hall, 2005; Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008; Forstner, 2004; Tasci et al., 2014; Iorio & Corsale, 2014; World Bank, 2009). As a result of this, in the initial planning of this study, I argued that the goal of the thesis was to investigate how CBT projects can access domestic and global markets through various marketing strategies. However, after completing the case study, interviews, and participant observation, I noticed that there were other topics mentioned in depth by a majority of the interviewees, which shifted the overall direction of the thesis. Interviewees noted that, although market access is essential, it needs to be supplemented by additional questions about

product development, capacity training, knowledge co-production, collaborative networking, and more. As I had not previously considered these questions, the structure of the overall thesis changed and gave way to creating a model (as explained and demonstrated in Chapter One) that fills a gap found in the literature. In the end, these questions had become the "driver that impels the story forward" (Borgatti, 2005).

### **2.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality**

All research participants were given a choice on whether they wished to remain anonymous. They were also assured confidentiality, and informed of the research aims and process. Individuals who had requested anonymity are assigned pseudonyms when identified in the dissertation, and the transcription of their audio recording was done solely by the author of this dissertation. Those that did not request anonymity are referred to by their legal names, and hired individuals largely transcribed the audio recordings of their interviews. All data collected will be kept for five years following the project's completion in a USB key and will be under lock. When I crossed international borders, from either Canada, Brazil, or Belgium, the data was stored securely on a laptop locked in a piece of carry-on luggage placed underneath my seat for the entirety of the flight. Once I landed in Belgium, all the information was transferred from my luggage to a locked storage unit in Brussels. After the five year conservation period, all paper documents will be shredded, and information stored on the USB will be deleted entirely.

## **CHAPTER 3: A CASE STUDY: THE UAKARI LODGE IN BRAZIL**

Addressing the dynamics that underlie community-based tourism requires knowledge of the current state and evolution of community-based tourism and the Brazilian travel industry in general. This chapter intends to provide some insight into the profile of the destination *Brazil* and community-based tourism within the country while also introducing the paper's main case study, The Uakari Lodge. Undoubtedly, the overall picture remains incomplete and distorted, and the reader is invited to consider it with circumspection.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section (3.1) takes a general look at the progression of tourism within Brazil over the years, including Brazil's tourist attractions, hospitality sector, transport, accessibility, and the incoming tour operating sector. In Section 3.2, community-based tourism in Brazil is addressed explicitly regarding Brazilian CBT public policies. It focuses specifically on the history of tourism networks and cooperatives within the country. The last section (3.3) focuses on introducing the thesis's primary case study, the Uakari Lodge. The section addresses the Lodge's history, from inception until the present day, including the primary activities, community involvement, marketing strategies, and the financial feasibility of the location.

### **3.1 Tourism in Brazil: Supply Considerations**

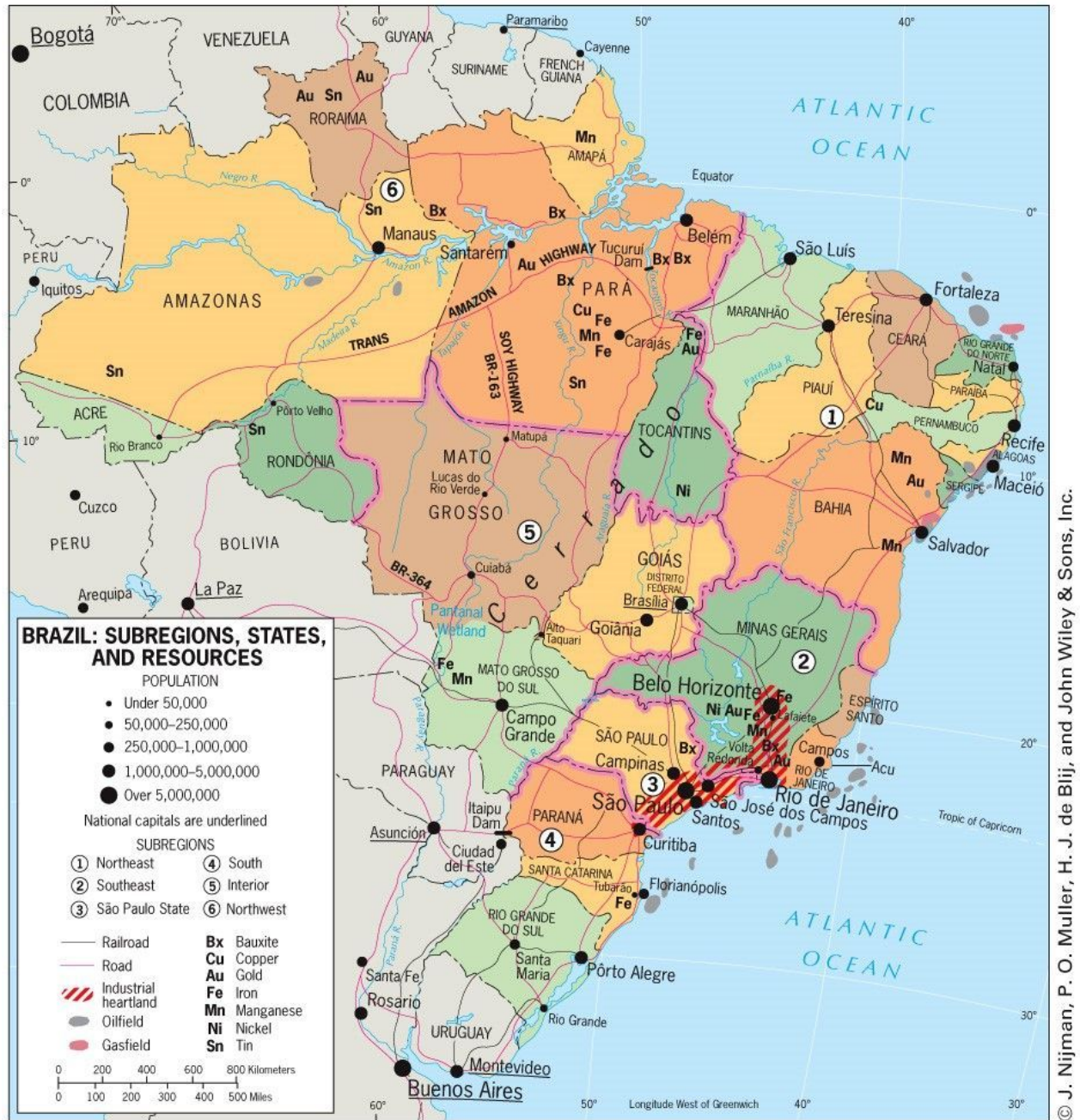
Brazil is the ninth biggest economy globally (Huck, 2020) and the largest country in South American and Latin America. Brazil is the fifth most populous country globally (IBGE, 2011). As of 2019, the IBGE website estimates that the population of Brazil is approximately 210 million people. Geographically, the Southeast and Northeast regions of Brazil (see Figure 3.1) remain the most populous regions, with 88.4 million (42.1% of the total population) and 57.1 million (27.2% of the total population) inhabitants, respectively, whereas the population of the Central-West is 16.3 million (7.8%) and the North region is 18.4 million (8.8%) (IBGE, 2019). According to the IBGE, among the 26 federal states, São Paulo is the most populous, with 45.5 million (21.8%) inhabitants (Pan, 2018).

The Brazilian Ministry of Tourism (2019) reports that Brazil received 6.62 million visitors in 2018. The Brazilian tourist product offers both Brazilians and foreign tourists a diverse range of options, highlighting nature, adventure, and historical-cultural attractions. Agência Brasil (2019), cited that the main motivation for tourists coming to Brazil in 2018 was primarily leisure (58.8%), followed by business and convention trips (13.5%). Other motivations, such as visiting



friends or relatives, totaled 27.7%. Among the first group, the main attractions mentioned were the beaches and the sun, followed by natural attractions.

**Figure 3.1: Map of Brazil**



Although Brazil attracted almost 6.5 million visitors in 2018, tourism in Brazil has stagnated in recent years. While foreign tourism increased by 7% worldwide, in comparison, tourism in Brazil increased by only 0.6% between 2003 and 2017 (Tourism Review, 2019). As a result, Brazil's tourism minister, Marcelo Alvaro Antonio, told the media company Skift (Majcher,

2019) that the country wants to double its tourist numbers by 2022. According to Skift, Mr. Antonio stated that the Ministry of Tourism would invest around USD\$198 million (BRL\$813 million) in tourism efforts through 2020. Some of these efforts include providing sixty-three small businesses with BRL\$86 million in financing and investing BRL\$200 million in a program that supports businesses located within thirty specific tourism routes (Majcher, 2019). The program will also enable the delivery of an Integrated Image Positioning Plan for Brazil, a National Investment Attraction Plan, and also the implementation of an Intelligent Tourism Map. Outlined in the National Tourism Plan 2018/2022, the first act focuses on identifying and defining Brazil's new position as a tourist destination. Through an online platform, the map will identify and geo-reference innovative initiatives by companies, institutions and public bodies in the tourism sector throughout Brazil, thus creating an environment conducive to the emergence of new businesses (Ministerio do Turismo, 2019).

### **3.1.2 The Governance of Inbound Leisure Travel**

In the context of this thesis, it is useful to briefly examine the history of tourism within Brazil briefly, as well as the central government bodies and policies which governed inbound leisure travel in Brazil at the time of fieldwork.

The discovery of oil in Brazil, the 1950 World Cup and the construction of Brasilia, drew world attention to the country, which indirectly promoted tourism in Brazil (Bursztyn, Bartholo & Delamaro, 2010). In 1958, COMBRATUR (Brazilian Tourism Commission) was created, and in 1966 the CNTur (National Tourism Council) and EMBRATUR (Brazilian Tourism Company) were created to organize and stimulate tourism, which was recognized as an essential economic activity. In 1971, Brazil's first tourism college was installed in São Paulo, at the current Anhembi-Morumbi University. Over the next two years, in 1972 and 1973 respectively, UNIBERO (SP) and USP (Universidade de São Paulo) were built.

Until the creation of EMBRATUR in 1966, public policies to promote tourism were practically non-existent (Bartholo, Delamaro & Bursztyn, 2010). The first legal document that mentioned some sort of tourism activity was Decree-Law 406 of May 4, 1938, article 59, which regulated the sale of air, sea, and land tickets. Together with the creation of EMBRATUR, Decree-Law 55 of 1966 defined, for the first time, a set of rules and regulations that can be identified as the genesis of a National Tourism Policy (Bursztyn, Bartholo & Delamaro, 2010, p. 81-82). Nevertheless, the initial role of EMBRATUR was restricted to the consolidation of the domestic market and the capture of external demand through advertising campaigns. It was not until the

1990s that EMBRATUR transformed into an institute and became a fundamental piece in elaborating public policies for the sector.

In Brazil, the 1980s were marked by the connection between tourism and the environment (Bursztyn, Bartholo & Delamaro, 2010, p. 82). In 1987, EMBRATUR launched an innovative ecotourism development program in the country. However, it did not take off immediately. Then in the 1990s, there was a deep fiscal crisis in the state. The adjustment and restructuring of policies proposed by international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank recommended promoting tourism activities as a promising line of action for the development of the country. As a result, since 1991, tourism has become part of the public policy agenda, especially in terms of territorial changes, particularly in the coastal region of Northeastern Brazil (Bursztyn, Bartholo & Delamaro, 2010, p. 82). Some of the main actions at the federal level are the 1992 National Plan of Tourism (PLANTUR) and its various programs, which include but are not limited to the Program of Action for the Development of Tourism in the Northeast (Prodetur-NE embryo) and the National Tourism Municipalization Program (Becker, 1995).

Up until 2002, the management of public policies related to tourism and travel was the responsibility of what was, at the time, the Ministry of Sports and Tourism. On January 1, 2003, the Ministry of Tourism (MTur) was established with a mission to develop tourism as a sustainable economic activity, with a significant role in creating jobs, facilitating foreign exchange, and providing social inclusion. As of 2019, MTur is also composed of the National Secretariat for Tourism Policies, the National Secretariat for Tourism Development Programs, and EMBRATUR.

The creation of the Ministry of Tourism in 2003 signaled the federal government's changing vision of the sector. The federal government recognized that the tourism and travel sector had the potential to impact economic growth, explicitly addressing income distribution and social and regional inequalities. Based on this policy definition, the Ministry of Tourism implemented the second edition of the National Tourism Plan — *An Inclusive Trip* (Viagem de Inclusão) 2007-2010, which consisted of a planning and management tool, prepared in a participatory manner, with the common goal of transforming tourism into an important mechanism for economic development (Silva, Ramiro & Teixeira, 2010). In this sense, the new National Tourism Plan was defined as the public policy for tourism in Brazil, which focused on developing the quality of the Brazilian tourist product. It explicitly considered regional, cultural, and natural diversity; promoted tourism as a factor of social inclusion, through the generation of work and income, and; promoted the competitiveness of the tourism product on national and international markets (Sansolo & Bursztyn, 2010).

It is also important to note that in 2008, MTur finally institutionally recognized the existence of community-based tourism initiatives through a published a public notice (MTur, no 001/2008), which aimed at promoting CBT activities (Sansolo & Bursztyn, 2010, p. 145). In the notice the Ministry defines community-based tourism as follows: "community-based tourism is understood as a model of tourism development, guided by the principles of solidarity economy, associativism, appreciation of local culture, and, mainly, carried out by local communities, aiming at their appropriation of the benefits derived from tourism" (Ministério do Turismo, 2015). However, Bursztyn, Bartholo & Delamaro (2010) argue that overall tourism has not been treated as an activity of general interest in Brazil, as in other places of the world, due to the culture of the country and the lack of dedicated professionals who promote discussions about its economic scope, and its responsibility within society (p. 85).

### **O Plano Nacional Do Turismo 2018 - 2020**

As mentioned previously, the National Tourism Plan is an instrument that establishes guidelines and strategies for the implementation of the National Tourism Policy. It is prepared collectively, with the support of the technical areas of the Ministry of Tourism, EMBRATUR, and public and private agents, through the Thematic Chamber of the National Tourism Plan, constituted within the National Tourism Council. The main objective of the document is to "order the actions of the public sector, guiding the State effort and public resources for the development of tourism" (Ministério do Turismo, 2015)

The first National Tourism Plan (NTP) was developed in the same year that MTur was created, 2003. The first plan was therefore from 2003 — 2007 (Guidelines, Goals, and Programs), the second, from 2007 — 2010 (A Trip of Inclusion), the third from 2013 — 2016 (Tourism Doing Much More for Brazil) and finally the fourth from 2018 — 2022 (More Employment and Income for Brazil). The National Tourism Policy aims to "contribute to the reduction of regional social and economic inequalities, promote social inclusion by increasing the supply of labor and improve the distribution of income" (Ministério do Turismo, 2018). In this way, the NTP is structured based on the lines of action of tourism, the initiatives related to each line, and their strategies to achieve what is proposed, namely to "modernize and reduce bureaucracy in the sector; expand investments and access to credit; stimulate competitiveness and innovation; invest in the promotion of Brazil's destiny internally and internationally and in professional and service qualification; and strengthen decentralized management and regionalization of tourism" (Ministério do Turismo, 2018).

Global Targets for Tourism in Brazil to be achieved, through the National Tourism Plan, until 2022 include (Ministério do Turismo, 2018):



- The increased arrival of foreigners from 6.6 million to 12 million;
- Expansion of tourism exchange revenue from the current USD\$ 6.6 billion to USD\$ 19 billion;
- Insertion of 39.7 million Brazilians in the travel consumer market;
- Generation of 2 million new jobs in tourism

To reach such Global Targets, initiatives and strategies were listed in each line of tourism activity. "Incentivo ao turismo responsável" (incentivizing responsible tourism) and "marketing e apoio à comercialização" (marketing and commercializing help) are two out of the five lines of actions presented in the NTP.

Under incentivizing responsible tourism, the NTP specifically addresses community-based tourism or "turismo de base local" (local tourism), stating that there is a need to "promote the integration of local production in the tourism production chain and the development of locally-based tourism" (Ministério do Turismo, 2018). The strategies noted under this initiative include:

- To stimulate the development of new tourism activities that incorporate aspects of local production, culture and regional cuisine;
- Support and articulate actions to promote and expand the marketing channels of products associated with tourism and Local Tourism initiatives.

Community-based tourism was institutionally recognized for the first time by public notice (MTur, no 001/2008). The notice even had a specific section dedicated to the promotion of CBTs in the 2013-2016 National Tourism Plan, which stated:

“Promotion and support to projects or actions for the local and sustainable development of tourism, through the organization and qualification of the production, improvement of the quality of the services, incentive to the associationism, cooperativism, entrepreneurship, formation of networks, the establishment of standards and service standards differentiated and innovative strategies for insertion of these products into the tourism production chain, particularly concerning community-based tourism products and services with local culture representativeness, enhancement of the way of life or defense of the environment. Purpose: To promote the qualification and diversification of tourism, with the generation of work and income, and the valuation of culture and local way of life" (Ministério do Turismo, 2013).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Please note that this text was translated by the author from Portuguese to English.

MTur also has a section on its website dedicated to community-based tourism, and it has sponsored and financed several CBT related projects in the past.

## **3.2 Community-Based Tourism In Brazil**

CBT development in the Brazilian context stems partly as a response to a public policy created at the federal level that sought to foster the expansion of a tourism model that proved to be extremely exclusive. In July 1992, EMBRATUR launched the National Tourism Plan (PLANTUR) to promote regional development through the formation of integrated tourism hubs (Bursztyn, Bartholo & Delamaro, 2010). However, the only concrete action was the Action Program for Tourism Development in Northeast Brazil (Prodetur-NE), which sought investments from large transnational groups interested in developing resort-towns and hotel mega-complexes in Northeast Brazil. The program ended up failing. However, it did begin a discussion on the importance of including not only the enterprises' demands but also the interests and desires of the local communities, especially when launching regional tourism projects (Bursztyn, Bartholo & Delamaro, 2010). Conversations and meetings regarding the topic of CBTs in Brazil enabled the consolidation of many non-formal research networks, sparking these dialogues in conjunction with the development of research, projects, and publications regarding the subject.

### **3.2.1 Turismo Solidário e Comunitário (TURISOL)**

In February 2003, the French Embassy in Brazil, through a cooperation program focused on the solidarity economy, brought together different actors to promote discussion on the creation of connections and networks within the Brazilian tourism industry. During this year, other meetings took place where the group's interest in staying in touch, establishing exchanges of experiences, and promoting the tourism solidarity debate at the national level was evident (Zanotti & Madureira, n.d.). In this context, the TURISOL Network, the first CBT organization within the country, was born informally. The network included seven Brazilian community tourism initiatives (Projeto Bagagem, Acolhida na Colônia, Rede Tucum, Casa Grande, Saúde e Alegria, The Uakari Lodge, and Silves), supported by the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), the Ministry of Environment (MMA) and the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA).

With the vision of "making Brazil a reference country in Community Tourism" and the mission of "building, strengthening and disseminating economically viable, environmentally responsible and socially just models through tourism with rural, traditional and urban communities," the

network aimed to strengthen existing initiatives and awaken other communities to build a different type of tourism (Zanotti, 2009).

The main principles of TURISOL are as follows (Zanotti, 2009):

- The local village community is to be the owner of the tourism company and to manage tourism jointly.
- The local village community is to be the primary beneficiary of tourism, which serves its development and strengthening.
- The main tourist attraction is the village community's lifestyle, organizational form, social projects, community mobilization, cultural traditions, and economic activities.
- Activities are created to enable visitors to exchange and learn. These are not cultural folklore lectures, but everyday activities that the tourists should learn to do.
- The tours respect the standards for preserving the environment of the area. They should have as little impact on the environment as possible.
- Transparency in the use of funds. The village community and the visitors participate in the fair distribution of the financial profit.
- Social partnership with travel agencies. An attempt is being made to encourage all participants in the tourism value chain with the joint profit.

Between 2003 and 2007, the network remained a means of communication among its participants, but no projects were carried out, nor funds raised to strengthen the initiative and foster CBT ventures. In 2007, a Community Tourism Meeting was held to resume the consolidation of the TURISOL Network and established the following lines of action: training and capacity building through meetings and events; production of knowledge through the elaboration of didactic materials, publications, and videos on the topics discussed in the meetings; promotion of public policies to support CBT; and promotion and commercialization of the destinations and services contemplated by the Network (Zanotti & Madureira, n.d.). At about the same time, the Ministry of Tourism first showed interest in the subject and organized a meeting with some NGOs. Together with the Virtual Tourism Institute of the University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), a proposal for the creation of a Brazilian network for community-based tourism was presented. The Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture Development were also involved. However, since such a network already existed, the Ministry of Tourism decided not to create a new one. Instead, in June 2008, it launched a call for proposals for community-based tourism projects.

The public notice announcement of MTur 001/2008, which aimed to support the experiences of in-progress CBT products in the country, further encouraged the TURISOL consolidation. This initiative was considered an important step towards the implementation of public CBT policies at

the federal level. In 2008, an Invitation to Bid was published in the Official Gazette on June 4. According to the edict, CBT projects were selected to support activities in the five thematic lines:

- Production associated with tourism;
- Professional qualification;
- Strategic planning and community organization;
- Promotion and commercialization; and,
- Promotion of solidarity economy practices.

The projects could fit in one or more thematic lines, and the request for financial support could be from R\$100,000.00 to R\$150,000.00 with an execution period of up to 18 months (Silva, Ramiro & Teixeira, 2009). The selection was completed on August 1, 2008, and 50 proposals were selected for support in 2008 and 2009, representing 19 federation units, and about 100 municipalities, with a total estimated budget of R\$7.5 million. Given the budget availability and technical/operational capacity of the MTur, 25 projects were supported during the 2008 financial year, and 25 projects were supported with the 2009 budget (Silva, Ramiro & Teixeira, 2009). The procedures, guidelines, and strategies adopted to support community-based tourism projects were analyzed by the DCPAT Coordination technical team in a publication.<sup>7</sup>

To analyze the results, in 2010, the TURISOL Network held the first National Meeting of the Turisol Network (Conti, Rocha & Viteze, 2018). At the meeting, attendees identified marketing as one of the main issues hindering the success of CBT ventures and noted that the TURISOL network could be used to conquer this issue through commercialization and promotional support as well as technical support for CBTs. However, after financial help from MTur ceased, the TURISOL network disbanded again and remained inactive between 2011 and 2014. According to Mielke (2009), the precise nature of the edicts and the discontinuity of public policy regarding Brazilian community-based tourism created more barriers than actually strengthening the network. At this stage, the network was inactive, mainly because the period coincided with the internal challenges of other central initiatives.

In August 2014, with a new board of directors and the strategic management of Projeto Bagagem assumed by Raízes Desenvolvimento Sustentável, the network dialogue was re-stimulated. Two strategic meetings were held — one at the Local Meeting of Local Tourism (ENTBL) and another at the Virtual Tourism Institute at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. In 2015, the Second National Meeting of the Turisol Network was held in Brasília, where a transitional

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<sup>7</sup> Lohmann & Dredge (2012) conducted a study with 26 of these projects, focusing on four key issues: the circumstances of a CBT project before and after the funds were disbursed; the management of the project itself; co-operation and decision-making processes; and the community's relationship with key stakeholders (p. 33-34). Although many of the projects suffered from poor governance and weak access to the market, thus making them an unviable solution to alleviate poverty within the region, they noted that bottom-up cooperatives that formed strong relationships with private companies (tour operators) were successful.



commission was set up to manage the network's activities. Although the final document of the meeting pointed out actions that should be implemented, such as the systematization of the principles of CBTs from the participants' perspective and the creation of a letter of intent model so that new ventures could be associated with the network, nothing was put into practice (Zanotti & Madureira, n.d.)

More recently, in 2018, Rede TURISOL mobilized to hold the II Global Forum on Sustainable Tourism, a self-managed activity that composed the thematic axis Democratization of the Economy, during the World Social Forum, in Salvador, Brazil. The results of these discussions were compiled in the Declaration of Salvador, a document of resistance towards development-models that encourage unconscious consumption, exploitation of labor, depredation of natural, cultural and historical resources, institutional racism, and human rights violations, but also a document that proposes ways in which community tourism can be used to counter mass tourism. These paths include recognizing the principles of solidarity economy and community tourism as a tool for local development (Conti, Rocha & Viteze 2018). As of 2019, the TURISOL website has been taken down and added to the Projeto Bagagem website. Projeto Bagagem, founded in 2002, was one of the founding members of the TURISOL network. It was initially an NGO that hosted solidarity trips to various communities, including the Amazon, Chapada Diamantina, and Paraty-RJ. Projeto Bagagem is a volunteer-led NGO whose mission is "to encourage the use of community-based tourism as a tool for valorization and sustainable development of tourism in Brazil" (Zanotti & Madureira, n.d.). At the moment, the NGO works as a think tank and a space for sharing its history and experiences. As noted in the previous section, the Uakari Lodge and Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development were part of the founding members of TURISOL, and are still part of the network.

### **3.3 The Uakari Lodge: An Introduction**

To the outside eye, the Uakari Lodge seems to be the perfect example of a successful community-based tourism initiative. The picture that the Uakari Lodge paints is a community-based tourism project that has achieved financial sustainability and profitability and has successfully helped poverty reduction within the communities involved in the project. This picture is why the Uakari Lodge was chosen as a case study.

#### **3.3.1 The Creation of the Mamirauá Reserve**

In 1974, José Márcio Corrêa Ayres saw a bald-headed uakari in a zoo in Germany, which inspired, according to Silveira, who wrote a book entitled "José Márcio Ayres, Guardian of Amazonia" (2013), "so many questions in Marcio as to the lack of knowledge inside Brazil about

this specific monkey, known in Europe as the 'English monkey' because of its characteristic red face, alluding to the stereotypical drunken Englishman" (p. 56). These questions led Ayres, a Brazilian primatologist, to pursue a doctorate at the University of Cambridge wherein 1986 he published his thesis paper, entitled "Uakaris and the Amazonian flood forest" (Robinson & Queiroz, 2011, p. 312). During his time studying the white uakaris in the várzeas (floodplains) of Mamirauá, the academic realized the numerous risks that these animals faced, thus inspiring him to create a campaign to protect the region and the white uakari. Márcio learned of the conservation "projects that had been funded by the Catholic Church and Pastoral da Terra together with the local population since the early 1970s. It was an important indication that systematic conservation work in the region was a possibility for the future" (Silveira, 2013, p. 75). In 1983, Ayres officially requested that Lake Mamirauá be protected and therefore closed by the Institute of Forestry Development to ensure his research could be finished. In his biography of Ayres, Silveira quotes him stating:

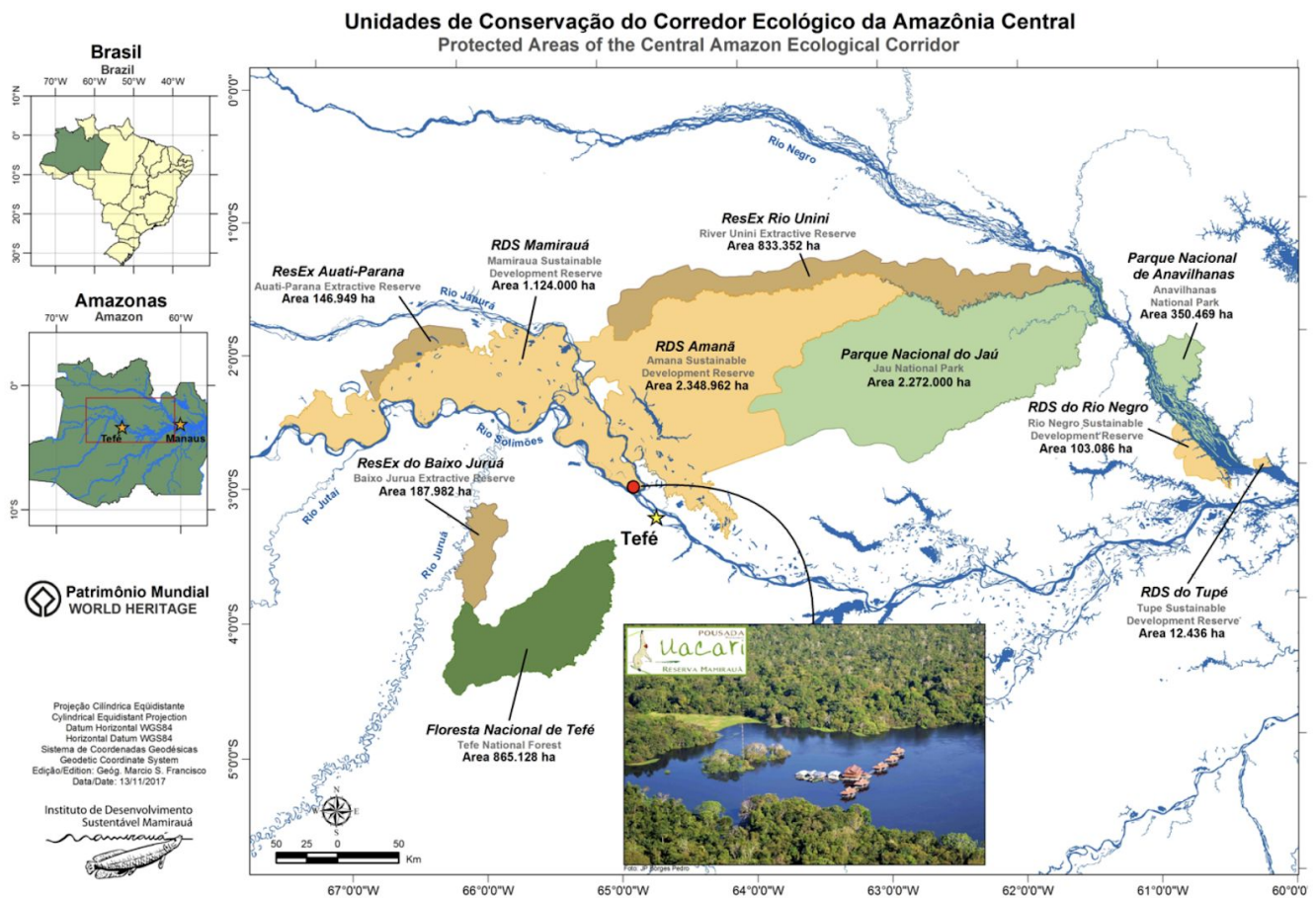
“Lake Mamirauá was closed off by the IBDF at my request beginning in 1983 so that I could do my research. You could say that the locals didn’t like my meddling. But when I came back from England after finishing my doctorate, the locals came to me and asked that the lake region continue to be protected because the fish population had increased greatly while I had been living there, but when I had left, the fishermen had returned again. At that time, (it was already 1986) I realized there had been a change in attitude by the project run by the Church and Pastoral da Terra, and they had started to protect the lakes. That humble community of people always being blamed for causing environmental problems was able to instead become the solution for the problem.” (Silveira, 2013, p. 75).

In 1984, Ayres along with Luiz Cláudio Marigo, a photographer that was hired by the Secretaria Especial de Meio Ambiente (SEMA) in 1983 to photograph Mamirauá, sent a proposal to SEMA to request that an area of approximately 950km<sup>2</sup> between the rivers Japurá, Solimões, and the Prana do Jaraua be transformed into an ecological reserve (Ayres, 1986, p. 25). The subsequent response took six years (Silveira, 2013, p. 75). In 1990, the Governor of the State of Amazonas decreed that the Mamirauá ecological station be created, and the initially proposed conservation area be quadrupled in size from 260,000 hectares to 1,123,000 hectares. Once established, the station began welcoming its first partner institutions, including the WCS, Conservation International, the WWF, and the Department for International Development (DFID), a now-defunct agency currently called the British Overseas Development Agency (ODA). The development of the Projeto Mamirauá was made possible by these partners' financial resources (Silveira, 2013, p. 81).

In 1993 the station became part of the Ramsar Convention, an international treaty signed by 75 nations "committed to preserving globally important wetlands, specifically through planning for

their sustainable use." (Silveira, 2013, p. 85). Unfortunately, the problem with this convention was that it limited human presence on site. However, Ayres<sup>8</sup> believed that without the support of local communities, it would not be properly conserved. Therefore economic and social conditions were to be created for these populations, "based on development with a scientific and participative base, with plans for the sustainable management of resources" (Silveira, 2013, p. 85).

**Figure 3.2: Protected Areas of the Central Amazon Ecological Corridor**



Source: Uakari Lodge, 2017

<sup>8</sup> Ayres died in 2003, however, his work established the Mamirauá Reserve, and the subsequent Amanã State Sustainable Development Reserve established in 1998 which connected Mamirauá with the Jaú National Park brought the academic international recognition in the field of conservation biology, and "he was consequently the recipient of numerous awards – the American Society of Primatology's Conservation Award, the WWF International Gold Medal, the Society for Conservation Biology Award, and the Rolex Award for Enterprise" (Valladares-Paduá, 2003, p. 39). According to Valladares-Paduá (2003), The Sociedade Civil Mamirauá, which he established, was also awarded the Von Martius Prize from the Brazil-Germany Chamber of Commerce in 2000, and the UNESCO Prize in the Science and Development category in 2001 (p. 39).

The model created by the station, with seemingly little input from community members, was approved by the Amazonas Legislative Assembly in June 1996 and sanctioned by the state government in July 1996 (p. 2013). The first version of the management plan (a second revised edition was published in 2006), created a zoning system that designated a core area as a protected zone, where human settlements and use of natural resources were prohibited. Surrounding this core area was a sustainable use zone, where most of the settlements were located, and economically productive activities could be carried out (Peralta, Vieira & Ozório<sup>9</sup>, 2017). The assignment of a protection zone with restrictions for productive use was an unduly cost for local communities who would bear economic losses resulting from the restrictions imposed by the management plan (SCM, 1996). Thus, a set of alternative income activities was also proposed in the management plan, including fisheries management, forest management, and a designated "ecotourism zone." According to Pinto (2018), this was the first time *tourism* was mentioned in a strategy for community development. The management plan stated that "ecotourism has already been identified as a strategic option and its economic, social, and ecological feasibility studies are taken as urgent. The priority implementation of ecotourism, as a more significant option, could generate short-term resources for the implementation of other options of economic alternatives" (IDSM, 1995, p. 48). In 1999 the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development (MISD) was created, which today is part of the Ministry of Science and Technology. The Sociedade Civil Mamirauá (the original NGO that helped implement the Uakari Lodge product) still exists but has consolidated itself into being the institution's fundraising arm (Silveira, 2013, p. 91).

Today, the Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reserve (MSDR; 2° 51' S, 64° 55' W) is a state conservation unit totaling 1,124,000 hectares and is the largest area of protected várzea in the world (Queiroz, 2005). The Reserve is located in the Middle Solimões region and is bordered by the Solimões, Japurá, and Auati-Paraná Rivers (see Figure 3.2). Along with the Amanã Sustainable Development Reserve and Jaú National Park, it makes up one of the largest continuous areas of protected tropical forest in the world (Queiroz, 2005). The MSDR is located in the Central Amazon Corridor; it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site (Peralta, Viera & Ozorio, 2010), part of the Amazon Biosphere Reserve, and is recognized by the Ramsar Convention (Peralta, 2002).

### **3.3.1 The Creation of the Uakari Lodge**

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<sup>9</sup> Please note that this section heavily references the authors Peralta, Vieira, Ozório and Pinto. This is because most of the information available on the Uakari Lodge has been published by the employees of the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development. I acknowledge that the information presented by these authors, therefore, can possess underlying biases. These possible biases are acknowledged and are carefully scrutinized in the subsequent analysis of the Uakari Lodge found in Chapter 4.

In the book, "José Márcio Ayres, Guardian of Amazonia," Silveira (2013) states that the first time Ayres had contact with the local population in the Mamirauá, they thought he was a policeman, and another time, a priest. He writes, "the tall, unfamiliar white man driving a boat and asking questions about the area and about monkeys made people suspicious." (p. 91). Silveira later writes the Ayres "made his way in slowly" (p. 91), and he quotes Elisabeth Gama, a biologist, who wrote of Ayres's interaction with local communities, the *caboclos* (people of mixed indigenous and European ancestry) and the riverbank populations. She states that "he ate and drank with them as if their world were his. He ate like a true Amazonian native, even though he was a citizen of the world" (p. 93).

Whether or not this is true, it is important to recognize that since its inception, the Uakari lodge has not been a *bottom-up* CBT project. The idea of the Lodge was born out of the attempt to manage economic losses that communities within the region would bear due to the management plan for the Mamirauá Reserve. The Lodge was a "proposed alternative income activity" (Peralta, 2013), and the primary objective of the Lodge was "the conservation of biodiversity in an Amazonian protected area" (Pinto, 2018, p. 59). As such, ecotourism was used as an incentive for biodiversity conservation. However, the local communities did not have any experience with tourism, or the service sector in general, as an economic activity.

Therefore, it is essential to note that since its inception, the project was created, structured, and implemented by outside forces. The project was initially created and run by Ayres and members of Sociedade Civil Mamirauá NGO and funded by the Department for International Development (DFID). Furthermore, recommendations on how to structure the project, which included defining a benefit-sharing and a project management model, were created by an outside consultancy that was hired to assess the tourism project's economic and financial viability. Consultations were held with local communities before and during the implementation of the project; however, tasks such as building infrastructure, product development, training and strengthening local skills, designing monitoring mechanisms, zoning and carrying out the inventory of tourist attractions was carried out by members of the Sociedade Civil Mamirauá along with researchers and academics. Meetings were held with local communities to plan and evaluate activities and to share results, challenges, and perspectives.

The initial idea for the Uakari Lodge's creation was that the enterprise would be able to generate income and fund activities for the whole Reserve. The IDSMD conducted an economic feasibility study that concluded that an investment of USD\$400,000.00, with a maximum of 100 visitors per year, would generate a return rate of 16% in ten years (Peralta 2013). This study prompted the Department for International Development (DFID) to provide start-up funds for the ecotourism enterprise. DFID agreed to finance the ecotourism project, provided that the Mamirauá Project ensured a policy of minimizing the social and environmental impacts of the

activity, a guarantee given by the project's overall coordination. DFID invested R\$570.000 (approximately USD\$150,000) over four years, which amounted to 57% of the total project costs. The federal government, including the IDSM, gave the rest of the funds (Pinto, 2018). The initial financial projections were incorrect, and it was concluded that the project would only be able to generate income for seven communities within the Reserve (Peralta, 2013).

The whole process was divided into three main phases (Peralta, Vieira & Ozório, 2017):

- Planning (1997-1999);
- Development (1999-2002);
- Operation (2002-onwards).

Three main people within the Sociedade Civil Mamirauá NGO were responsible for this ecotourism venture, and before the development of the project, these individuals participated in planning consultations with the communities within the Mamirauá sector. The main idea of these consultations was not to raise false expectations. However, there was "some confusion over unrealistic expectations of job creation and the possibility of communities charging tourists for access to trails" (Peralta, 2013). Peralta (2013) argues that the local reactions were mostly positive with community members contributing ideas on how to develop certain tourism products, such as guiding and community visits.

However, Peralta's statement is challenged in Silveira's book (2013) wherein he states that the local's initial resistance towards these conservation ideas nearly defeated the project before it started and that the project's researchers and employees were often referred to as "foreigners" or "*macaqueiro*," which comes from the word *macaco*, meaning monkey — a Brazilian slang term for suck-up (p. 93). In the book *Arengas & picicas: reações populares à Reserva de Desenvolvimento Sustentável Mamirauá no Estado do Amazonas* (2005), the author Reis echoes this statement by writing, "the demonstrations of resistance, aside from joining dissatisfaction and the reluctance of those segments opposed to the new order proposed by the creation of Mamirauá became a way to discredit the partners and workers promoting it, bringing the resistance closer together" (p. 165).



**Figure 3.3: Aerial view of the Uakari Lodge**



*Source:* João Paulo Borges Pedro, taken from Pinto (2018)

During the development phase, project staff continued to liaise with community members to maintain their support. Although there were some setbacks, the development of the enterprise continued; however, only two communities out of the seven were actively engaged in its development. During this stage, only a limited number of jobs were created, and economic benefits were not shared equally (Peralta, 2013). However, community development was seen as a key to success and the integral piece in linking ecotourism and conservation. Strategies, such as more temporary jobs, purchase of more local products, promotion of tourist visits to local communities, investment in social capital through the support of local associations and the creation of *a sense of ownership*, were implemented and resulted in another two communities becoming more involved in the project. By the end of 2000, four communities (Vila Alencar, Caburini, Boca do Mamirauá and Sítio São José)<sup>10</sup> were actively engaged in the project and were receiving the bulk of the economic benefits (Peralta, 2013).

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<sup>10</sup> These four communities which were the most active since the beginning of the project, currently represent approximately 84% of families involved with the Uakari Lodges activities and still receive the majority of the economic benefits of the lodge (Pinto, 2018). This will be further explored in chapter 3.3.2.

**Figure 3.4: The Floating Structure at Water Level, Plus a Community Member in a Canoe**



*Source:* Eduardo Coelho, taken from Pinto (2018)

From 2002 onwards, the Lodge was fully operational. There was a 25% annual increase in arrivals from 2000 to 2005 (Peralta, 2013). It is interesting to note that since the Lodge's opening Peralta (2013) states that it was clear that locals lacked the professional skills to manage the Lodge, and as a result, there was a need to build on skills and capabilities. So a series of courses, training sessions, and internships were designed to improve management and services. Over the years, the MISD has provided multiple training programs or training events for any community member located in the Reserve. After joining training activities, many community members became demotivated (due to tiredness, language barriers/issues, or a lack of interest) and failed to finish the programs (Peralta & Cobra, 2018, p. 93). Although great strides have been taken since the Lodge first opened, it is important to note, as the authors argue, that there is still no mastery of the overall management of the enterprise or mastery of the English language. This lack can be due, in part, to the structural conditions that do not allow novices to access specific positions, such as those that require English or managerial skills (Peralta & Cobra, 2018, p. 94).



In 2006 and 2007 the Tefé airport was shut down due to safety issues,<sup>11</sup> which resulted in a sharp decrease of guest arrivals, thus impacting the economic results and profit shares of the lodge. The gateway town to the lodge, Tefé, is not accessible by roads. As a result, guests take a plane from Manaus to Tefé before taking a one-hour boat ride to the lodge. Although another transportation option exists many guests do not choose this option as it is too time-consuming.<sup>12</sup> No profit shares meant that the committee responsible for assessing compliance with sector management rules did not do their job. According to local leaders, “the level of sector organization and attention to the sector management rules were related to the presence of economic profits shares from the tourism activity” (Peralta 2013, p. 86). Since there were no expectations of receiving shares in the years 2006 to 2008, people did not obey local management rules. As an environmental agent with knowledge of the incident said:

[Environmental agent]: Everyone erred! What happened was that everyone knew there would be no profits shared from ecotourism; so many people invaded the ecotourism area. People said that there was a lot of poaching (invasão) because there were no profits. But I think that with or without profits, everyone has to obey the rules. (Sector meeting, February 2008 as cited in Peralta 2013, p. 82).

Peralta et al. (2017) mention that for communities that did not have access to direct benefits, the incentive to maintain the status of lake preservation declined when the common benefits did not flow. The authors argue that joint share of benefits should be seen as part of the costs of an enterprise for local community support from the outset, and should not have been associated solely with surpluses, since these are very risky. This fact had already been pointed out by the local communities in 1999 when they asked for the right to charge entrance fees for tourists. This entrance fee was implemented in 2014 with a new *social and environmental fee* of R\$50 charged to every visitor (Pinto, 2018).

It is interesting to note that the Lodge still functions in a *top-down* hierarchy. Daniel, De Urioste-Stone, Ozorio, Peralta, & Vieira (2017) share insights from their trip to the Lodge in 2013. At the time, Gustavo Pinto, the Lodge Manager, and Fernanda Sa Vieira, the MISD's Coordinator of Tourism, addressed the challenges of shared governance at the Uakari Lodge. One of the initial hallmarks of the Lodge was the promise of collective decision-making. However, as explained by Vieira, there are different forums for decision making, depending on which decision needs to be made. For example, the monthly staff meeting only includes the permanent staff of the Lodge, representatives of the community association, and the

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<sup>11</sup> According to Daniel, De Urioste-Stone, Ozorio, Peralta, & Vieira (2017) the airport was closed primarily due to the fact that the town of Tefé had relocated its municipal landfill near the end of the runway. The landfill had attracted large scavenger birds like vultures, which caused a safety risk. The only airline that flew to Tefe refused to fly to the town until the landfill was moved. It took ten months until the town moved the landfill and air service resumed (p. 9).

<sup>12</sup> There are slow boats and speedboats to Tefé and they only leave Manaus during specific times during the week, which can be limiting for incoming visitors. The speedboats take 11 hours while the slow boats take around 44 hours.

Community-based Tourism Initiative Coordinator. These meetings can include discussions regarding logistics, operations, maintenance, needs, and staff performance. Then there is the President's Meeting, which happens every six months and includes community leaders. The President's Meeting is where MISD staff, like the Lodge Manager, would present financial results, leading to discussions about investments. This forum is meant to create transparency, build social capital, and increase a *sense of ownership* within communities (p. 8-9). Nevertheless, decisions made at any forum must be made through consensus.

### **A Transition To Full Independence: 2012 - 2022**

In 2009, due to questions about the venture's economic viability, project staff decided to update the Uakari Lodge Business Plan. The study took over two years to develop and was published in 2012. It analyzed the economic and financial viability of Uakari Lodge from 2002 to 2010, seeking to identify the main bottlenecks and opportunities of the initiative. The prognosis of the research evaluated three future scenarios for the activity:

- Low Investment Scenario;
- Renovation Scenario; and
- Deactivation Scenario.

In the first scenario, due to uncertainty about the future or low institutional interest, minimum investments would be made (emergency), and the *Pousada Uacari* (the "product") would continue without significant changes. In the renovation scenario, more substantial investments would be foreseen, to improve the product, attract more visitors, and increase the professional qualification of residents to move more consistently towards the transfer of management of the enterprise. In the last scenario, both the community and the market would be prepared for deactivation, a destination would be given to the infrastructure, and the Program would work with Mamirauá's legacy of ecotourism through the dissemination of lessons learned (Ozorio and Janer, 2012).

In a meeting with the institutional board and representatives of the Community-Based Tourism Program, it was agreed that the Mamirauá Institute would opt for scenario 2, that is, it would make investments so that the Lodge could become financially autonomous in 10 years. In a seminar held between the communities of Mamirauá Sector, Mamirauá Association of Ecotourism Auxiliaries and Guides (AAGEMAM)<sup>13</sup> and Mamirauá Institute in 2014, it was

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<sup>13</sup> Discussions about the best organization model for community participation in the provision of services at the Uakari Lodge resulted in the creation of an association. With the support of technicians and consultants, service providers came together to create an association — the Association of Auxiliary and Ecotourism Guides of Mamirauá (AAGEMAM) — which currently still provides services to the Uakari Lodge and is directly involved in the management of the enterprise. Officially created on June 3, 2000, AAGEMAM is a civil society, non-profit, initially formed only by members of local communities.

decided that the ownership of the Uakari Lodge would be shared among the eleven communities in the sector and the association of ecotourism workers and the management of the Lodge would be the responsibility of this organization. This decision was approved and validated at the General Assembly of the Mamirauá Sector, with the presence of the stakeholders involved. The Mamirauá Institute decided to take a supportive role during the transfer of management, elaborating planning, and defining the stages.

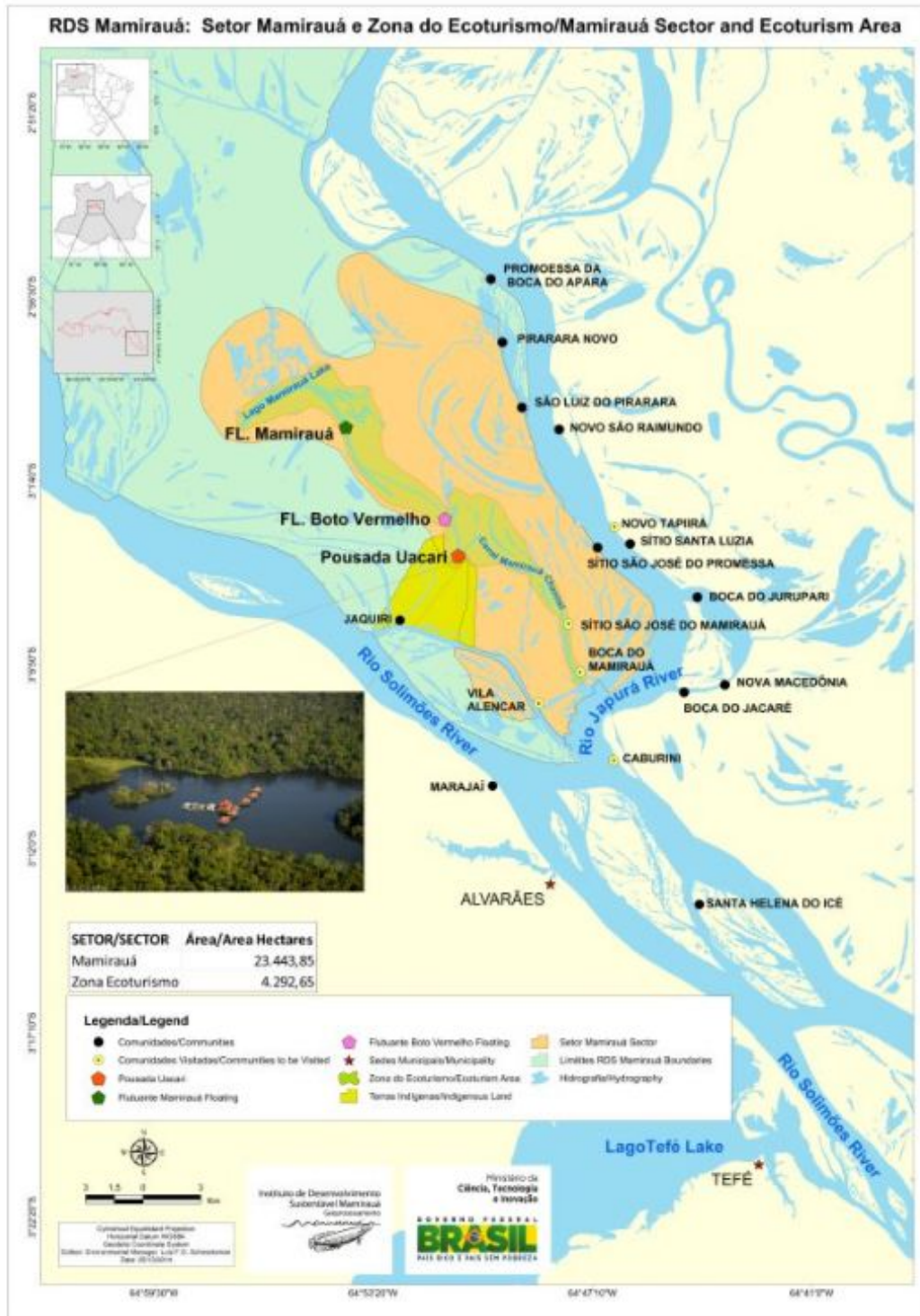
### **3.3.2 The Mamirauá Communities**

According to Census, the Mamirauá Reserve had 191 communities, 1,823 residences, and 10,867 inhabitants in 2011 (Pinto, 2018). Communities are formed by households related by kinship, with around ten households on average. They were established with the Catholic Church's support and had some basic infrastructure such as a church, school, and a community center. They are grouped in political sectors or *sectores*, with each community electing their political leader responsible for representing the interests of their community. Each sector participates in assemblies and meetings and watches over its resources and territories. In addition to sector meetings, there is an annual assembly for the entire Reserve, for which representatives from each sector come together to "deliberate on broader topics of interest to the protected area" (Pinto 2018, p. 9). In total, the MSDR is divided into eighteen sectors. Before the 20th century, the region was inhabited by several indigenous groups. Unfortunately, due to diseases introduced during colonization, the indigenous population dwindled, and the remaining members were subject to miscegenation into colonial society by the Portuguese government (Pinto, 2018). Although indigenous communities still exist in the area, they also have a significant degree of biological and cultural miscegenation (MISD, 1995).

There are eleven main communities (see Figure 3.5) involved in the management of the Uakari lodge. However, there are other localities that produce services or products to the lodge. There is a concentration of benefits among four communities (Vila Alencar (B), Caburini (A), Boca do Mamirauá (E) and Sítio São José (F)) out of the eleven, primarily due to their proximity to the lodge. These communities also represent 84% of the families involved in tourism activities (Pinto, 2018).

The average number of families per community with direct economic gains can be seen in Table 3.1. As noted previously, Vila Alencar, Caburini, Boca do Mamirauá and Sítio São José, the four communities that were the most active since the beginning of the project, represent 84% of families involved with the Uakari Lodge's activities.

Figure 3.5: Map of the Reserve and the Location of the Communities



Source: Peralta, Vieira & Ozorio (2017)

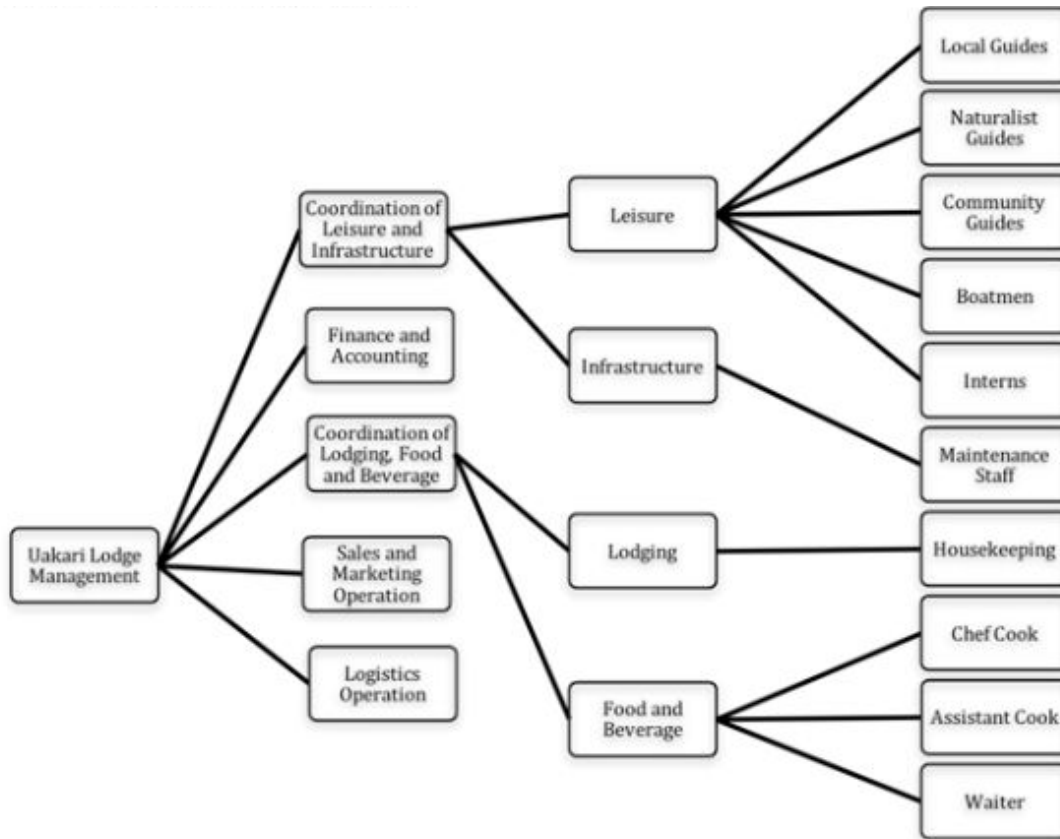
**Table 3.1: Average Number of Families per Community with Direct Economic Benefits from Uakari Lodge and Percentage from the Total Number of Families**

Community	Average # of families	% of total families
Vila Alencar	26.9	33%
Caburini	17.9	22%
Boca do Mamirauá	15.7	19%
Sítio São José	8.4	10%
Tapiira	5.2	6%
Sítio Promessa	2.5	3%
Macedônia	1.7	2%
Jurupari	1.3	2%
Jaquiri	1.1	1%
Pirarara	0.90	1%
São Raimundo	0.8	1%

Source: Pinto (2018)

The MISD has been collecting data on family income from tourism even before the current structure was built. In 1998, visitors stayed on one of the floating scientific bases in the Reserve. Since then, the data collection methodology went as follows: the Uakari Lodge's manager (a community member) and an AAGEMAM representative would take note of the person's name, the service or product provided and name of family and community. Information was (and still is) collected as *family income* and not individual payments. Peralta (2004) classified families in Vila Alencar according to their formation and can be used as the case example for communities at Mamirauá Reserve. Her studies show 66,7% of homes are formed by nuclear families (marital union); 20.8% are extended families (a nuclear family plus another adult relative), and 4% are single homes (adult living alone).

**Figure 3.6: Lodge Organization**



Source: Daniel et al., (2017)

One thing that should be highlighted is that throughout the Uakari Lodge literature, an explanation of payment per day worked by community members is still unclear. It is unclear if the MISD pays each family individually for each day that they have worked or, as mentioned briefly by Daniel et al. (2017) if profits are distributed to community leaders during meetings, and those leaders then distribute those profits evenly throughout their communities.

The Lodge works on a rotation schema, and, from the beginning, was not meant to become a full-time job for community members. Instead, it was introduced as an alternative income opportunity focused on poverty alleviation. According to Peralta (2013), the strategy was to allow members to work 11 days per month at the Lodge, which means that approximately 54 people work directly at the Lodge during any given period while others work with the Lodge indirectly. Daniel et al. (2017) also state that the communities provide the Uakari Lodge with a pool of 113 temporary service staff and six permanent employees. At the time (2017), the authors state that members of the local communities held the management positions of maintenance supervisor; supervisor of food, beverage, and accommodations; and transport

supervisor. The AAGEMAM controls the employment of the Lodge. The association selects and trains employees and makes sure that the rotation system is equitable (p. 7).

Geographic location is an essential factor in connection with the Lodge mainly because of transportation. The "rabetas" (wooden canoes with slow-powered propelling engines), the most common locomotive in the Amazon for more impoverished families, are slow and travel around 10-15km/h. Therefore, getting to the Lodge can take hours. Consequently, Uakari Lodge's food and beverage manager visits every community twice a week for the purchase of products. So it is easier for more distant populations to make investments in agricultural production than traveling to provide services at the Lodge. Those communities located further away, provide products, like fish, to the Lodge. This concentration of benefits has been flagged as an issue by Peralta (2013), who writes that "the study also shows that when tourism generates important economic benefits, but access to opportunities are restricted, the activity exacerbates already existing resource conflicts due to a local perception that costs of protection are collective, but benefits are concentrated" (p. 91).

In the end, economic benefits have not been substantial over the years (average income per person was R\$933, standard deviation R\$420), due in particular to the fact that the closure of the airport impacted the number of visitors. Nevertheless, Peralta et al., (2017) noted that their case study of the Uakari Lodge corroborated the theory that perceived benefits are more important than the real benefits. In the case of the Uakari Lodge, even though the number of beneficiaries has grown over the years, reaching a maximum of 120 people in 2007, or about one-third of the adult residents in the sector, many people did not recognize the economic importance of this activity. Also, their study showed that local people regarded individual economic benefits as more important than collective ones. This point was used as an argument against the relative importance of tourism: "ecotourism income is important, but it benefits the communities in common." (Peralta et al., 2017 p. 188). This statement is echoed by Coria and Calucura (2012), who argue that the unequal distribution of benefits discourages participation and creates or exacerbates problems. Daniel et al. (2017) also have stated that not all local communities choose to participate in the CBT initiative and have also continued to pressure the MISD to reintroduce commercial fishing in the area (p. 7-8). All of these issues have also been posited by community members and are addressed in the analysis chapter.

### **3.3.3 The Uakari Lodge Product, Visitor Profiles and Marketing Strategies**

By the Brazilian Amazon standards, Mamirauá is one of the best places to see the Amazonian fauna (Ozório, Nassar, Vieira, Peralta, Bernardon, & Freitas, 2017). The main ecotourism attraction of the Mamiraua RDS is the ease of observation of fauna, which includes the white



uakari, the alligator, the pirarucu, and the pink dolphin. The Uakari Lodge is located in the Amazonian floodplain, and the white water river floods the forests seasonally. The amplitude of the water level variation in Mamirauá RDS is, on average, 10 meters. This dynamic of water results in four seasons during the year (dry, flood, full, and ebb) and directly affects the ecotourism activity developed in the Reserve. While providing unique scenic features and unusual wildlife viewing opportunities, the water level's seasonality shapes the tourist activities carried out by Uakari Lodge — both the quality and the nature of them (Ozório et al., 2017).

There are two fixed schedules during the year: one schedule for the full season and another for the dry season. In times of flood and ebb, a combination occurs between the two fixed schedules. Some activities undergo changes in their operation between dry or wet or are performed in only one season. The fauna and the landscape sights also undergo significant changes during the year. It is possible to say that visiting the Uakari Lodge in the dry and wet season are two different experiences. Also, both seasons have characteristics that can be considered positive or negative, according to tourists' demands. The visitor can get to know the interesting adaptations of that fauna and how the community members adapt to life in the floodplain. The life of local populations and their socio-cultural aspects are essential elements of the ecotourism product of Uakari Lodge. When visiting the Lodge, visitors interact with researchers working locally, enabling access and information exchange on the várzea ecosystem. Also, the Reserve has a history of researching the management of natural resources and involvement of local populations and receives visitors explicitly interested in deepening this knowledge.

### **The Lodge and Its Offerings**

The Uakari Lodge has its infrastructure in two bases, one in Tefé and another in the Mamirauá RDS. The Tefé office supports the organization and hosts the sales and marketing, logistics, and financial departments.

The infrastructure of Uakari Lodge was designed based on aspects of the local culture and was therefore implemented with materials from the region. Due to the fluctuations in water levels between the wet and dry seasons (a difference that can be as much as 12 meters [or 30 feet]), the Uakari Lodge structures had to float on the river. All of the Lodge structures float on logs from the local *Hura crepitans* tree, known for its buoyancy, and are anchored to the bottom of the river with concrete blocks (Daniel et al., 2017). The lodging structure comprises five bungalows, of two large rooms each (25m<sup>2</sup>) for a total of 10 guest rooms. All rooms are suites with a balcony, a shower with hot water, two single king-size beds, a solar energy system, and a waste management system (Ozório et al., 2017). The dwellings are screened and covered with PET tile. All suites overlook the forest. The minimum occupancy for the Lodge is two people, and the maximum is twenty people. In addition to the maximum occupancy per package, there is also an annual limit of visitors, capped at 1,000 a year. The Lodge does not have a specific target



audience. However, employees do note that the Lodge receives more international tourists than Brazilian tourists.

It is also interesting to note that, as stated by Ozório & Janér (2012) and Pinto (2018), the original plan for the Lodge did not consider future expenses or the high depreciation rate of infrastructure. The Lodge opened in 2002, and since then has not gone through any renovations or upgrades. The Lodge itself is simple — it has all the basics but without any added luxuries, like air conditioning or a reliable internet connection. The problem, however, might be the price/value ratio as an eight day and seven night package can cost travelers around USD\$850 — USD\$1,000 (excluding flights). As a result, this lack of improvements to the infrastructure has impacted visitor satisfaction. Pinto (2018) states that this lack of renovation "soon became known by the travel industry" (p. 34) and resulted in tour operators canceling bookings in fear that their clients would possibly have a bad experience (Ozório & Janér, 2012). As of February 2020, no new renovations have been completed. Pinto has noted that the Brazilian government's bureaucratic nature has stalled the approval of these renovations for the last two years (2018-2019). Government approval is needed because the Lodge is located in a protected area. Nevertheless, approval is anticipated for 2020, and once approved the MISD wishes to undergo a total renovation of not only the hosting modules but also of the central floating house, which is where tourists gather for meals and which houses the kitchen, reception, restaurant, bar, library and TV room.

In addition to the hosting modules, the Lodge has a central floating house, employee accommodation, and support house of the Workers' Association. Solar energy systems generate electric power and heat water for the entire infrastructure of the Lodge, like the showers, waste disposal, recycling, and separation of organic and inorganic wastes (Ozório et al., 2017). The water used for cleaning and bathing is obtained from the river through electric pumps, and mineral water is used for oral hygiene and consumption. The food preparation is carried out with water from the rain collection, which passes through a filtration system. The tiles are made of PET plastic, and the wood comes from forest management or donations from residents.

In the transfer from Tefé to the Lodge and vice versa, aluminum boats are used with higher power engines, 90 and 150 Hp, and with a capacity for up to six and ten tourists, respectively. These boats are coated by aluminum and have lateral and frontal protection against rain. Perishable goods such as fruits, vegetables, and vegetables are transported in these transfers, and therefore, the crew's capacity is reduced (Ozório et al., 2017).

The services offered include full board, lodging, transfer from Tefé airport or hotel, and tours. Three meals a day are available. The menu is Brazilian cuisine, with a focus on Amazonian

dishes, fresh fish, fruit, and regional juices. Red meat is not served at the Lodge, and vegetarian and vegan options may be provided upon request.

**Figure 3.7: A Tourist Boat**



*Source:* Eduardo Coelho

### **The Uakari Activities**

The ecotourism activities developed at Uakari Lodge are mainly due to their location in the Amazonian floodplain environment. There are four regular tourist packages: three nights (Friday to Monday), four nights (Monday to Friday), seven nights (Monday to Monday or Friday to Friday), and the package Tefé<sup>14</sup> (Saturday morning until Sunday afternoon). Prices for each package range from USD\$500 to over USD\$1,000 per person (excluding flights). Each package has a basic schedule according to the season.

The tours offered are mostly contemplative or educational, and all are guided. It is worth mentioning that both the schedule and the tours are adaptable and flexible to meet, as far as possible, the demands, needs, and desires of different tourists (Ozório et al., 2017).

Activities include:

- **Hikes.** There are fourteen easy-level trails located near the Lodge in areas with typical vegetation of the floodplain.
- **Interpretive activities.** A guided trail, where visitors are told about the adaptations and peculiarities of the floodplain forest and its importance to the Amazon.
- **Canoe Trip.** A two to four hour canoe trip close to the canopy to look for monkeys, birds, sloths, and other animal-life as well as flora (trees, vines, bromeliads, orchids).
- **Community Visits.** A visit to a local community guided by a community guide. The visited communities include: Sítio São José, Boca do Mamirauá, Caburini and Vila Alencar. The visit includes interaction, exchange of cultures and experiences, and extra income for communities with the sale of handicrafts. During the seven night package, the

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<sup>14</sup> Exclusive package for Tefé residents. This option arose from the need to give the opportunity for local residents to get to know the Pousada Uacari. Therefore, it is exclusive to this group and has no profit margins.

tourist can spend all day in the community; the idea is that the visitor and community have more contact than the part-time visit.

- **A Boat Ride.** Visits to lakes and canals near the Pousada in a canoe with an outboard motor; highlights include dolphins and tucuxis (flood and ebb), alligators, waterfowl, and pscívoras, pirarucus (dry), monkeys, sloths.
- **A Night Hike.** A guided hike only available during the dry season
- **A Boat Visit to Mamiraua Lake.** A boat trip that includes an explanation about the occupation and use of Lake Mamirauá and ends with a stop to watch the sunset.
- **Traditional Fishing Excursion.** Fishing with cane, line, hook and bait (fish), mainly for piranhas. Adult fish in sufficient quantities can be served at meals.
- **A Night in the Forest.** The night in the forest includes a guided trip to a small house five meters high where visitors sleep in hammocks under the stars (only available in the seven-day package).
- **Talk about the Institute.** Introductory lecture on the Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reserve and the work developed by the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development.
- **An Evening with a Researcher.** Presentation of some research developed within RDS Mamirauá by the researcher in charge.

The presence of at least one local guide is mandatory in all tours of Uakari Lodge. The community guide is responsible for presenting the community, its history, and its culture to visitors. The guide interprets the Mamirauá riverside lifestyle for tourists (Ozório et al., 2017).

Unfortunately, local and community guides, for the most part, have a low level of schooling and do not speak English — or another second language — as required by the public at the Lodge. As a result, the Uakari Lodge hires a bilingual naturalist guide, not from the community, that fills this gap. The naturalist guide is often a graduate with a Tourism, Biological Sciences, or Ecology degree. The naturalist guide should be bilingual, preferably fluent in English. However, this is not always the case. Their presence is mandatory in the interpretive trail, in the community visit, and the trip to Lago Mamirauá. That said, the presence of the naturalist guide in the other walks is not needed. The naturalist guide is often the only English-speaking individual at the Lodge and therefore serves as the receptionist, guide, and problem-solver. Although they are not hired to be translators, they also perform this function (Ozório et al., 2017).

**Figure 3.8: A Picture of Three of the Floating Lodges at the Pousada Uakari**



*Source:* Taken by the author

Local guides and naturalist guides work together and complement one another. While the local guide conveys his traditional knowledge based on his experiences of interaction and adaptation to the environment in which he lives, the naturalist guide relays formal scientific knowledge to visitors. The former locates and identifies the animals and their habits, the plants and their uses, the local history and the riverside way of life, based on the local's production practices and systems of knowledge. The latter provides information on ecology, zoology, botany, geography, and the region's history, based on existing literature. The communication difficulty between the local guide and the foreign ecotourist is minimized with the use of illustrated guides of bird species, mammals, and the interpretive trail.

In December 2017, the Uakari Lodge had three full-time MISD staff working on the ecotourism project. Pedro Meloni Nassar, a former naturalist guide and current coordinator of the CBT Program; Luciana Cobra, the Operations Manager; and Leticia Galdino, the Sales and Marketing Manager. An interview was conducted with Galdino to discuss the sales and marketing strategies that she was implementing. During the conversation, two things became apparent; firstly, Galdino lacked the time, and secondly, she lacked the expertise to implement marketing strategies. At the time, Galdino was in charge of both the sales and marketing of the Uakari Lodge. The sales aspect of the Lodge was all manual. Questions, bookings, and payments were all made manually, through email or phone, which would prove to be time-consuming not only because Galdino had to use basic tools, like Excel, to complete bookings, but the internet proved

to be slow and would often cut out. In addition, Galdino had no marketing experience, a fact that she reiterated multiple times in the conversation. In December 2018, Leticia Galdino left the Uakari Lodge and was officially replaced by Gustavo Pinto.

### **Much More Than a CBT: A Unique Selling Point**

The Mamairauá Sustainable Development Reserve is part of the Central Amazon Conservation Complex and was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2003. On their website, UNESCO states that this conservation complex is the largest protected area in the Amazon Basin and "is one of the planet's richest regions in terms of biodiversity" (UNESCO 2019). The Uakari Lodge, which is located in the Mamairauá Sustainable Development Reserve, is not visited because it is a CBT, it is popular because it is one of the best places in the Brazilian Amazon to see wildlife.

In an article published in the Lonely Planet in 2013, the author Gary Chandler writes, "...and one of the best lodges in the entire Amazon is Uakari Lodge in Mamirauá Reserve." (Chandler 2013). Pinto agrees:

*When people think about wildlife, there is no, zero, other lodge in the Brazilian Amazon that you can see as many animals as you can in Mamiraua. So if you go to any travel guide or documentary, anything that is related to wildlife in Brazilian Amazon, they will mention the lodge...the Uakari Lodge is very lucky...so although we are a community-based tourism company, people don't come for that reason, that is a side benefit from the visit. They are really interested in the wildlife, and by the way that tourism is done by the institute in terms of conservation.*

The customer (demand) is primarily traveling to the Amazon to see its wildlife. When talking to different lodge guests (from Western Europe or Brazil), all but one had come to visit the Lodge because of the wildlife. Furthermore, when asked if the guests knew that the Lodge was a community-based tourism project, many of the guests said no, and many were also unfamiliar with that specific term. When asked why Elodie, a guest from France, and her partner had come to the Lodge, she replied *"to find the jaguar. Not to see wildlife. To be in a peaceful place, to be off the beaten path. Also, I like how the Lodge is built on the water; I was curious about it."* A Paulista (GB3) — someone who lives in São Paulo — and her son were visiting the Lodge because her son learned about the Amazon at school and dreamed of visiting the rainforest, and another retired senior Paulista couple (GB1; GB2) wanted to fulfill a lifelong dream of visiting the Amazon. Leticia, the former Marketing Manager of the Lodge, also added *"we have some guests that are interested in that [CBT projects], but most of them do not really know. They find out about that when they get here, but they are just looking for an experience in the jungle — in the Amazon. They don't really research other things about the Lodge, they are looking for a*

*unique experience. I believe that when people hear about the Lodge when they research, they only research Amazon lodges in Brazil."*

The narrative is not that of a community-based tourism project but a lodge in the "heart of the Amazon" that offers excellent leisure services, accommodations, food, and transportation in the Mamirauá Reserve that also supports preservation, generates income for local populations and has minimal social and environmental impacts. In essence, it is the "best example of ecotourism in the Amazon" (Uakari Lodge, 2019). The unique selling proposition is much more attractive than merely selling the Lodge as a community-based tourism project.

The diversification of the Lodge's product offer allows a range of individuals with different interests to visit the project. For example, the Lodge is known for its wildlife research, specifically jaguar and pink dolphin research. The Lodge offers photography tours, a Jaguar Expedition, which invites a small group of tourists to join scientists as they search for tagged jaguars in the Amazon and a tour that follows the path of naturalist Henry Bates. It caters to photographers, bird watchers, scientists, researchers, and regular tourists.

As Deuzani, a member from the Caburini community and a permanent member of staff at the Uakari Lodge who started to work for the Lodge back in 1999, states, *"this differential helps a lot to bring more people, yes. Because if it were a community-based program without research, we would not receive so many people."* But expectations need to match reality. Although the Lodge is not the primary reason why tourists visit, accommodation, tours, and food are still products that the Lodge offers its customers, and unfortunately, it seems as if the quality of these products does not meet the requirements of the market, which can also be a reason why the Lodge is financially unstable.

### **The Financial Feasibility of the Lodge**

As stated earlier, the Uakari Lodge has been fully operational since 2002 and has had a shared management model between the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development (MISD) and the Mamirauá Reserve communities. Before discussing the local impact of the Uakari Lodge, it is also important to note that the MISD has economically supported the Uakari Lodge throughout the years. Some of the costs that have been taken on by the MISD from the beginning have been: rental of the central office, boat docks in Tefé, the operational manager's salary, surveillance of the area, internet, water, and electricity bills and part of the aquatic and terrestrial transportation. These costs represent around 13% of the Lodge's operational costs (Pinto 2018). It is interesting to note that, according to Daniel et al. (2017, p. 9), financial profit was never the primary focus of the Lodge. The goal of financial sustainability was preempted by goals such as an improved quality of life for communities, supporting environmental goals, the impact on the local economy, and the creation of a competitive ecotourism experience. Since its inception until



2013, the Lodge has never reached 50% of its potential capacity (see Table 3.2). As a result of this, the Uakari Lodge has not been able to become financially profitable.

**Table 3.2: Occupancy rate**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of visitors	404	528	697	830	628	595	636	713	547	596	621	700
Average stay	3.2	3	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0
Room nights	1293	1584	2300	2905	2135	2261	2417	2638	2133	2324	2484	2800
Capacity utilization	18%	22%	32%	40%	29%	31%	33%	36%	29%	32%	34%	38%

*Source:* Daniel et al., 2017

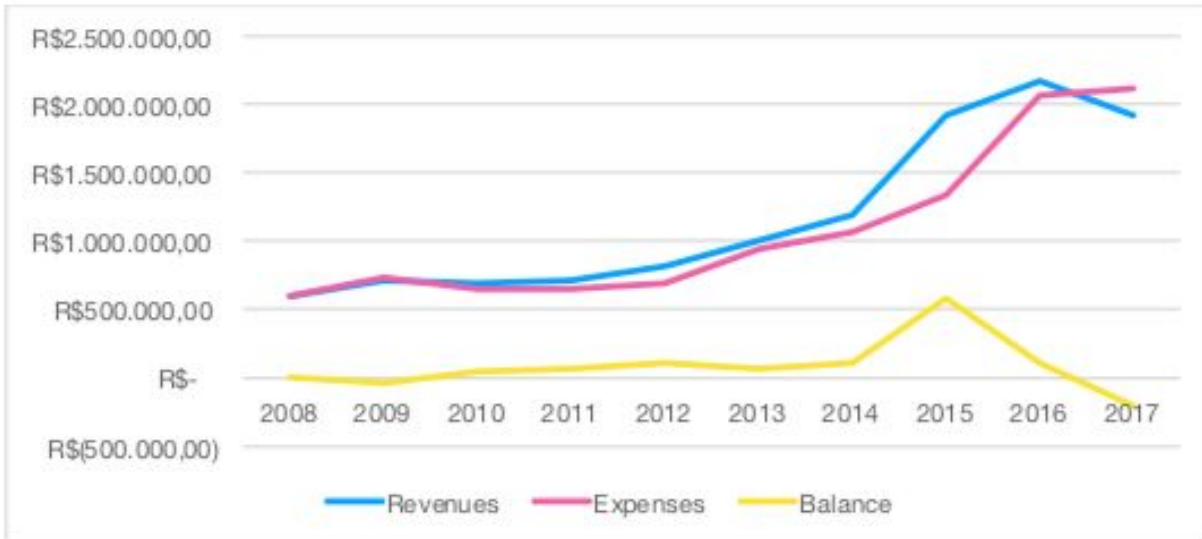
From 2008 up until 2017, the Lodge was only able to turn a profit in 2014 – 2015, due to, according to Pinto (2018), the effective marketing decisions in the previous years, when "the Uakari Lodge took part in many travel shows, visited critical buyers in Europe and trained DMC staff at many companies across Brazil, launched a new website and social media pages, together with the promotion of the country during the FIFA World Cup and the upcoming Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games (p. 36).

In contrast to those years of financial stability, the Lodge had one of their most significant financial losses from 2016 – 2017. These losses were due, in large part, according to Pinto (2018), to three main reasons: the economic crisis in Brazil, which limited the MISD's financial commitment to the Lodge, lack of international visitors, and a complete stop on implementing any marketing strategies.

In 2013, the MISD decided to invest in long-term financial market banking products, and although the Lodge had a loss of R\$200,000 in 2017, the interest made from the initial bank investments was used to alleviate the deficit (Pinto 2018).



**Table 3.3: Revenues, Expenses and Resulting Balance at the Uakari Lodge (2008-2017)**



Source: Pinto (2018)

### The Uakari Customer Profiles and Marketing Strategies

The peak of the high season for the Uakari Lodge is the third quarter of the year, the traditional holiday period for European and North American countries, the main visitors of the Lodge. Also, part of this period corresponds to the winter school vacations in Brazil.

According to the article *Profile of the Demand of the Visitors of the Uacari Pousada and Subsidies for the Marketing Strategies*, written by Ozório & Pinto (2017), the foreign public represents the most significant percentage of visitors to the Uakari Lodge. In 2013, 67% of the initiative's visitors came from outside Brazil (Ozório & Pinto, 2017). A similar situation occurs in jungle hotels around Manaus, where 60% of visitors in 2012 were foreigners (Ozório & Pinto, 2017). The majority of visitors to the Uakari Lodge are from the English (mainly), Dutch and Australian markets. Tour operators have played an essential role in these results as the clients of the Lodge's main partners are the English, American, and Dutch public. The Lodge has fewer partnerships with German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Canadian operators.

In terms of national demand, the regional public in the Uakari Lodge is the main customer due to a special Tefé package for city dwellers, usually used by the military (who are temporarily stationed in Tefé). A study released by FIPE (2012) names Manaus as the 27th most visited city in Brazil by Brazilians. The survey also reveals that, in terms of travel, the northern region is the least "desired" by the national public.

**Table 3.4: Age Ranges of People Staying at the Uakari Lodge versus other Hotels Located in the Amazon**

Age range	Uakari Lodge	Other Hotels in the Amazon
18 to 31	29%	26%
32 to 40	24%	23%
41 to 59	35%	37%
60 and more	12%	15%

Source: AMAZONASTUR, 2013; Banco de dados PTBC, IDSM (2014)

Both at the Uakari Lodge and in the jungle hotels of Amazonas, the average visitor age group is from 41 to 59 years old, which according to Ozório & Pinto (2017), is compatible with the ecotourism segment. Nevertheless, the percentage of younger visitors, aged 18 – 31, is higher at the Uakari Lodge while the 60+ age sector is higher in other jungle hotels. In this case, the distance factor seems to be responsible for this age difference, since accessing Mamirauá RDS can be complicated.

Visitors find out about the Lodge in many ways. According to a study conducted by Ozório & Pinto (2017), in 2013, 40% discovered the website through the internet. Another vital vehicle is word of mouth. In that same period, 22% of the guests heard about the initiative through friends and family. Travel guides also play an essential role in the promotion (21%), especially *Lonely Planet*, which since 2002, has given a prominent position to the destination in its publications.

In 2013, the share of travel agencies and the media who directed customers to the Lodge fell compared to previous years (Ozório & Pinto, 2017). Data collected by Ozório & Pinto (2017) show that the internet has been the most important means of promoting the Lodge. Data from Google Analytics from the Pousada Uacari websites (available at <http://www.pousadauacari.com.br> and <http://www.uakarilodge.com.br>) in the first half of 2014 demonstrates that access made by direct acquisition (that is, the visitor typed the address directly into the browser) was quite significant.

Furthermore, Ozório & Pinto (2017) noticed that almost 100% of the organic searches<sup>15</sup> included the name or a reference to the Lodge. The reported period had the following words: UAKARI LODGE, POUSADA UACARI, UAKARI FLOATING LODGE, MAMIRAUÁ, WWW. POUSADAUACARI.COM.BR, UACARI LODGE, POUSADA UACARI AM,

<sup>15</sup> **Organic search** results are listings on search engine results pages that appear because of their relevance to the search terms, as opposed to their being advertisements.

WWW.UAKARILODGE.COM.BR. Some explanations for this high percentage of direct acquisition and organic searches with targeted keywords are:

- The large number of people who know about Uakari Lodge through friends
- The large number of printed reports (primarily national and foreign magazines) and;
- Publicity material of Uakari Lodge that is intensely divulged in specialized fairs that the Uakari Lodge participated in the last years. In magazines and other advertising materials, the address of the pousada's website is printed as a way to search for "more information.

**Table 3.5: Source Channels that Accessed the Uakari Website - Taken from Google Analytics (Jan 1 - June 20, 2014).**

Source	# of users
Reference	21.448
Direct	13.681
Organic search	5.694
Social Media	119

Source: Ozório & Pinto (2017)

Access through social networks within that specific period was low. Ozório & Pinto (2017) believe that this is still a tool that is more often accessed by ex-clients and remains a way for past visitors to receive updates about recent activities at the Lodge. The most significant number (21%) of visitors, accessed the Lodge's website through a reference, which means that they clicked on a link on another website that led them to the Lodge's main site. Link clicks via travel guides (*Lonely Planet, Fodors, National Geographic Travel, Moon*) correspond to the majority of acquisitions by reference (total of 28.63%), while English news agencies also had good representation – *Daily Telegraph, Independent* and *Guardian* – accounting for 12.25% of accesses. Acquisitions through the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development (14.51%) are easily explained by the institutional link. In most of the mentions made to Pousada Uacari, this is linked to IDSM. Ozório & Pinto (2017) report that visitors to the Lodge's websites spent an average of 1 minute and 23 seconds on the site in the first half of 2014 and did not click on more than two pages.

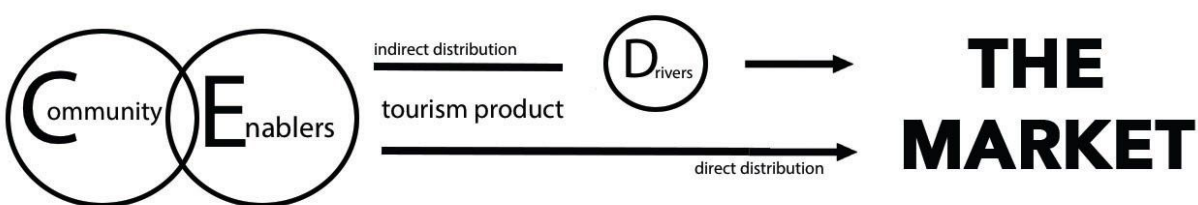
Ozório & Pinto (2017) state that in December 2013, a group of MBA students from Stanford University provided marketing consulting for the Uakari Lodge. In their analysis, the group evaluated that the website had vague and low information characteristics and that it did not fulfill

its primary function: sales. As a result of this, one of the students built a new website for the Lodge taking into account the most suitable models for sales of this type of service. The website went online at the end of 2014 (p. 67). Unfortunately, during the website migration process, Google Analytics was not set up correctly and therefore valuable website usage data could not be captured.

## CHAPTER 4: THE CHALLENGES OF MARKET ACCESS IN BRAZIL, A DISCUSSION

If we apply the current CBT model identified by the literature (Figure 1.2, p. 65) to the case of the Uakari Lodge, several topics, themes, and issues can be identified. For the sake of this analysis, the figure is once again presented below (Figure 4.1)

**Figure 4.1: The Current CBT Approach as Identified by Literature**



The current CBT approach highlights that in many cases, CBTs are being created by community members and enablers, which can be identified as academics, NGOs, or government institutions. As mentioned in the previous chapter, The Uakari Lodge was created to mitigate the economic losses that communities would suffer because of the Mamirauá Reserve restrictions. The project was led and implemented by enablers. The founder, José Márcio Ayres, was a primatologist; the organization that helped create the Lodge was the Sociedade Civil Mamirauá (an NGO); it was partially funded by a government institution (DFID); and managed, until the present day, by the Mamirauá Institute for Sustainable Development (MISD), which is part of the Ministry of Science and Technology. Drivers were included in some initial stages, primarily a consultancy to assess the economic and financial viability of the tourism project, but the Lodge was primarily designed, implemented, and run by enablers with some community participation. Throughout this process, it seems as if drivers have only been included when indirect distribution was needed.

The Uakari Lodge seems to follow the current CBT approach, as identified in the literature. It is a top-down project created between enablers and community members who have developed a product that they market through direct distribution, such as a website or Facebook, or indirect distribution through the use of drivers like travel agencies. However, it seems as if their implementation of this particular CBT model is not working. The Lodge itself is struggling with issues of governance, market access, and financial feasibility. Furthermore, questions regarding the Lodge's transfer of power to community members identify a topic that seems to have been overlooked in CBT literature. Questions such as *can or should a CBT project be transferred back*

*to a community if it is a top-down initiated project?* have been left unanswered. As a result of all these queries, this chapter strives to provide a more thorough discussion and analysis of the Uakari Lodge, supplemented with participant observation and content analysis regarding the overall CBT movement in Brazil. Therefore, before specifically addressing the Uakari Lodge, this chapter will begin by including an analysis of a document created by TURISOL members. In 2017, an email with a Google Doc link was sent to the author plus fifty members of the TURISOL CBT network, which invited all recipients to edit and add an outline of the main problems, strengths, and potential opportunities for CBTs in Brazil during 2017 and onwards. TURISOL is one of the oldest and largest CBT networks in Brazil, and its members include employees of various Brazilian CBT projects, including the Uakari Lodge. Below are the responses; they were originally written in Portuguese, and the author translated them into English while trying to keep the structure and wording as close to the Portuguese version as possible.

## **WHAT ARE THE MAIN PROBLEMS AND THREATS?**

### ***Market-readiness***

- Lack of a business approach from the beginning. Even if the product will take time to be ready for the market, it must have a clear strategy with a clear market view. Money spent on the wrong projects gives double damage: money could have gone to another initiative and at the same time, each failed project worsens the image of CBT. All of the problems below should be evaluated before investing too much.
- Many communities do not have access to the Internet and/or quality telephone.
- Precarious and fragmented offer, still without the necessary support for its development and permanent qualification.
- Lack of specific marketing policy for the activity — precarious integration with the other products offered. Failure to distribute the products.
- Projects carried out in a timely manner with no long-term perspectives for the sustainability of the initiatives.
- Lots of disconnected and non-socialized information about initiatives, concepts, and solutions found and successful practices.
- Absence of knowledge and systematization of the demand profile for Community Based Tourism in Brazil.
- Obfuscating approaches to community tourism from the view of the solidarity economy in contrast to approaches to the market economy.

### ***Lack of Government support***

- There are currently no public policies for the CBT in MTur.
- Discontinuity of projects and loss of support by large companies - environmental/social compensation and public policies MTur, MDA, MDS, MMA.
- Low qualification of community members to empower themselves.

- Lack of a policy to promote community-based activities — lack of specific lines of credit to empower and support communities.
- Lack of integration of communities in forums and tourism councils of the municipalities regions - distancing communities from information on the activity/capacity-building for impacts and benefits / low negotiation capacity with other entities of the chain.
- Precarious promotion of existing initiatives for the national and international market due to lack of public policies.
- Impossibility of registering communities and associations in CADASTUR.
- Discontinuation of actions of the national network.
- Difficulty in accessing foreign financing from non-governmental entities.
- Polysemy and conflict of denominations from the point of view of supply, demand, WTO, and governments.
- There is little appreciation of community tourism initiatives by public managers, as well as a lack of understanding regarding what community-based tourism is (in all three spheres, but especially in the municipal spheres).

***Other comments and statements that didn't address government or marketing included:***

- The size of Brazil (continental) makes it difficult.
- Dispersed communication and low quality.
- There is a lack of basic sanitation and transportation infrastructure in many communities.
- Absence of an updated mapping of existing initiatives.
- Different definitions and concepts.

**WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS AND POTENTIALITIES?**

- A wide variety of cultures: quilombolas, natives, sertanejos, riparians, traditional fishermen, peasants, etc.
- A large number of academics are interested in community-based tourism and trying to contribute to research and studies. A significant number of researchers and consequent CAPES research groups that have community-based tourism or community-based tourism as a research theme were identified in a survey conducted in 2014.
- Tourism as a complementary activity for other productive chains, such as artisanal fishing and family farming.
- The existence of different initiatives spread from north to south of the country, whether in rural, coastal or urban areas. These are represented by diverse groups of sociocultural or economic characteristics identified or not as traditional populations, whether in family agriculture, in settlements, in caiçaras communities, quilombola communities, indigenous people, among others already mentioned.



- The first CBT initiatives in Brazil emerged, at least in the field of documentary and bibliographical records, in the 1990s. Among them are the Extractivist Reserve of Currealinho (RO) in 1997; the Pousada Aldeias dos Lagos (Silves, AM) in 1997; Pousada Pedras Negras (RO) in 1997; the Pousada Aldeias dos Lagos (Silves, AM) in 1997; the Pousada Uacari (RDS Mamirauá, AM) in 1998; All of them fruit of the initiative of WWF. Prainha do Canto Verde (CE) in 1998 and Acolhida da Colônia (SC) in 1999.
- Currently, according to a documental and bibliographic analysis performed in productions from 2002 to 2013 in Brazil (251 documents: 08 books, 07 theses, 31 dissertations, 164 complete articles/abstracts, 21 videos, 01 journals, 09 leaflets/maps, 04 edicts/edicts, and 06 others) produced in national territory and with case studies in several Brazil states. 213 case studies mentioned in the document were registered as practices of community tourism in Brazilian territory.
- Possibility of organizing different segments such as cultural, gastronomic, ecotourism, adventure, events, etc.
- The willingness of the communities to undertake, to seek an alternative of income and of differentiated work, also as an alternative to the maintenance of the young people in the communities.
- Potential to undertake new activities in the country.
- A global movement of valorization of local, regional, and sustainable activities.
- Connections with movements in Latin America and other continents.
- Beginning of the formation of an interested public in Brazil.
- Successful initiatives, few yet, but already with some regularity.
- Niche operators being created in Brazil.
- International interest for Brazil in this segment.
- Entrepreneurs have a strong link with the site, which increases the chances of survival of the initiative (strong point).
- The growing demand by tourists for cultural exchange and authentic experiences (potentiality).

An analysis of the above responses reveals that the main problems and threats can be grouped into two main categories: market-readiness and a lack of government support.

- **Market-readiness.** Although distribution is mentioned in one of the points, the majority of members pointed out that one of the main marketing issues is not distribution but understanding the product or the initial offer. Many of the points echo what can be found in the literature, CBT projects need to understand the market and create a market-ready offer with a robust business approach from the beginning. One individual also brings up the question of access to ICTs as a barrier

for community members in terms of direct distribution channels, a question, and concern that is similarly voiced in the literature.

- **A lack of government support.** Along with questions about market-ready products, TURISOL members also seemed to identify government participation, or lack thereof, as a threat to CBTs in Brazil. Although the author has found references to CBTs and responsible tourism in current and former National Tourism Plans, as outlined in Chapter 3.1.2, according to TURISOL members, it seems that these plans are not being translated from policy to reality. The lack of public policy towards CBTs is mentioned four times. Furthermore, there are several statements regarding financing. Some members mention a lack of financial help from the government, one member mentions *lines of credit* (in Portuguese: *linhas de crédito específicas*) while another mentions a lack of foreign financing from non-governmental entities (the authors assumes that this means large NGOs like the WWF or GIZ).

Although there are mentions of market access and distribution channels, the wording of some of the points seems to suggest a development-first mindset, which can be seen in statements about the importance of government support, financing, and an increased focus on the community than the economy. In response to a statement by a member who identified a lack of a business approach as a problem, one member wrote: "*gostaria de deixar claro que sou contra essa abordagem negocial mas a favor da abordagem econômica como um dos eixos da sustentabilidade.*" Roughly translated, the member is against the business approach but in favor of the economic approach as one of the axes of sustainability.

The difference between these two approaches is that the latter focuses on the concepts of solidarity economy, which some members argue differs from a business approach. For example, one of the emails leading up to the creation of the document, the member writes: "*...um documento que subsidia e justifique um edital de apoio ao turismo solidário e sutilmente aplicado nos princípios da economia solidária não em negócios.*" Roughly translated, it states that the network should create a document that justifies a call for support for solidarity tourism that subtly applies the principles of solidarity economy and not the principles of business. Another member wrote the main problem or threat was the "*obfuscating approaches to community tourism from the view of the solidarity economy in contrast to approaches to a market economy.*" It is interesting to point out that members identify a lack of a business or market approach as a problem and a threat, yet there is still strong opposition against the concept itself. The explicit mention of the solidarity economy and the rejection of the concept of "business" might either demonstrate a possible fracture within the network between those that

accept and those that reject the market or demonstrate that members have identified the problems but are being unrealistic in terms of what is needed to solve these issues.

Eight points were made in the Google Doc regarding market access and distribution; therefore, the author expected that the next section, which was about strengths and potentialities, would highlight ways in which to overcome these problems or threats. The members seem to understand that they have a varied and unique offer in Brazil. The first point that was made under strengths was that the country has a wide variety of cultures, from quilombos, to natives to traditional fishermen. The authenticity of their products was mentioned several times throughout the section, along with an agreement that there is an increase in local and international interest in these types of authentic and local experiences. There was also a mention of organizing these offers into different segments, such as cultural, gastronomic, and adventure, and a mention of niche tourism.

Nevertheless, the strengths and potentialities section had little information regarding market access, linkages, or market opportunities. The last two comments mentioned entrepreneurs and growing market demand for CBTs. However, some of the comments made it clear that most of the individuals writing suggestions had research or academic background and mindset. The themes identified in the document are common subjects that have been identified in the author's analysis of primary and secondary research. As a result, the author wishes to further explore these three prominent topics within this specific chapter of analysis. The subjects include:

- Merging development-first and tourism-first rhetoric;
- Understanding the reasoning behind a market-ready product; and
- Addressing the importance of distribution channels.

#### **4.1 The Dichotomy between Development-First and Tourism-First; Community and Market; Research and Practice.**

The literature review has highlighted the dichotomy between community potential (development-first) and tourism potential (tourism-first). The concept of a dichotomy between development- and tourism-first was first introduced to the author by Dr. Eduardo Mielke, a Brazilian academic and author of the book *"Desenvolvimento Turístico de Base Comunitária"* (2009), which has been referenced several times in this thesis. Dr. Mielke has been a vocal advocate of merging the community and market, specifically the commercialization and promotion of CBTs, arguing that if the tourist does not show up then, the community will not believe in the project. He argues for a two-prong approach:

- The community needs to deeply understand what tourism is from understanding what they gain from it, the roles of intermediaries, how they will sell the community to the market.
- There needs to be more investment in the promotion and commercialization process.

Mielke writes that there is so much time and money spent on training the community and helping members understand what tourism is, and yet there is little to no attention given to marketing and promotion. He also argues that projects can not work alone anymore and that there is a need for intermediaries. It is interesting to note, however, that during the interview with the author, Mielke focused heavily on the question of distribution, telling the author of this dissertation to look at distribution channels like social media, and analyze how these channels can be used to promote CBT products to international or domestic markets. Furthermore, there was little mention of product development. Instead, there was a focus, as with many other academic papers, on the question of market access as a barrier to CBT success.

Mielke's first point is an important one to highlight. He argues that the first step needs to be empowerment. In order for community members to understand what tourism is and how they gain from it, they need to be part of the overall planning and implementation process. In Chapter 2.6.2, the author presented a CBT model (Figure 1.2) based on the literature, demonstrating that, from inception, enablers need to work with the community to overcome issues of governance before addressing any questions related to market-ready products or distribution. If this is not done, as is the case with the Uakari Lodge, projects may struggle with ownership, which could potentially jeopardize the project's potential to be fully community-run without the presence of a mediator organization.

#### 4.1.1 Ownership of the Lodge

When the CBT product is formulated and designed with a focus on the international markets, and with this top-down mode of organising, it requires the constant action and translation of a mediator organisation for survival. It can be sustainable as long as the mediator organisation maintains and repairs the network with its operational and financial support (Zapata et al., 2011, p. 20)

As outlined in Chapter 3, **the Uakari Lodge is not a community-led project**. Interestingly, the whole Uakari Lodge process was divided into three main phases: planning, development, and operation, all of which had limited community empowerment, significantly affecting community ownership of the project.

## ***PLANNING***

The planning phase of the Lodge was between 1997 and 1999, according to Peralta, Vieira & Ozório (2017). During this period, Sociedade Civil Mamirauá, an NGO created by Ayres, was responsible for planning and developing the project. An outside agency was brought in to fund the project, and a consulting agency was hired to create a sound business strategy for the potential CBT product. Peralta (2013) argues that during this period, community members were consulted and informed about the impending project, and due to conflicting reports by Peralta (2013), Silveira (2013) and Reis (2005), it's not clear whether community members were interested in participating in the project. Silveira (2013) also mentions that there was strong community opposition towards the project, almost causing it to fail.

## ***DEVELOPMENT***

During development, project staff continued to connect with community members to either establish or maintain their support. Peralta et al., (2017) note that to achieve the support and involvement of the local communities, researchers and project staff drafted "*uma estratégia de aproximação*" (approach strategy), which included regular visits and participation in all events promoted by sector coordination (such as bimonthly sector meetings and assemblies). The ecotourism program team held meetings with local communities to disseminate and evaluate the results of their activities, to render accounts, and to plan activities. The Reserve is home to 191 communities, and although it is not clear how many communities are located close to the Uakari Lodge, it is interesting to note that project staff initially only had the support of two communities during the project's development phase. At the end of 2000, this number grew to four communities (Vila Alencar, Caburini, Boca do Mamirauá and Sítio São José).

## ***OPERATION***

The Uakari Lodge officially opened in 2002 and has experienced a history of challenges. As outlined by Sakata & Prideaux (2012), an individual's attitude, perceptions, and level of support for tourism are a product of their cost-benefit analysis, which influences their association with tourism. This fact has also been actualized within the Lodge. According to Pinto (2017), communities did not have profit sharing for six years, which considerably deteriorated the trust that they had in the MISD's proclamation of the benefits of ecotourism (p. 34). The 2012 Business Plan brought a new perspective in terms of financial planning, and a goal of a 10% profit margin was set (Daniel et al., 2017, p. 13). However, it seems as if this was not realistic. Although the Lodge had a profitable year in 2014-2015, the Lodge experienced its most significant economic loss in 2016-2017. Continued financial instability, along with unequal benefits between communities, restrictions placed on the communities by the MISD, family income instead of individual payments and a complex decision-making process, wherein the

MISD Coordinator has primary decision making power, has only led to a more profound disconnect between community members and the Uakari Lodge project.

The issue of ownership has been further complicated with the introduction of the transfer of power. As mentioned previously, in 2009, in a meeting with the institutional board and representatives of MISD, it was agreed that the Mamirauá Institute would opt for scenario 2 — to make investments so that the Lodge could become financially autonomous in 10 years. The Lodge is set to be fully autonomous in 2022. In 2012, the Uakari Lodge designed a new 10-year business plan where the Mamirauá Institute was going to transfer the ownership and full management of the Lodge to the communities. In the original business plan, marketing and commercialization were to be taken over by the community members. However, this was not possible, mainly because, as Pinto argues, the community members do not want the responsibility. Pinto states: *"local people in the communities do not want to run the Lodge. They want to have the social, economic, and environmental benefits from it, but it is not a demand that they run the place."* As a result, another business plan was created with three new "outsider" positions: a naturalist guide, an operations manager, and a marketing coordinator. The idea is that the community members would hire out and manage these people. In 2018/2019, another business plan was created to designate a board of directors that would include the MISD to help run the project.

The idea of having positions filled by people from outside the communities is not a new concept. For example, in December 2017, all the main management and operations positions were held by outsiders. The Institute has also been bringing outsiders into the Lodge to train and prepare staff for 2022. Vivianne was one of those outsiders that was brought in to help as a staff coordinator. In a conversation, she mentions that apathy for the Lodge and its success is common among community members. She singled out the younger generation, specifically younger males, who would instead just earn a paycheck and often spend it on frivolous things like alcohol. She further explains that her job has taught her to be patient because she is not allowed to fire community members. Instead, Vivianne works with the staff and encourages them to strive to be better. She remarks that if there is someone on top of the community members, like herself, who pushes them to do better, the quality of work increases, and the Lodge reviews are much higher. She believes that this external influence is essential to create and maintain a product and have it to the incoming customers' standards.

This need for an external influence may be the result of the MISD's continuous role in implementing and managing the project from its inception. Deuzani echoes this statement by acknowledging it is difficult to get the community members to feel like the project is *theirs*. In a conversation with community members during a company barbecue, questions of ownership were brought up about work contracts, rewards, and consequences. As outlined in Chapter 3,

AAGEMAM, the community association, controls the employment of the Lodge, and although they select and train employees while also making sure the "rotation system is equitable" (Daniel et al., 2017, p. 7), there is not much more information available on how the system works. The community members at the barbecue stated that they could not be fired, and instead are removed from the rotational schedule if they do something wrong. They also have no working contract with the Lodge. Instead, they are provided a day rate. It is also unclear if that day rate is paid directly to the individual or the family unit. Furthermore, working harder does not result in extra pay or rewards, just like breaking rules results in little to no consequences.

Moreover, it seems as if all these rules have been created and are enforced by the MISD. It is also important to reiterate, as discussed in Chapter 3.3.2, that there is a concentration of benefits in only four out of the participating eleven communities. Vila Alencar, Caburini, Boca do Mamirauá and Sítio São José, the four communities that were the most active since the beginning of the project, represent 84% of families involved with the Uakari Lodge's activities (Pinto, 2018). This concentration of benefits has been flagged as an issue by Peralta (2013), who writes that "the study also shows that when tourism generates important economic benefits, but access to opportunities are restricted, the activity exacerbates already existing resource conflicts due to a local perception that costs of protection are collective, but benefits are concentrated" (p. 91). It might be the reason behind some community member's apathy for the project, as MC1 and MC2 note<sup>16</sup>:

*"I think, at work, I like doing this work, but there are a lot of guides that just go there, they don't provide good information, they just pass the time and go home. They don't care. So at the lodge, I think there is no such thing, ah I work more than another. ... I do my job well, I present, I give the information well, but I'm going to earn the same, whether I do a good job or not."*

- MC1, December 2017

*"If I was hired it was going to be different, the person would value the work more, he would do a better job still, because he knows if he did something wrong and knew that he was going to get fired and that he was not going to get back. Oh, and that, it is not. Contracted is not even there ... If you do a wrong job, you take that suspension, but in 6 months you go back to work. So that's the job. Ah, you're not going to work anymore ... you do not have this business."*

- MC2, December 2017. In response to the fact that the employees are not contractual workers.

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<sup>16</sup> The responses were originally provided in Portuguese and have been translated from Portuguese into English by the author.



In Chapter 2, the thesis highlights that CBT projects can be initiated from within and outside the community. Both approaches can offer pros and cons depending on the type of partnership that stems from the community-stakeholder(s) relationship. Whether the CBT is *top-down* or *bottom-up*, community members need to feel empowered to make decisions that benefit them and their communities. The issue with the Uakari Lodge is that it was (and seemingly still is) a project that included the community as an afterthought. The implementation of the Reserve meant that restrictions had to be applied to the communities living in the area, and the Lodge was seen as a solution to that particular problem.

As a result, the Uakari Lodge skipped the first prong of Mielke's two-pronged approach. Community members did not understand what tourism was and did not fully participate in its planning or implementation. Instead, outside organizations planned, developed, and still operate the whole Uakari Lodge experience. Even today, the MISD Coordinator is the primary decision-maker on matters related to the Lodge. It seems that this type of structure can work and can still be classified as a CBT project. The only possible issue is the transfer of ownership that is set to happen in 2022. Luciana Cobra, the Uakari Lodge Operational Manager, argued the communities chose to take over the Lodge by 2022. Her claims are corroborated by literature. However, after talking with other staff and community members at the Lodge, there are still questions about whether this decision was made through consensus. As mentioned beforehand, the Lodge's decision-making process is complex, and there exist different forums depending on what decision needs to be made.

In any case, the community members that work at the Uakari Lodge lack a *sense of ownership* because, in truth, the project was never really for or about them. The communities had no personal stake in the project as they did not even financially support the development of the Lodge (Daniel et al., 2017, p. 7). However, they did (and still do) enjoy the direct and indirect benefits that came with their participation even though they were never really part of the process. Zapata et al. (2011) argue that this type of CBT model requires the mediator organization's operational and financial support throughout the project's lifespan (p. 20). This argument can be mirrored in the lessons learned of the Lodge. One of the three main reasons why the Lodge had such a substantial financial loss in 2016-2017 was because it had to incorporate the costs MISD could no longer cover (Pinto, 2018, p. 39). Furthermore, although the MISD wants to transfer all ownership back to the communities, the last revision of the Business Plan, which argued for the MISD's presence on a board of directors, demonstrates that their presence might still be needed and wanted by the communities. Can the Uakari Lodge survive without the MISD?

Furthermore, this lack of ownership may be why community members Waldenilson and Ruth started their own pousada<sup>17</sup> called Casa Do Caboclo, in the community of Boca do Mimirauá. The project is not a CBT, but if residents of the community are interested in providing their services to incoming tourists, they can and do work in a rotation scheme. Waldenilson and Ruth are great examples of "cosmopolitan locals" (a resident with external exposure), as outlined by Iorio & Corsale (2013). Interestingly enough, both Waldenilson and Ruth have worked at the Uakari Lodge. Waldenilson was one of only three community members to finish a year-long English course offered by the Institute to any interested party. Once he completed the English course, he decided to launch his own pousada with the help of the municipality. The Pousada has a working website, a Facebook page, and even a TripAdvisor page. Casa Do Caboclo is also listed in the *Lonely Planet* as the "first and only authorized alternative to Pousada Uacari." The creation of new pousadas can also be an example of the importance of individual versus collective benefits.

During the author's stay, another community member mentioned that she also wanted to open up her own pousada. When asked about it, Cobra remarked *I think she already had this idea for about three years to open it. They even made a workshop with us recently. But I do not know anything more concrete.* When asked what she thought about community members starting their business ventures, Cobra replied:

*I do not see a problem. The most important thing is that no one loses sight that we are doing the same thing. All is the same product. It's important that no one sees each other as a competitor. You have to work on this issue of seeing yourself as partners and not as competition. I think this is possible, I do not think this is a utopia, I do not think this is a romanticized idea. It's the same thing, the schedules will be the same. You can do one thing together. Yes, but we are winning and the community is in harmony, we continue working together. In the end, in a social business, not only profit is important, what matters also are people and the environment. I see it that way because I think what's important is that they have this idea.*

As mentioned in Chapter 2, before addressing market access, products, linkages, or opportunities, community-based tourism's guiding principles need to be addressed or implemented. As Manyara and Jones (2007) clearly stated, positive impacts are more significant if communities "emphasize independence, address local community priorities, enhance community empowerment and transparency, discourage elitism, promote effective community leadership and develop community capacity to operate their own enterprises efficiently..." (p.

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<sup>17</sup> Traditionally a pousada was a family run business that offered rooms for travellers. Nowadays it can be used to describe any overnight accommodation, like an inn or a hotel. However, the word pousada still tends to describe a smaller accommodation like a bed and breakfast.

47). Only once this is established can projects address issues of market readiness or access. This sentiment is echoed by Mielke (2009), who states that "...the promotional part is one of the last steps to be taken. It is only possible to promote when the rules, responsibilities, and duties are duly clear and agreed to by all. This organization must be conceived by the will of the parties directly interested and not by the imposition of external agents. **Imposition does not generate commitment**" (p. 23)[*emphasis added by the author*].

The literature has demonstrated that for a CBT project to work, the members of the community need to first understand what tourism is before deciding whether they want to participate in the development of a project. As a result, it seems as if the first issue that the Uakari Lodge needs to overcome is governance and limited community participation resulting in low community ownership, which threatens the sustainability of the Uakari Lodge long-term. The second issue is whether or not the Lodge is being treated as a business instead of a non-profit, a question that has been raised because the Lodge seems to lack financial viability.

#### **4.1.2 Business Venture or CBT Project?**

CBTs, unlike many other tourism products, require a dual strategy that addresses both *tourism potential* (demand), such as product highlights and markets and *community potential* (supply), such as local capacity and cooperation (Richards, Suansri & Van Hee, 2018). As a result, although CBTs must produce community benefits, encourage social development, and promote ownership at a community level, projects need to be managed like a business.

From a poverty alleviation standpoint, the Uakari Lodge has contributed both direct and indirect economic benefits to the Mamirauá Reserve Communities. From 2008 to 2017, as outlined by Pinto (2018), the total direct benefits were R\$2,837,903.30 (or USD\$854,790.15). During this period, families with economic benefits from the Lodge made an average of 4.16 minimum salaries per family per year. Direct economic benefits have been generated by providing services, selling products, and distributing surpluses. However, it is known that this amount is higher, as some items such as sales of handicrafts, tips for workers, and laundry expenses are often not counted. Furthermore, indirect benefits, such as the profit shares from the social and environmental fees, have been used to fund community projects, like schools, and community centers. Direct benefits can be reinvested in other means of production like agriculture, fishery, and livestock; indirect benefits have been used to finance small community business. Money spent in nearby towns starts a chain of necessary linkages for the regional economy (Pinto, 2018).

Other than economic benefits, the Lodge has provided environmental and social benefits. Deuzani states:

*When I started to work here, my colleagues and I, we started to have our own money and we could do what we wanted. And that's when I started to feel like another person ... independent. I didn't have to depend on another person, I could have what I wanted with my work. And that is how I started to see things differently. I started to have a different vision.*

Nevertheless, as described by Pinto (2018), the Uakari Lodge is a not-for-profit initiative whose priority is economic development for biodiversity conservation. As a result, the MISD "strives to connect as many locals and generate as much qualification and remuneration in the communities, which probably would not be an option for regular hospitality companies either in the Amazon or anywhere else" (p. 32). Although Pinto (2018) states that the Lodge is a not-for-profit initiative, Cobra clarifies, in her interview, that the Lodge is and has always been treated as a business. *"Look, the lodge generates benefits for the community. But the Lodge is a business. The tourists need to treat it as a business. Treat it as a business, but without losing the authenticity of the product...of what it is. Understand this as a product."*

Although Cobra may be correct, it is essential to note that from the beginning, the Uakari Lodge was not adequately supported as a business. The Lodge was seen as a project designed to motivate the local population to participate and receive benefits from the conservation of the region's biodiversity. In 1998, an economic viability study of ecotourism activity in the Mamirauá Sector was carried out by an ecotourism and marketing consultant. This feasibility study was also designed as a preliminary business plan for the project. However, as noted in Chapter 3.3, most of the initial projections and plans were too ambitious, and many things were overlooked, such as the high costs and the increased deterioration rate of the infrastructure associated with having a lodge in such a remote location.

Furthermore, according to Pinto, since the MISD primarily ran the Lodge, it was not treated as a business. The MISD is a social organization financed and run by the Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovations, and Communications. It is not a privately-owned business. Therefore, it can be assumed that the MISD does not have much prior experience or knowledge in creating or running a business. As previously outlined by Daniel et al. (2017, p. 9-10), financial profit was never the sole focus of the MISD, and profit margins were generally in single digits. Throughout its lifespan, the Uakari Lodge has suffered from financial instability. In 2009, due to questions about the venture's economic viability, a new business plan was commissioned and implemented in 2012. As mentioned previously, the plan included a goal of a 10% profit margin. Two other business plans were created and implemented between 2012 - 2020. However, none of

these adjustments seem to have changed the reality of the situation. As a business, the Uakari Lodge is failing. It has not been able to become financially profitable over the years. Between 2008 and 2017, it was only able to turn a profit in one year. It is also essential to note that the MISD has economically supported the Uakari Lodge and covers around 13% of the Lodge's operational costs.

Moreover, the most worrying out of all of this is that, regardless of ownership and financial issues, the MISD plans to give back 100% ownership to the communities, a move that the MISD staff has said was the decision of the community members themselves. The author believes that the Uakari Lodge is an example of a CBT that has focused too much on the supply and not enough on demand, which has resulted in a project that is not sustainable. The author argues that to understand Uakari Lodge's situation, it is also essential to look at the development-first and tourism-first approaches currently being undertaken at the Lodge and within the Brazilian CBT network.

### **The Development-first Approach: An Unrealistic and Paternalistic Approach**

During their interviews, both Pinto and Dr. Teresa Mendonça, a professor at the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ) who has been researching community-based tourism in Brazil since 2003, mentioned a TURISOL meeting that happened in 2015 in Brasilia. During that meeting, Dr. Mielke was invited to speak about agency and the market. Dr. Mendonça argues that he was not the right person to be invited to the meeting primarily because he was too market-oriented and therefore was not able to provide a balanced approach. She argued that he was too aggressive and believed that his language was inaccessible to the community members. She adds, "*he should have acted like the intermediary because his profile is not a community one.*" What ensued after the presentation was a division in the network. As Pinto states:

*You probably heard about the meeting that happened here in Brasilia three years ago. I was in that meeting as well...So a group that is very fragile and that doesn't have much economic power and doesn't have any support from the government was divided, which divided everything even more. So, there is this part of the group from Projeto Bagagem who believes that community tourism should be only taken by local communities and anyone else from the outside is not welcome to work with them - like leave us alone and let us do our work and if you come to try to help us then you are trying to abuse us and take advantage of us. That is half of the group, that is a lot of the group. And there is this other half, like me, like some community initiatives that believes that they have things to do and they believe that tourism can be used for social and economic development and the more support they have, the better. The thing is that this group is divided. And after this division not much happened.*

There exists a division between the market and community, wherein, as explained by Dr. Mendonça, a culture within the community has demonized the word "market." (*"ao mesmo tempo existe uma cultura dentro das comunidades que o mercado, essa palavra e demonizada"*). She argues that a specific mechanism, or a specific intermediary, needs to be created that merges the social sector with access to markets. She also argues that community members need to find other market economy alternatives, and states that the word "market" needs to be translated into another word, a word that will not be rejected by community members.

During the conversation, Dr. Mendonça also mentions Alberto Viana, an educator and researcher, who lives in Bahia and is a strong advocate for a type of community tourism that connects to the political issues of the solidarity economy. He is part of a group of Brazilian individuals that advocate for the implementation of solidarity economy guidelines within community tourism. However, Dr. Mendonça adds that the implementation of the solidarity economy *makes it unclear how this logic will work within the market*. Dr. Mendonça argues that there exists a strong distrust within the Brazilian CBT network, not only towards the market but also anything or anyone that is deemed an outsider. She gives the example of outsider researchers, who are often seen as parasitic, or "suckers" (*sugador*) of information and resources, that provide no direct benefits for local community members.

As outlined in Chapter 2.3.2, literature has argued against a tourism-first approach primarily due to the argument that neoliberalism and capitalism are focused on profits instead of promoting the principles of community development. Capitalism is seen as hegemonic, imperialistic, and exploitative. The same type of rhetoric is present within the Brazilian CBT network. Projeto Baggagem, which is an NGO and the founder of the TURISOL network, for example, published a document after they held the II Global Fórum on Sustainable Tourism in 2018. The attendees of the event created a joint statement that read "...these exemplars are based on principles such as solidarity economy, which contests the hegemonic forms of conventional and mass tourism that often present themselves as non-sustainable: segregating, predatory and invasive against people, their environment and their cultures" (Raízes Desenvolvimento Sustentável, 2018). This statement exemplifies the wording that frequently appears in the literature.

The overall problem with this development-first approach within the Brazilian CBT network is two-fold:

- **The voices that are heard are usually not from the community.** The arguments against a market approach come from academics and individuals working for public organizations and NGOs. Like the literature, these are individuals that seem to be



speaking *for* community members, prioritizing, for example, the collective, instead of individual benefits, and;

- **They seem to be unrealistic.** Literature has demonstrated that CBTs are failing primarily due to market-readiness and market access. However, instead of accepting the fact that these are issues that need to be addressed, it seems that some members of the network are still distancing themselves from the concept of "the market." As an example, some of the TURISOL members prioritize discussing different ways to redefine the problem, arguing for the definition of solidarity tourism that applies the principles of solidarity economy, rather than the principles of the market or that the word *market* needs to be translated into another word. This example can also be tied back to the Uakari Lodge, where MISD staff knew the importance of treating the Lodge as a business, yet failed to implement any real changes in terms of business strategy.

As a result, the author believes that both of these points need to be addressed, albeit briefly in the following section.

### **Community Members DO Want Individual Economic Benefits**

The author began to think about the distinction between self-interest (*me-ness* as Dr. Sheldon calls it) and selfishness. The author argues that it is almost selfish in itself for individuals to argue that people should forgo the "me" to focus on the "we." In community-based tourism, there is this focus on prioritizing the collective over individual needs. However, the author argues that this type of thought process can be seen as paternalistic. Academics and intellectuals advocate a focus on the collective, and yet, the author tends to question whether this is what community members want. As pointed out in Chapter 2.3.2, multiple case studies have demonstrated that community members want to engage with the market and enjoy its benefits, including monetary benefits.

In the case of the Uakari Lodge, as outlined in Chapter 4.1.1, MC1, MC2, FC1, and FC2 (see Annex A), voiced their issues about work contracts, rewards, and consequences. MC1 stated that if he did a better job than his colleague, he would appreciate being paid more or receiving a reward for a job well done. MC2 also argued that he would value his work more if he had a regular work contract. During this conversation, it seemed as if these community members, who were in their early to mid-20s, did not feel as if they were empowered. They spoke of decisions that were made and imposed on them and the fact that they had little to no voice. It seemed as if, at least for these individuals, the MISD's attempt to create an equal system that focused on the collective was not listening to individual voices. These community members wanted to get paid



fairly, rewarded for going the extra mile, and even implement consequences for individuals who did not take their work seriously. This focus towards the collective instead of the individual might also be why Waldenilson and Ruth started their pousada in the community of Boca do Mamirauá; and more recently Vila Alencar introduced their tourism project, which focuses on the community's indigenous roots and includes an encounter of the Kayxana and Mayuruna ethnicities. The community also has plans to host guests at their village.

As stated earlier, Waldenilson was one of the few individuals who finished a year-long English course offered by the Institute. As mentioned in Chapter 3, although the MISD offers multiple training programs to any community member interested, most members who sign up for these programs often fail to finish them. However, there seems to be no incentive to finish the programs (like salary increases) or consequences if individuals drop out. Vivianne tells the story of a culinary program, for which a couple of individuals were chosen and given money to spend time apprenticing underneath a chef in a city. She states that once given the money, which was supposed to help cover expenses, some of the apprentices spent the whole sum in a matter of days and returned early. When re-telling the story to the author, Vivianne seemed frustrated. Although unclear, it seemed to the author that these individuals were not punished for their actions. Possible frustration that they are not being rewarded for their efforts or maybe that their peers are not being punished for their apathy might be why individuals like Waldenilson have opted to create their own projects. A focus on the collective and community development might be stalling motivation and fostering this apathy. Furthermore, the author strongly asserts that the participation of community members in the market does not necessarily mean that the system will exploit them.

### **Community-Based Tourism is an Economic Activity**

In 2019, the author of this thesis spoke to a university classroom about her research. Once she was finished, a student came up to her and told her that he had disagreed with everything that she had said. In truth, the student said, the author was too focused on the market. He argued that these communities need to focus first on their land rights and not on the market, a position with which the author agreed. *"Tourism shouldn't be the answer to everything, maybe they need to focus on something else,"* the author responded, to which the student replied, *"but they also need money."* When the author spoke to Mariana Madureira, Raizes co-founder, the question of what constitutes success was raised, which prompted Mariana to answer that success depends on the community's objectives. *"Some groups, especially NGOs, use tourism to get visibility to what they want to say, and they get visibility to fight for the territory, and so it's very political."* Her argument mirrors that of the student's.

But when the author asked the same question to Justin Francis, founder of ResponsibleTravel.com, his answer was quite different:

*How long will a project go on being successful if it is not generating an income? What happens when the donor pulls out? Presumably, the government then takes their land? People are very fond of talking about, all the benefits of the community, the healthcare project, the shared pride in what is going on, the conservation benefits — none of that happens long-term unless you can make the tourism industry fund your work. If not, it all disappears. So, you've got to make a case that basically this land should be used for tourism. If you don't make that case, the land will be used for something else.*

As argued throughout this chapter, there seems to be an evident distrust by the Brazilian CBT movement towards the market and overall the concept of capitalism. Critiques against capitalism argue that the system is unsustainable, exploitative, imperialist, and undemocratic. The problem here is that it seems as if development-first advocates argue for a CBT approach that generates economic benefits for community members, but that does not follow the same structures, rules, and regulations as other businesses. It seems as if there is a gap between research and practice; however, there also seems to be a hesitation in bridging that gap. In essence, the author asserts that development-first advocates tend to argue for a non-profit, aid-based type of system within a business model, a project that does not have to focus on product development, distribution, or customer satisfaction, but still reaps all the monetary benefits of an established business. And that is where the divide exists.

As stated in Chapter 2.3, the modernization of the marketing mix due to the digitization of the tourism sector has triggered a shift from product-first to consumer-first. In today's consumer-focused society, the individual tourist is the dynamic hub, around which stakeholders, companies, destinations, and other consumers orbit (Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin, 2014). The tourist is the central point of the system, in which the supply is meant to satisfy the demand. Yet, many of the individuals present in the Brazilian CBT movement argue that they do not want to participate in the market, whilst simultaneously arguing that they deserve compensation for their efforts. This type of thinking does not work in a free market scenario. Aid does not have a strong voice in capitalism. As a result, the author believes that academics and intellectuals within the CBT movement in Brazil condemn the system because it does not work within what they perceive as a fair value exchange. They are not trying to work within the system, but instead are trying to work outside of that system and then condemn it for not adapting to their particular needs. This thought process might stem back to an argument made by Nozick (1997) and Cushman (2012), which argues that intellectuals and academics have a sense of entitlement based on a perceived hierarchy. A hierarchy that allows them to dictate their needs and wants without understanding the practical implications of their thoughts and ideas. In a way, as

explained in the literature, intellectuals and academics live in their world and refuse to pop their insular bubble.

Throughout this thesis, the author has identified that there seems to exist this either/or type of situation presented primarily by academics, such as *community vs. market*, *capitalism vs. climate*, and *me vs. we*. However, the author wishes to pause and ask *why?*

As stated, zero-sum thinking argues that for a person to gain something, another must lose, meaning that for someone to make money, they must, therefore, be exploiting others. This type of thinking was also identified by interviewees when discussing the Brazilian CBT movement's overall discomfort with the idea of the market. As previously mentioned by Pinto, there are members of the Brazilian CBT movement who wish to keep things local and are unwilling to work with outsiders, as they believe that they are manipulative and exploitative.

It seems that one of the ways to downplay the market's "exploitative nature" is to create concepts, terms, and ideas that advocate for a middle ground. In Chapter 2.3.2, the terms, such as social enterprise and B Corp, were discussed and introduced to merge community and tourism/market. These businesses adopt a triple bottom line: *people*, *profits*, and *planet*. Many Brazilian organizations have also adopted this middle ground, both Raizes and Vivejar are certified as B Corp organizations, and Vivejar, a Brazilian CBT tour operator, self-identifies as a social enterprise. Dr. Mendonça also highlighted this need to redefine the word "market" so that it can become more accessible for community members. Nevertheless, this led the author to question why there is a need to redefine a concept like the market. Justin Francis, however, states:

*When I set up Responsible Travel, I asked myself, should I set it up as a charity or a business or a social enterprise. In the end, I thought, what is wrong with setting it up as a business? I thought that it would be more powerful if I set it up as a business and the reason is this: unless we can get the tourism industry to copy businesses that put responsible tourism at their heart, we will fail...The reason why we are here after 17 years is we make a profit, and we approach it in a commercial way. We hire people with commercial skills to make it work. The old model is - the old way of thinking of the world is that if you want to do good, give to charity and you shouldn't think about making money. Right now that this has changed.*

As outlined by Justin Francis, it seems as if there is an automatic assumption, corroborated by Mielke (2009), that profits are sinful. Zero-sum thinking is at play here — for someone to turn a profit, another person must lose. There is a hesitation in working with the market either because of the assumption that it is exploitative or that it is too complicated to understand and participate

in fully. In the case of the Uakari Lodge, it is a mixture of both. It started with hesitation and resulted in a situation where MISD individuals are ready for a semi-tourism-first approach; however, due to a lack of knowledge exchange, they are unable to participate in the market entirely. The Uakari Lodge is still too supply-orientated and puts too much emphasis on community-based initiatives rather than taking a more market-driven approach. This focus on supply might be because the MISD is not a business, but rather it is a social organization created and controlled by the Brazilian government. The MISD's primary focus is science and research, and therefore not only does the MISD staff lack the skills needed to run a successful business, but they might also not have the time nor the desire to run one.

### **A Tourism-First Approach: A Lack of a Knowledge-Exchange**

Phi et al. (2017) mentioned that knowledge dynamics should include the involvement of multi-sectoral actors at multi-levels, whereas knowledge exchange, being fluid and dynamic, can move in an upward and downward direction. These collaborations, networks, and partnerships help shape information and knowledge flow, thus strengthening the overall process.

Unfortunately, the members of the CBT Brazilian network who have articulated their wishes to work with international networks and actors have seemingly rendered themselves inaccessible to outsiders. The problem is that the CBT network within Brazil lacks a diversity of voices; during the author's time in Brazil, she noticed that the same names were mentioned when discussing topics related to community tourism. This repetition can be due to, as mentioned, personal or professional affinities between these individuals. However, the main issue is not necessarily affinity, but, as further elaborated below, a lack of practical experience and knowledge. Many of the CBT projects in Brazil are facing particular setbacks, including but are not limited to profitability, governance, community ownership, marketability, or financial feasibility. They possess knowledge gaps that can not be adequately addressed because they do not include external local or global sectoral actors to strengthen their business value chains. Instead, they are working within their insular bubble, interacting and sharing lessons learned with each other, winning awards, and speaking at conferences about their experiences — all the while no one is questioning whether their methods are working or are successful.

When the author first asked Cobra, from the Uakari Lodge, why she had hired Gustavo Pinto as a marketing consultant over a marketing agency, she replied, *"So in fact, Gustavo is very good in matters of professional affinity [afinidade profissional]. She goes on to say, "in reality it was affinity. We know his work, and we know how he is. But the ideal would have been if he would take care of the offline marketing, and we would have hired someone to focus on the social networks."* Gustavo Pinto was hired as a marketing expert in charge of the Uakari Lodge's online and offline marketing efforts. However, as identified by Cobra during her interview, Pinto has

more experience with offline marketing. As a result, the author argues that the problem with affinity is that the best person for the job might not always be hired. This example is not meant to question Pinto's abilities, but instead is meant to highlight that affinity can impede the CBT networks' ability to identify practice and knowledge gaps.

As mentioned previously, since starting her thesis journey back in 2015, the author has noticed that the same names are often repeated when discussing topics regarding sustainability and, more specifically, community-based tourism within Brazil. These individuals are often seen as experts, speaking about best practices and lessons learned; however, the picture that is painted often does not reflect the reality of the situation. The Uakari Lodge is a perfect example of this. From April 25 to 28, 2018, the Mamirauá Institute held the "Community-Based Tourism Planning and Management" course, funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. The purpose of the training, which brought together professionals from various regions of Brazil, was to train multipliers to manage natural environment resources through community-based tourism activity. This course was taught by Pedro Meloni Nassar, the Community Based Tourism Program Coordinator of the Uakari Lodge, and was attended by 13 participants, one of which was a member of the Castelhanos community located in Ilhabela. That specific member's participation in the course intensified communication between the two community-based tourism projects, which led Pedro to visit the Castelhanos CBT organization to share lessons learned and best practices between the two projects.

The problem is that neither of these organizations are ideal examples of community-based tourism. The Uakari Lodge struggles with governance, financial feasibility, and profitability, while it seems as if the Castelhanos organization still struggles with creating and selling their product. However, instead of recognizing their weaknesses and connecting with other actors that might strengthen their particular value chains, they seem to be working within a closed circulatory system. For example, in the author's personal opinion, the Uakari Lodge, should not be teaching a course on Community-Tourism Planning and Management, when they struggle with community participation and ownership. This is just one example of participants of the Brazilian CBT movement, working together due to affinity without acknowledging the possible knowledge gaps that exist and questioning how these gaps can be filled.

In conclusion, the Brazilian CBT network is currently in a precarious situation. Many questions and disagreements still exist on whether CBTs within Brazil should or should not participate in the market and, if they do, how they should participate. The division is clear. Development-first advocates argue against CBT participation in the market, which they deem exploitative. They tend to argue for a non-profit, aid-based type of system within a business model, which the author maintains is unrealistic. On the other hand, those individuals, like the Uakari Lodge, who have decided to adopt a more demand-driven focus, lack a certain self-awareness when it comes

to their weaknesses. There is a lack of proper collaborative partnerships, a common thread that can be found throughout this chapter. One of the primary purposes of CBT, as identified in the literature, is to generate economic benefits. One can argue that a community-based tourism product is a commercial product at its core, and "a community-based tourism product cannot sustain itself without tourists" (Mtapuri, Giampiccoli, Jugmohan, 2015, p. 2). As a result, one of the most important aspects of a CBT is a market-ready product.

## 4.2 Defining the Product

In today's hyper-connected world, it is vital for tourism businesses to deeply understand the needs and wants of their potential customers and work with them to create, adapt, and continuously update their tourism offer. As stated previously, in 2017, the author spoke with Justin Francis, the founder of Responsible Travel. One of the primary reasons for the discussion was a research report, mentioned in Chapter 2.2.1, that was created through a joint initiative between Responsible Travel and Conservation International. Created in 2006, the project's goal was to promote and support CBT projects across the world. Some of the achievements, listed on the Responsible Travel website, include 19 CBT listings on the RT website, high search engine listings, and an increased number of inquiries/leads about the projects. As a result of this, the author wanted to reach out to Justin Francis personally for an update about the project and learn more about his experiences working with CBT projects.

One of the first questions that the author asked was "*You launched this project that you did, which was written about by academics, you said on your website that you created a list of CBT projects that you have worked with and still work with. Tell me about that project and if you are still working with these CBTs*" His response was as follows:

*No. The experience was so appalling for us that we ceased, because the very simplest things, we couldn't reach them, the contact with most of them - they had no working email addresses, we couldn't provide any kind of service to our customers, we couldn't make a booking. To describe them as amateur would be an understatement, they were absolutely appalling. They had no record of their finances. They couldn't tell if they were profitable or not. Most of them had no working email address, no way of contacting them. They were utterly unprofessional in terms of ... and bear in mind Yvonne, I deal with, my business as you know is dedicated to responsible tourism, I deal with hundreds of small scale tour operators all over the world. I am very used to dealing with small organizations in remote places. But the community-based tourism stuff was so unprofessional that we couldn't work with it.*

Along with identifying market access as an issue, Francis argues that one of the problems with the industry, which is not dealt with in the development of CBTs — sometimes at all and in other cases right at the very last minute — is that the community and their advisors develop tourism experiences that are rejected by the international distribution network because they are not market-driven. He gives the example of a CBT in Madagascar; Francis introduced the product to ten interested tour operators. At that point, the CBT project had finished creating its product and was looking for distribution. However, all ten operators argued that they could not sell that specific product for two specific reasons,

- The location was too remote and the distances were too far apart and;
- If travelers traveled this distance, they would not do it for only one project. As the location was incredibly remote, visitors would stay for an extended period, and therefore there was a need for diversification of USP, such as multiple projects.

In the end, the project was not picked up by any tour operators because, as Justin Francis argues, "*it was not because they met or discussed the opportunities, it's because **the tourism product was wrong***" [emphasis added by the author]. Goodwin & Santilli (2009) state that successful CBTs are often in prime locations, with reasonable proximity to establish tourism routes and links to the private sector.

Unlike many other CBTs in Brazil, the Uakari Lodge is in a unique position because it is located in the Amazon, the largest remaining tropical rainforest globally, which houses 10% of the world's known species and is home to 350 ethnic groups (WWF, 2019). The Amazon is a known destination. As a result, the author believes that it is easier to market a trip to the Amazon because it is already a "bucket list" destination, meaning that people are already aware of the destination, its draws, its limitations and have a desire to travel there. Furthermore, they are aware of the remoteness of the location and therefore are willing to pay higher prices for the experience. The Uakari Lodge's advantage is that the primary product is not the Lodge, but the wildlife. Nevertheless, although the wildlife is one of the primary reasons why tourists visit the location, there has been lack of bottom-up marketing strategy and the MISD staff have not taken into consideration the needs and demands of the tourists, which has resulted in a sudden and sharp drop in visitors and a substantial financial loss in 2017.

#### **4.2.1 A Lack of a Quality Product**

Markets, trends, and consumers change and evolve, and as a result, products have to change as well to avoid decline. Since the Uakari Lodge and its activities are not the primary reason tourists visit the project, Pinto believes that this led to limited efforts to adapt, update, or



revitalize the activities or the infrastructure of the Lodge. He states, *"for example, if you book a seven-night stay, to me that is so boring. It's so boring because you keep doing the same thing over and over again. The reviews on TripAdvisor, for example, people are so impressed by nature and wildlife and the relationship they create with the communities that they kind of ignore the fact that the product has problems. That's what I believe."*

The author decided to conduct a content analysis of the Lodge's TripAdvisor page. As of Wednesday, July 3, 2019, the page has 240 reviews, 192 of which are excellent, 40 are good, 4 are average, 3 are poor, and 1 is marked as terrible. The conversation that the author had with Gustavo was in early 2018. As a result, the author decided to first look at the reviews left before January 2018. All of the negative reviews (rated average, poor or terrible) were made between 2008 and 2017. The author looked through all of the reviews. Some of the more interesting comments can be found below:

*Anyone traveling to the jungle needs to leave their comfort zone. I did this consciously to adapt myself to existing conditions. I had hoped for a little more of the suites and the meals, but even without sunlight, with a rather primitive bathroom, makeshift cleaning and half-careless housekeeping, the stay was very good. The chalets could be transformed into a place of charm with little touches to value the spaces. Indigenous handicrafts, thatched roofs with straw or bamboo mats, plants and flowers adorning the cottages, the dining room, and the place of arrival. I left these and other suggestions in the form I received, I hope to contribute to the improvement of the Pousada. - Fabialivia (Oct 2017). Originally written in Portuguese.*

*...but otherwise, they are quite basic. Don't touch the blue paint on the balcony! And you have to like bat poo. Showers are good & cold — although in saying that we had problems with having no water in our room for 24 hours & had to shower in another room. The fan also didn't work in our room because it was remote-controlled only & there were no batteries for the remote. That makes it uncomfortably hot without a fan! .... The staff are friendly & Jessica — the onsite biologist — is fantastic!! The guides are from the local villages. It is a fantastic initiative that they use them as their knowledge of the rainforest is unparalleled, but they don't speak English, so sometimes that makes it hard to know what you are looking at — or even where you are looking. It is an experience you have to take - but it was widely agreed that 4 days is probably enough. - TravelDooney (Sept 2016)*

*Points of improvement: The local guides should learn some English in order to A) be able to communicate with the foreigner tourists, and B) take a lead of the Pousada in the future. Considering that the objective is to make them the managers, they would need to be able to communicate with people other than Portuguese speakers. The structure could be a little renovated, especially the bathrooms and the fans close to the beds (too noisy)...but*

*the standards of the room would really need some improvements and modernization. It would be good to have some explanations on the flora (trees, plants, use of the herbs) during the excursions. Andre' was always very nice with us and very helpful, but some more information on the forest would have been very welcome. - Schockmann (Dec 2017)*

The main issues mentioned repeatedly were the fact that staff did not speak English and problems with infrastructure such as sewage smells, lack of warm water, or fan noises. Interestingly enough, the reviews got much better from 2018 and onwards. There are still mentions about the simple accommodations; however, they are quickly forgotten due to the wildlife. This comment, left by Horste in September 2018, exemplifies this attitude: "... *but be prepared for rudimentary, but comfortable accommodations (though the setting is unbelievably beautiful)...*"

It is also interesting to note that the quality of the product can be subjective depending on the customer, and that is why businesses need to know who their ideal customers are. Several staff members, including Jessica, the Uakari Lodge Naturalist Guide, noted that there were specific customer segments that were more apt to accept the Lodge's modest accommodation, specifically foreigners and "educated" Brazilians who live in one of the major Brazilian cities such as São Paulo. Throughout the conversations at the Uakari Lodge and during the author's time in Brazil, there was repeated mention of the "Brazilian-type" — a type of traveler that enjoyed luxury or "chic" products, that posted heavily on Instagram,<sup>18</sup> and therefore would need continuous access to the internet and modern conveniences like air conditioning. This Brazilian traveler archetype, as described by various Uakari Lodge employees, such as Jessica, manifested itself during the author's time at the Lodge in Deborah, a Brazilian visitor who had come to the Lodge with Nicolaas, her Belgian boyfriend. During the conversation with the author, Deborah, a resident of Recife, told the author that her foreigner boyfriend made her come to the Lodge and that she would not have ever come otherwise because there were cockroaches everywhere, no internet, and no air conditioning. She had never had the desire to visit the Amazon, and, for her, the wildlife could not make up for the fact that infrastructure was not to her particular taste.

In the end, the Uakari Lodge is aware that their product needs to be revitalized. Since the author left the Lodge back in 2017, two experiences have been created: the Amazon Emotions Program and the Henry Bates Expedition, which were both created and launched in 2018. The Amazon Emotions trip is done in partnership with another Amazonian lodge so that visitors can experience two different ecosystems during their stay in the Amazon. The Henry Bates

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<sup>18</sup> Brazil has the second largest user base on Instagram, after the United States with 50m monthly active users (Carro, 2018). According to Carro (2018) Brazilians are some of the most enthusiastic users of social networks and messaging apps in the world.

Expedition follows the path of the naturalist who lived in the region for almost five years during the 19th Century.

Nevertheless, approval for renovations is anticipated for 2020, and once approved the MISD would like to undergo a total renovation of not only the hosting modules but also of the central floating house, which houses the kitchen, reception, restaurant, bar, library, and TV room, and is where tourists gather for meals. In the end, it seems that the lodge staff are aware of the product quality issue and are actively trying to remedy it. Nevertheless, along with identifying issues with product quality, in his Master's dissertation, Pinto (2018) established that decreased marketing efforts were another reason why the Lodge experienced a sharp drop in visitors from 2014 to 2017.

### **4.3 Direct vs. Indirect: Does It Matter?**

Pinto believes that the Lodge was and still is lucky because it experiences something that he labels *spontaneous marketing*. Due to the interesting nature of the Lodge and the surrounding wildlife, magazines, television, movies, and documentaries have always taken an interest in the Uakari Lodge. The Lodge has been visited by photographers and reporters from *National Geographic*, *BBC*, *Lonely Planet*, *the New York Times*, most of which have focused on the biodiversity and conservation angle. It seems as if the main product is not the Lodge, but wildlife surrounding the Lodge. The headline of the most recent article that mentions the Lodge, found in Google News and published by AFP on May 14, 2019, reads: "Brazil's giant comeback shows preservation and development of Amazon is possible." The article's main angle is the resurgence of the Amazon's pirarucu fish that was close to extinction. The Uakari Lodge is mentioned, but only at the end of the article.

However, it seems as if this type of marketing is not enough. As mentioned previously, the Uakari Lodge suffered financial loss in the 2016/2017 fiscal year due to a sharp drop in the volume of visitors (16% shorter than expected as outlined in the 2012 Business Plan). This is, according to Pinto (2018), related to three reasons: the Uakari Lodge could no longer incorporate costs of the Lodge due to a financial crisis, a reduction of international visitors in Brazil in general (Zika scare and political crisis), and "**a nearly-null investment in marketing strategies**, 'wiping down' part of the lodge's position in the market" (Pinto, 2018). The growth in the 2014-2015 fiscal year was primarily credited to "the active marketing decisions in the previous years, when Uakari Lodge took part of many travel shows, visited critical buyers in Europe and trained DMC staff at many companies across Brazil, launched a new website and social media pages" (Pinto 2018, p. 36). The problem was that instead of continuing to invest in the Lodge's marketing, everything was left alone, with the assumption that the growth would continue.

Then in 2016-2017, the number of incoming guests fell from 1050 to 600 for that fiscal year (numbers provided by Gustavo during the interview). At that point, the Uakari Lodge started to realize that if marketing and commercialization were not set up correctly before the community transfer, the Lodge would go bankrupt. In 2017, the business plan was redesigned and re-written; thus, the management of the Lodge was changed. New positions were designed, and it was decided that commercialization, sales, and marketing would be taken over by a third party individual that would not live in Tefé. The reasoning behind this was two-fold. Although the Operations Manager was initially in charge of sales and marketing, the workload was too much. Marketing was not adequately prioritized. Furthermore, the internet connection at the Lodge and Tefé made it incredibly difficult to stay online. Therefore, it was decided that a remote third-party individual would be hired who would live nearby, preferably in South-East Brazil. It was also preferable that this individual would have connections to local and international DMCs and tour operators. In the end, Pinto was hired for this position in 2018. In 2018, another business plan was drafted, wherein a board of directors would be created after the transfer to help participate in all decision-making. The MISD would be part of this board of directors.

### **Too Much Data, Not Enough Capacity to Implement**

In today's consumer-driven world, many sectors, including the tourism sector, find it difficult to understand their customer (Moutinho, Ballantyne & Rate 2014). Businesses often look to the future in terms of emerging innovations. However, they lack the answers to the most basic foundational question: *who is the customer?*

The author previously stated that MISD and lodge staff have a clear understanding of who comes to their Lodge and why these customers come. The staff has a clear understanding of the Lodge's ideal customer, and this is because, at the end of each visitor's stay, the staff at the lodge hand out an incredibly detailed evaluation/exit survey (see Figure 4.2). Cobra notes:

*Actually, the visitor writes this in the end. All of this data here, we have a historical database of many years. Because of course it was something or other modified over time, but for example, the issue of evaluation has always been 1 to 5. So what we were adapting was some of the questions. Here we have that part about what they thought of the price, whether they thought it was fair. Or how they heard of the inn. Another thing we also have is whether they want to keep in touch with us or not. And our idea of continuing this later relationship is through a newsletter. We managed to do it at the time, around two years ago, but because of limited staff, we just didn't have the time.*


Once all the information is filled out, it is all added to "the bank," which are Excel files that contain all of this information. Once the data is filled out, the Lodge sends the customer an email inviting them to add a review on TripAdvisor with a link in the description. This whole process has allowed the staff at the MISD to get to know who their customers are and the distribution channels that lead these customers to discover the Lodge. However, even further than that, the Lodge was set up with its marketing since its inception. As of November 2019, according to Neil Patel SEO Analyzer, the Uakari Lodge website has a total of 234 backlinks from articles. Backlinks are also known as *incoming links* and are created when one website links to another.

The problem with the Uakari Lodge is not a lack of information. The MISD staff, marketing managers, and even the naturalist guides can tell you who is coming into the Lodge. Jessica identifies that foreigners in their 30s and 40s, usually couples traveling to South America, visit the Lodge, as does a growing number of educated Brazilians from major cities like Sao Paulo. The staff can also tell you the exact percentage of people that came through a third-party or direct booking. The issue has never been the data, but the implementation of that data.

As noted previously, in December 2017, the Uakari Lodge had three full-time MISD staff working on the ecotourism project. Pedro Meloni Nassar, a former naturalist guide and current coordinator of the CBT Program; Luciana Cobra, the Operations Manager; and Leticia Galdino, the Sales and Marketing Manager. Luciana Cobra began working at the Uakari Lodge as the Sales and Marketing Manager in 2011, a position she held for 11 months before she was promoted. Before working for the Uakari Lodge, she worked as a travel agent after finishing a degree in tourism management. Galdino also graduated with a bachelor's degree in tourism in 2010, and up until she was hired at the Uakari Lodge in 2016, she had previously never worked in marketing. At one point, Galdino stated that she often focused more on the sales aspect of the job as her previous experience was operational, she then added, *"I don't have much experience in marketing. And I feel that marketing is not that good because of it."* A lack of experience, coupled with a lack of marketing strategy meant that essential marketing tasks were not completed.

Daniel et al., (2017) visited the Lodge in 2013 and remarked that MISD staff were mostly passive order takers, not aggressive order getters (p. 12). Staff only responded to incoming requests for information and worked with prospective visitors and tour operators to assist visitors. They stated that the 2012 business plan called for attracting more tourists to the Lodge based on an active social media campaign that would include a presence on Facebook, Twitter, plus the creation of YouTube videos. The Operations Manager also previously identified that the internet was the most important means of promoting the Lodge by analyzing Google Analytics. Data from Google Analytics also identified link clicks, organic search terms, and incoming links.

Figure 4.2: One side of the Exit Survey presented to visitors when they check out


**Uacari**  
 RESERVA MAMBRAUÁ

**Dear Guest,**

Please take some time to answer this questionnaire; your comments are very important in helping us improve our services. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_ Register #: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Use an Ledge staff)

3. How would you classify your visit?

Excellent   
  Very Good   
  Good   
  Fair   
  Poor

4. Evaluation of services:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Transfer (Taxi services)					
Transport (boats)					
Accommodation					
Cleanliness					
Food and drink					
Activities					
Local Guides					
Naturalist Guides					

5. What did you think about the:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Not applicable
Lake visits						
Exploring trails						
Canoe trips						
Traditional fishing						
Research contact						
Wildlife viewing						
Mambrauá Institute Presentation						
Night tour						
Jungle house						

6. Did you visit a village? What did you think of the visit?

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
Vila Alencar					
Boca do Mambrauá					
Sítio São José					
Caburini					
None visited					

Source: Given to the author on departure



However, the suggestions that were written by Daniel et al., (2017) have not been implemented and Google Analytics, although identified as an essential marketing tool, was not correctly installed since the website was updated in 2014. The problem is that staff understand that they should create strategies, but they do not have time to implement their ideas.

The author argues that the problems are:

- There is not enough time to do everything;
- The people that are hired lack the experience, and;
- There is not enough money.

Along with the fact that there exist only three positions at the MISD, which manage all operational, community, sales, and marketing aspects of the Lodge, the city of Tefé is also an incredibly remote location. The distance between Manaus and Tefé is approximately 500 km or a 2.5-hour plane ride. The author asserts that it is safe to assume that not everyone would choose to move to the small city for a marketing position, which ultimately limits the pool of candidates. However, the problem is not only time and experience, but also money.

Marketing agencies, for example, are expensive. When Cobra wanted to add a pop-up on the main Uakari Lodge website, she contacted a marketing agency that quoted her R\$900 for the job, which is approximately USD\$230, a price that she stated that she could not pay. Marketing services are expensive. The author has previously worked for three different marketing agencies and has seen first-hand the financial mark-up for simple and basic tasks; a basic pop-up, for example, can be installed in less than five minutes. Even an experienced marketing freelancer, can charge anywhere from USD\$20–USD\$200 dollars per hour.

There seems to be an incompatibility between money, time, and experience. Marketing is so much more than uploading a post on Facebook. Marketing for the Uakari Lodge, for example, includes writing bilingual blog posts, creating content for social media, updating Facebook and Instagram, implementing an influencer strategy, checking and implementing SEO tactics, email marketing, website management, taking pictures/videos, PR outreach, visiting DMCs and tour operators nationally and internationally, attending travel shows, and so much more. During her time at the Uakari Lodge, Galdino could not do any of those tasks because of the lack of time, resources, training, and experience. Although this is not the only reason that visitor numbers have fluctuated, it certainly can be seen as one of the contributing factors.

The author ultimately wishes to argue that the difference between direct and indirect strategies does not matter. When asked about direct vs. indirect distribution channels, Pinto replied, *"it is difficult to make a generalization you know? If you analyze the situation of some*



*community-based ecotourism companies in the Amazon like the Uakari Lodge, Chatalan (Bolivia) or Capowi (Ecuador), you see that their position can be a bit remote and then when you organize your trips in terms of flights and commuting ... it would be easier through a DMC."*

In the case of the Uakari Lodge, however, many foreigners still arrive at the Lodge through direct channels even though it is a remote location. The Lodge's set structure (two, three, or seven day stays) allows for a predetermined flow of visitors that come to the Tefé airport simultaneously. Staff not only provide information about how visitors can get to Tefé but also arrange airport or hotel pickups/drop-offs and a joint boat trip that takes travelers from Tefé to the Lodge. During the author's stay at the Lodge, for example, all of the foreign visitors had booked the website directly. Nevertheless, Pinto brings up an interesting point; it might be challenging to make a generalization regarding which distribution channel is best in addressing market access issues.

When the author asked Justin Francis about distribution, he replied: *"you don't sit behind a keyboard and get distribution. It's not how it works. To develop those relationships. This is why typically, a private sector tourism business would have people working in Europe and North America. It is not a one-off meeting at the WTM or ITB. It is week in and week out that you are visiting these travel agents and tour operators and you are giving them an update on the travel product, you are providing their sales staff with training, it is a constant process."* Justin's response mirrors the lessons learned presented by Pinto during his time working as an Operations Manager at the Uakari Lodge.

Pinto pointed out the Lodge almost went bankrupt because of the airport shutdown. In 2013, he was the first person from the Uakari Lodge that went to a travel show, which had never happened before. Once he arrived, he argued, *"I got the same responses which was 'oh I thought the airport was still closed.' So, people didn't say, HEY GUYS the airport has been open for the last five years. So, tour operators stopped selling the Lodge because they thought they would have to make their clients take the boat. So it was important to be in a travel show because a lot of information was cleared up to the market."* However, along with attending trade shows and connecting with DMCs and tour operators in Brazil and abroad, Pinto, Galdino and Cobra, have all also identified that they have a direct social strategy, which includes talking to previous customers via Facebook and Instagram and asking them to leave a review on TripAdvisor via a post-stay email.

In the end, businesses have implemented direct and indirect strategies when trying to market their tourism products; it does not have to be an either/or type of situation. Businesses can have websites, a social media presence, an account on Booking.com, or Airbnb Experiences while also working with domestic and international tour operators. Diversification of marketing

distribution is common in the tourism industry. Therefore the issue is not whether a CBT project should work with tour operators or launch their website, but whether they have the (1) time, (2) experienced employees and (3) budget to be able to not only launch the CBT product but continuously support the marketing of the CBT product throughout its lifespan.

#### **4.4 A Third Way: Cross-Sectoral Collaborative Partnerships between Community, Enablers and Drivers.**

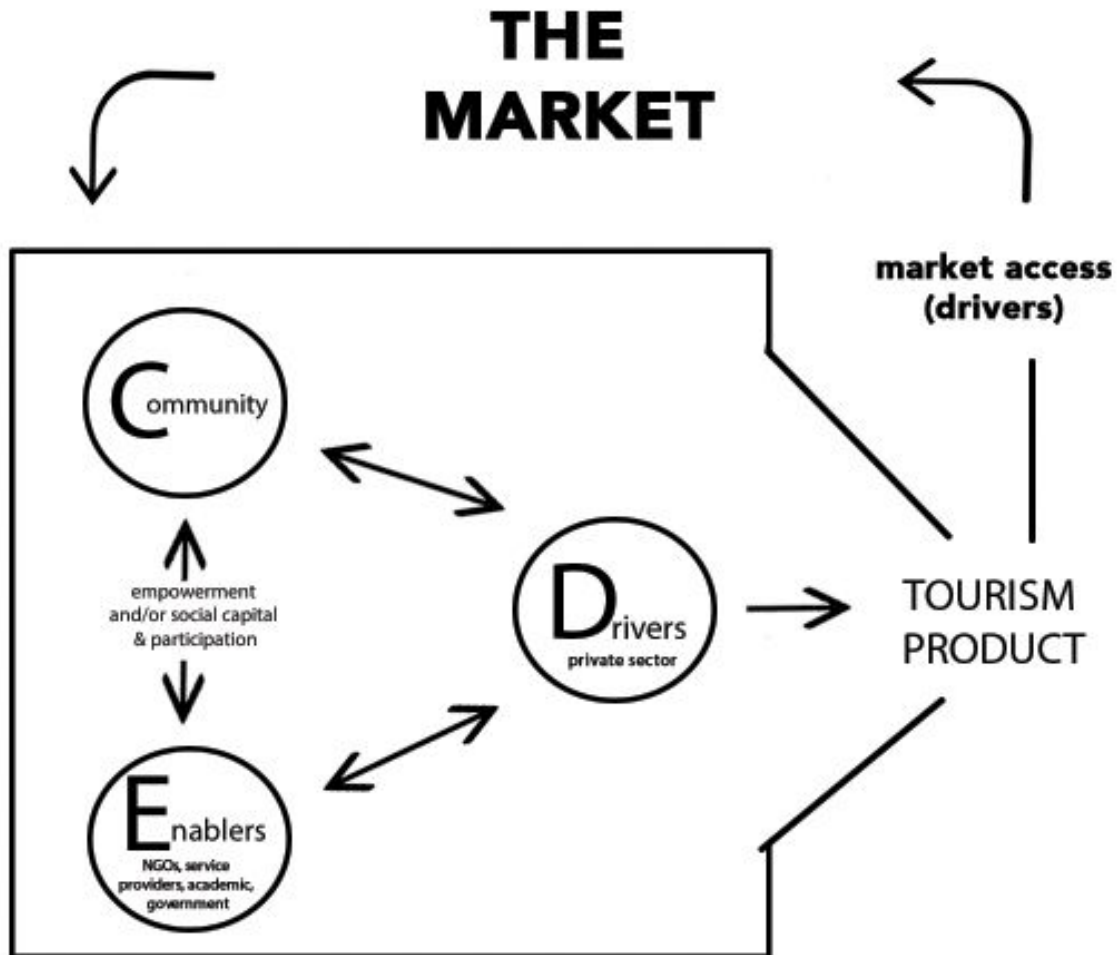
When the author talked to Justin Francis, she mentioned, albeit briefly, the situation that was happening at the Uakari Lodge. Justin Francis had a couple of things to say, which the author found relevant to include within this chapter:

*Just a few things to look out for that. That sounds very nice, but if the project is not commercially viable, what they are - I am being cynical here - but this is a way of a donor who decides that they don't want to fund this anymore and leaving a community in a lurch. Leaving the community to face the consequences. Because if this business is not self-financing already, they are going to hand back a failing business to the community and leave them to get on without further funding and that is the story of what always happens. I don't, unless this business is going well, I don't see this as a good thing. I see this as a disaster for this community. Have you seen the research done by Roe and Ashley with the ODI and I think also the IID. They are similar, they came to the conclusion that it is almost impossible. Because basically tourism as you and I know requires distribution. If you have a community that cannot distribute the product, the product will fail. I don't think, if this donor wants to hand back this project to the community in the Amazon, I would advise that they wouldn't do it until that project is financially self-sufficient from tourism bookings - otherwise they are handing back a failing business to the community with little chance of making a success of it. They are just walking away. I've seen this so many times.*

The analysis of the literature, the Uakari Lodge, and the situation with the CBT Brazilian network has led the author to create an adapted CBT model (see Figure 4.3).

First and foremost, enablers, NGOs, service providers, academics, and government officials, need to be realistic in terms of the type of relationships they will form with community members when establishing a CBT project. A *top-down* project like that of the Uakari Lodge can still be seen as a CBT project, but the MISD has to realize that they have a permanent part to play in the sustainability of the project due to the way that they implemented the project, which has led to limited community ownership. The structure of the Uakari Lodge model calls into question the possibility of a transfer of ownership, something that is set to happen in 2022.

Figure 4.3: An Adapted CBT model



### Governance and Transfer of Power

The analysis of the Uakari Lodge has touched upon a topic that was not addressed in the literature review, which is the transfer of power or transfer of ownership. The *top-down* vs. *bottom-up* approach is discussed in Chapter 1.2.2. Arguments against top-down projects include the fact that this type of CBT structure creates a dependency on the external entity, leading to project failure if funding stops or if the external agency decides to leave the project. A bottom-up approach that focuses on local control, ownership, and participation can provide different and more "hopeful" results (Zapata et al., p. 725). Following this assertion, Chapter 1.2.3 argues that empowerment, social capital, or participation can play an essential role in the creation of a sustainable and successful CBT project.

Since inception, the Uakari Lodge has struggled with issues of empowerment, social capital, and participation, and the Lodge itself can be defined as a *top-down* project implemented by external enablers. Although the Uakari Lodge is still a CBT project, communities had no stake in the Lodge's planning or development. They did not understand what tourism was, what they gained from it, the advantages, the roles of the intermediaries, what the MISD would do, and how they would sell the community. In short, they were not part of the process, and the primary decision-making power lied (and still lies) in the hands of the MISD. This is one type of a CBT project, one that creates a long-term dependency.

Transfer of power was not mentioned in the literature review, and as the Lodge's transfer of ownership is set to happen in 2022, the question of whether a *top-down* project can be successfully transferred back to a community remains unanswered. Justin Francis argues at the beginning of this subchapter that a transfer of power should only happen once a CBT business is financially self-sufficient. However, is it even possible if empowerment, participation /or social capital are not established at the beginning of the project? Is the transfer of power possible? And if not, does that mean all *top-down* projects initiated by external agents should be based on the concept of a permanent and long-term collaboration?

Whether it is *top-down* or *bottom-up*, there are many different types of CBT approaches. One thing that should be highlighted is that any organization that wishes to participate in the creation of a CBT project needs to be realistic in terms of what type of structure they want to implement, which will affect them in the long-run. A CBT project is not a two-year project. It can take decades to establish properly and requires an incredible amount of time, effort, and money.

## **CBTs Are Businesses**

Another point that needs to be highlighted before addressing the other side of the CBT coin is that: **CBTs are businesses**. When development-first advocates ignore the fact that the market is important in the development and implementation of the CBT product, their lack of openness negatively impacts communities. Literature is filled with examples of CBT projects developed because of a community need and then abandoned because there was no demand from tourists. Chapter 2.2.1 provides those examples, as does Planeterra, which often works with CBT projects that have been abandoned. It is no longer ethical to argue against the market because it is the one thing that can sustain these projects once they are developed. As noted in the adapted CBT model (Figure 4.3), the market is the starting point; without market demand, there can be no tourism product. Therefore, it is irresponsible for any individual or group to develop a CBT project without contemplating the demand side or tourism potential of the CBT coin.

As a result, once (and if) issues of governance are overcome, drivers, or the private sector, need to be part of the development of the tourism product. While the enablers deal with issues such as empowerment, participation, and social capital, drivers will be in charge of idea generation, concept development and testing, market strategy, market analysis, product development, test marketing, and ultimately, commercialization/market access. Drivers will also be able to realistically gauge whether or not the community should be used to create a CBT project. In Chapter 2.3.2, the author briefly discusses the *journey* of a Planeterra project, which starts with an assessment of market potential. The organization first identifies a location that receives a large number of travelers and a distinct community need. If there are a limited number of travelers or departures, Planeterra does not invest in a project, even if there is a community need (Planeterra, 2019). The author asserts that a community need should not automatically translate into a CBT project. Furthermore, if there is a community need but no demand, the author would argue that other possible avenues should be explored. Once the tourism product is created and validated by the market, the drivers will then "drive" the product to the market, whether through direct or indirect channels.

All of these issues are interconnected. Questions of market access are directly linked to product development, which is directly linked to the community/tourism gap. One issue can not be resolved without addressing all elements. Community-based tourism is primarily seen as a development tool. It is being started and run by enablers creating and developing businesses without the right partners that can offer them the tools to market and sell their products. In the case of the Brazilian CBT movement, there are two sides: one that refuses to work with the market, deeming it to be exploitative, while the other relies on affinity, working with individuals with limited to no real business experience. In both cases, there is a lack of real collaborative networks and cross-sectoral knowledge exchange. In a way, they are both focused on staying within their respective bubbles and yet both champion CBTs as the ideal pro-poor development model, too disconnected from the market to realize that their models are failing. And yet they continue to win awards, write blog articles about their successes and teach others about their lessons learned.

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*Community-based tourism is a socialist belief operating in a capitalist system.*

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Projeto Bagagem, Raízes (a Brazilian consultancy), and Vivejar spent over seven years developing a tourism project in the Jequitinhonha Valley, knowing, at least partly, that it would fail since it did not resonate with the market. The project was first started in 2009, and the main

role of Raízes was to prepare the community members for incoming tourists, but once the project was in its final stages, it became apparent that the Jequitinhonha Valley was not on the regular tourist trail and therefore many tourists would not generally go to that specific area. During an interview, Mariana was asked what type of people were interested in community-based tourism. She stated: *"it's gringos, the great majority. It's not our culture to go to communities and just see traditional and see, sometimes poverty. You know people in Brazil still think tourists are going to fancy places. Going to very comfortable places. Going to hotels. We are starting to get mainly people from Sao Paulo, because they have more of an international head."*

Along with understanding that the project's ideal customers were not Brazilian, Mariana also acknowledged that the remoteness of the valley was not ideal for international travelers as they often had limited time and difficulty getting to the location. Vivejar, a B Corp accredited social enterprise launched in 2016, ran one tour to the Jequitinhonha Valley in 2017, and as of March 2020, it seems as if no subsequent tour was organized. Vivejar did announce two tours in July 2019 and November 2019, but both seem to have been canceled. Therefore the author assumes that neither organization, Raízes nor Vivejar, understand that these types of projects that they invest in are not sustainable in the long-run — or they are so far removed from the realities of market demand that they genuinely believe that their involvement within these projects will create positive impacts. In either case, the individuals that end up being negatively impacted are the community members.

Organizations like the MISD, Vivejar, and Raízes can walk away from these projects without negative repercussions; they have lobbied government and private institutions to fund these projects and have used this money to develop initiatives without any market knowledge, while at the same time paying their own salaries. Once they remove themselves from these projects, the people that stand to lose the most are those within the community, those who have spent the last seven, ten, or twenty years of their lives preparing for something that is not sustainable in the long run. And in the author's opinion, this is one of the most critical barriers that needs to be overcome before CBTs can be considered a useful pro-poor development model

## CONCLUSION

The first step to bridging the gap between community and market is to accept the fact that at its core, a community-based tourism product is a commercial product and "a community-based tourism product cannot sustain itself without tourists" (Mtapuri, Giampiccoli & Jugmohan, 2015, p. 2).

As outlined in this paper, CBTs are a complex process (Simons & de Groot, 2015), and as Moscardo (2008, p. 175) states, "the reality in practice has not often matched the ideals in principle." Many internal and external factors influence the potential and success of a CBT destination. Development agencies, donors and NGOs have placed a lot of investment in promoting the CBT as the ideal development model, "whereby the social, environmental and economic needs of local communities are met through the offering of a tourism product" (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009, p. 4). However, in practice, studies have suggested that even in the best cases, "between a fifth and one-third of the total tourist turnover in a destination is captured by the *poor* from direct earnings and supply chain" (Ashley & Mitchell, 2009, p. 2). Academics (Mitchell & Mukosy, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Zapata, Hall, Lindo & Vanderschaeghe, 2011; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009) have pointed primarily to the lack of governance and a lack of access to markets as two substantial barriers to the viability of the CBT model.

In the case of governance, literature has argued that CBT projects, which focus on the principles of sustainable development, empowerment, community development, social capital and so forth (Mitchell & Mukosy, 2009; Ashley & Mitchell, 2009; Zapata et al., 2011; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009), referred to as *bottom-up* projects, have been more successful in terms of addressing the critique that CBT projects fail because of poor governance. Arguments against top-down projects include the fact that this type of CBT structure creates a dependency on the external entity, which can lead to project failure if funding stops or if the external agency decides to leave the project. Therefore, a bottom-up approach, which focuses on local control, ownership, and participation, can provide different and more "hopeful" results (Zapata et al., p. 725).

In the case of the Uakari Lodge, a top-down CBT project that has struggled with issues of empowerment, social capital, and participation, the question of transfer of power was an interesting and a new topic that was not previously mentioned within the literature. Zapata et al., (2001, p. 20), argue that most top-down projects, implemented by international organizations, need the participation of these mediator organizations for the duration of the project's lifespan. However, the Uakari Lodge is set to transfer the lodge's responsibility back to the community in 2022. Questions on whether a top-down project can be successfully transferred back to a community remain largely unanswered and could be researched and assessed in future studies.



Once (and if) issues of governance are overcome, this thesis argues that three things need to be accomplished before market access can be discussed:

- CBTs need to be perceived as an economic activity that can also provide community benefits and not as a development-only tool;
- CBTs must include enablers, or the private sector, in order to be sustainable; and,
- Product development, specifically market demand, must take precedence over community demand.

Before addressing questions regarding market access, there should be a fundamental shift in the way literature and CBT practitioners perceive and discuss community-based tourism products. Authors like Armstrong (2012) and Ngo et al., (2018a) have adopted the term community-based tourism enterprises to demonstrate that projects need to have a commercial mindset and plan for financial viability from the beginning. Nevertheless, there remains a gap between development- and tourism-first approaches. A Third Way allows for the consolidation of these two approaches, which can create a CBT product that simultaneously focuses on the needs of the community while still being demand-driven. **CBTs, in the end, are businesses.**

CBTs are an economic activity, therefore regardless of the structure of the value chain, the only constant needed is the inclusion of both enablers and drivers that can facilitate cross-sectoral knowledge exchanges to create multi-sector collaborative partnerships that will, in the end, facilitate viable CBT projects. Drivers, or the private sector, need to be part of the development of the tourism product. While the enablers deal with issues such as empowerment, participation, and social capital, drivers will be in charge of idea generation, concept development and testing, market strategy, market analysis, product development, test marketing, and ultimately, commercialization/market access. Drivers will also be able to realistically gauge whether or not the community should be used to create a CBT project. The VCD approach argues that value chain (VC) development initiatives will only succeed when market actors (the private sector) are in the driver's seat and have worthwhile incentives (e.g., more stable income) (GIZ, 2015, p. 9).

In the case of Brazil, CBT projects are facing particular setbacks, which include but not limited to, profitability, governance, community ownership, marketability, or financial feasibility. There also still exist multiple questions and disagreements about how CBTs within Brazil should or should not participate in the market and how they should participate. The division is clear. Development-first advocates argue against CBT participation in the market, which they deem is exploitative. They tend to argue for a non-profit, aid-based type of system within a business model, which seems to be unrealistic.

On the other hand, those individuals, like the Uakari Lodge, who have decided to adopt a more demand-driven focus, lack a certain self-awareness in terms of their weaknesses. The Uakari Lodge possesses knowledge gaps that can not be adequately addressed because they do not include outside local or global sectoral actors that can help strengthen their business value chains. Instead, they are working within their insular bubble. The Uakari Lodge lodge itself continues to struggle with issues of governance and has been financially unstable since its inception.

The author asserts that community-based tourism seems to be a socialist belief operating in a capitalist system. As NGOs or academics often develop many of the CBT projects started in Brazil, the focus seems to be placed upon the community, with limited attention towards the market. What ensues is years of community-focused preparation for incoming tourism, which results in an end product that attracts little to no tourists.

As stated earlier, the first issue is overcoming the idea that there exists an incompatibility between market-first and community-first approaches; CBTs projects can be economically viable and market-ready while also promoting the principles and values of community development. In Brazil, it seems as if there is still a dichotomy between the development-first and tourism-first approach, in which there is a strong distrust towards the "market." As explained by various Brazilian academics and CBT practitioners, the system is seen as flawed, predatory, exclusive, and exploitative. Therefore, there are still CBT practitioners within the Brazil movement that argue that CBT should be the responsibility of the local communities. However, this type of logic insulates the CBT network as projects cannot interact with different "*drivers*" or private actors that can connect these projects with global value chains, networks, movements, and alliances. Understanding that community-based tourism projects are a business also leads to the understanding that private sector actors, or those driving the projects forward, have to have financial incentives to participate in said projects.

However, profitability does not necessarily have to take away from the project's social mission. Therefore, one needs to include both enablers and drivers from project inception. Enablers may have community-focused knowledge. However, they might lack the practical business understanding to develop a commercially viable product. As a result, the private sector can integrate business knowledge into these projects to create a competitive and financially sustainable CBT project. A project cannot be successful without the combination of enablers, who establish projects, and drivers, who propel those projects forward. That said, the inclusion of drivers must also include the acceptance of the market as an essential piece in the development of a community-based tourism project. This acceptance also means that projects cannot be supply-led; therefore if there is a community need, but no market demand, a CBT project probably should not be developed.

All of these issues are all interconnected. Questions of market access are directly linked to product development, which is linked to the community/tourism gap. One issue can not be resolved without addressing all the elements. Community-based tourism is primarily seen as a development tool. It is being started and run by enablers, academics, and NGOs that are creating and developing businesses without the right partners that can offer them the tools to enter into the market and sell their products. In the case of the Brazilian CBT movement, there are two sides, one that refuses to work with the market, deeming it to be exploitative, while the other, relies on affinity, working with individuals that have limited to no real business experience. In both cases, there is a lack of real collaborative networks and cross-sectoral knowledge exchange. In a way, they are both focused on staying within their respective bubbles and yet both champion CBTs as the ideal pro-poor development model, too disconnected from the market to realize that their projects are failing. And yet they continue to win awards, write blog articles about their successes and teach others about their lessons learned.

In the end, this thesis examines the importance of the business side of the CBT product, providing insight into the neglected field of product development and the role of various stakeholders in the creation and implementation of a financially sustainable CBT product. The paper has argued that CBTs are an economic activity. Therefore they should not be supply-led. Instead, the focus should initially be on market potential and market demand. Secondly, to understand the market, in terms of potential and access, product ideas should be tested and developed with the private sector from the earliest stages of planning possible. Limitations are acknowledged in this study, and therefore future research possibilities are presented. There remains a gap in academic literature regarding how these suggestions listed in this paper can be achieved in a practical sense, as examples of successful CBT projects developed in response to market demand are rare. Furthermore, evaluating different types of CBTs outside of Brazil was outside the scope of this study. Thus, endeavors to assess the business life cycle of a CBT and the roles of enablers and drivers within the CBT context would be useful.

CBTs, unlike many other tourism products, require a dual strategy that addresses both *tourism potential* (demand), such as product highlights and markets and *community potential* (supply), such as local capacity and cooperation (Richards, Suansri & Van Hee, 2018). Therefore, enablers and drivers are essential to the development of a financially sustainable CBT product.

# ANNEXES

## Annex A: Interviews

### Uakari Lodge Interviews

Name	Sex	Age	Nationality	Affiliation	Location(s) of interview	Date(s) of interview	Informal/Formal
Luciana Cobra	F	30s	Brazilian. <i>Not from community</i>	Operational Manager of the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge & The Mamiraua Institute	December 2017	Formal. Recorded
Gustavo Pinto	M	30s	Brazilian. <i>Not from community</i>	Marketing Manager of the Uakari Lodge (as of 2018). Former Lodge Manager.	Skype	January 28th, 2018 February 28, 2020	Formal. Recorded
Jessica dos Anjos Oliveira	F	late 20s	Brazilian <i>Not from community</i>	Naturalist Guide at the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Formal and informal, partly recorded.
Leticia Galdino	F	mid 20s	Brazilian. <i>Not from community</i>	Marketing Manager	Mamiraua Institute	December 2017	Formal. Recorded
Vivianne	F	30s	Brazilian. <i>Not from community</i>	Food and Beverage Supervisor	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Informal, not recorded. Notes taken afterwards
Male community member (MC1)	M	20s	Brazilian.	Community staff members of the Uakari Lodge	Local event at Alvares, Amazonas	December 2017	Informal, semi-recorded. Notes taken afterwards
Male community member (MC1)	M	20s	Brazilian.	Community staff members of the Uakari Lodge	Local event at Alvares, Amazonas	December 2017	Informal, semi-recorded. Notes taken afterwards
Female community member (FC1)	F	20s	Brazilian	Community and staff members of the Uakari Lodge	Local event at Alvares, Amazonas	December 2017	Informal, semi-recorded. Notes taken afterwards
Female community member (FC2)	F	20s	Brazilian.	Community staff members of the Uakari Lodge	Local event at Alvares, Amazonas	December 2017	Informal, semi-recorded. Notes taken afterwards
Deuzani	F	40s	Brazilian.	Community member	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Formal recorded

Elodie	F	30s	French visitor	Guest	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Formal recorded
Brazilian mother (GB3)	F	40s	Brazilian.	Guest at the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Informal conversation during dinner time
Deborah Lobo and	F	20s	Brazilian.	Guest at the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Formal recorded
Nicolaas Aerts	M	30s	Belgian	Guest at the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Formal recorded
Swedish woman (GS1)	F	30s	Swedish	Guests at the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Formal recorded
Swedish male (GS2)	M	30s	Swedish	Guests at the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Formal recorded
Guest (GB1)	F	60s	Brazilian	Guests at the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Informal conversation during dinner time
Guest (GB2)	M	60s	Brazilian	Guests at the Uakari Lodge	Uakari Lodge	December 2017	Informal conversation during dinner time

### Additional Interviews

Name	Sex	Age	Nationality	Affiliation	Location(s) of interview	Date(s) of interview	Informal/Formal
Mariana Madureira	F	30s	Brazilian	Co-founder of Raizes Sustainable Development, former employee of Projeto Bagagem and member of TURISOL.	Rio de Janeiro. Multiple locations.	June 2016 January 2017	Three formal interviews, and countless informal meetings
Dr. Teresa Mendoca	F	40s	Brazilian	Professor at the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Researching community based tourism in Brazil since 2003.	Mall food court in Jacarepagua, Rio de Janeiro	February 2018	Formal. Recorded and transcribed.
Dr. Ivan Burstzyn	M	40s	Brazilian	Professor at UFRJ	Cafe	November 2016	Formal. Recorded

Dr. Eduardo Mielke	M	40s	Brazilian	Author of Desenvolvimento Turístico de Base Comunitária (2009)	Skype and then a meeting in Curitiba	-	-
Justin Francis	M	40s/ 50s	English	Founder of Responsible Travel, a company whose research on CBTs has been cited in various academic papers	Skype	February 14th 2017	Formal. Recorded.
Diego Arelano	M	20s	Brazilian	Former Marketing Manager at Vivejar	Skype	July 18th, 2017	Formal. Recorded.
Sheila Souza	F	30s/ 40s	Brazilian	Founder of Brazilidade, a CBT project in the Santa Marta Favela	At the Santa Marta favela	June - July 2016	Formal. Recorded.

**TOTAL: 25**

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