

TO DO! 2008
Contest Socially Responsible Tourism

Award Winner

REDE TUCUM

**Network for Local Development in the
Coastal Areas of Ceará**

represented by:

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Fortaleza, Ceará

BRAZIL

Rationale for the Award

by

Klaus Betz

1. INTRODUCTION

The contest application by "REDE TUCUM - Network for Local Development" was checked from 30th November to 11th December, 2008, in the coastal region of the Brazilian state of Ceará on behalf of the Institute for Tourism and Development (Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung e.V.). The statements on concept and objectives of the project have been verified, with the following result:

The author recommends awarding REDE TUCUM with the TO DO! 2008, primarily to acknowledge what a network spread over several hundred kilometres of coastline, involving twelve initiatives and communities, has achieved in terms of tourism *policy* (see 3.2). In almost all cases, this policy has developed from the resistance struggle against real estate speculators. It is a strategy for communities to manage the increasing tourist demand themselves. Furthermore, it is important to the participants to make use of the progress associated with this development according to their own highly participatory standards in order to achieve ecologically sustainable and socially equitable development.

Thus the following award rationale focuses on the award for a "measure," not an individual tourism project or an individual tourism product or service, but on the activities as a whole, which are conducted by a network for local development in the coastal areas of Ceará, based on village associations. Its name: REDE TUCUM¹.

2. BACKGROUND

Brazil has a population of 190 million and consists of 26 federal states. With a gross domestic product (GDP) of about 1,400 billion US\$ in 2007, Brazil is/was the tenth largest economy in the world. The income per capita in 2007 was about 7,600 US\$. In Germany, it was 40,415 US\$ at that time. The minimum wage in Brazil is currently 400 Real (R\$) a month, which is about 135 Euro (as at the end of January 2009).

Compared to the Southern parts of the country (around the mega centres of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo), Ceará is one of the poorest states in Brazil. To the left and right of the highways and off the regional centres, the existing infrastructure is fragmentary at best (roads, water and sewage management, schools, health care, etc.). The income and wealth gap between South and North, urban and rural areas is large, and in some cases huge.

Basically one can say that in order to survive in the economic metropolis of São Paulo, a family needs four minimum wages per month; in Fortaleza, the capital of Ceará (3.5 million inhabitants) a family may, if it comes to the worst, survive on two, and families living in the rural parts of Ceará can and/or must manage with *one* minimum wage.

In order to understand the activities of REDE TUCUM in context, several aspects are of key importance:

¹ TUCUM is an indigenous word for the (tough and strong) fibres of a palm tree. TUCUM is used to produce nets and hammocks. The name is therefore symbolic. It stands for local people's resistance and for their ability to form networks.

2.1 Tourism as a Risk

Along Ceará's 576 kilometres of coast line, tourists from overseas, i.e. holiday-makers from North America, Europe or Asia, might play a significant role only in the future – if at all. At the moment, the number of domestic tourists is much higher. Depending on the place and region in Ceará, the ratio is about 70:30, in some cases 60:40. Affluent Brazilians know that the country's most beautiful, most natural, least spoilt and longest beaches are in Ceará.

For many years, these seemingly endless beaches have been attracting the attention of investors and real estate speculators. In the past two decades, several attempts have been made to construct large luxury resorts along the coasts of Ceará; mostly without consulting the local population, and in more than a few cases using forged land titles. Some projects were realised, others ended as decaying hulks of abandoned projects or serve as rather daunting examples of a tourism development that is driven by outsiders and getting out of hand (e.g. in Canoa Quebrada and Jericoacoara).

This means that in the past the coastal population of Ceará has experienced tourism mainly as a "threat," as a danger to the native communities with their traditional lifestyle based on sustainable fishing.² Until a few years ago, it was hardly possible for these people to understand tourism as an opportunity, as an instrument of independent local and regional development that offers the chance of gradually increasing prosperity.

2.2 Tourism as an Opportunity

The fishing village of Prainha do Canto Verde has played a decisive role in bringing about this change. For its socially responsible tourism development it had already received the TO DO!99 (see www.todo-contest.org/preistraeger-en/prainha01.html). For many people in the coastal region of Ceará, it is the model that provides orientation, and Prainha is somehow also a *primus inter pares*.

Over the past ten years, widely recognised and effective ecological, social and tourism initiatives have been launched in Prainha do Canto Verde. This also includes the committed work to establish the Terramar Institute in Fortaleza. Through the activities of this institute, the current network REDE TUCUM has emerged. Terramar as an NGO practically works as a coordinating umbrella organisation and has been concentrating mainly on the holistic development of coastal communities in Ceará.

Its focus is on fisheries (protection of and access to marine resources), leadership training, education and training e.g. in environmental education and environmental protection, exchange programmes between communities and/or workshops, human rights issues (especially in the context of land rights) and of course encouragement of political involvement. Furthermore, Terramar took the responsibility of organising two international seminars on sustainable tourism (Turismo Sustentável).

Its achievements have in the meantime been recognised by the respective ministries (tourism, environment, labour) in Brasília. The suggestions made by Instituto Terramar on community-based tourism are increasingly heard and supported by the government³. The decisive key word is "Turismo Comunitário." It does not mean a tourism concept developed by a municipal institution, but refers to a local economic model with regional linkages which benefits the local poor (see also 3.1).

Another aspect is that the development initiated in Prainha do Canto Verde ten years ago has for the first time provided young people growing up in the fishing villages with opportunities for

² In contrast to industrial fishery with trawlers, industrial fishing vessels, etc., fishing in these villages continues to be "artesanal" fishing, i.e. based on traditional crafts.

³ Terramar has also been supported by "Amigos de Prainha do Canto Verde" in Switzerland, SST (the Swiss Foundation for Solidarity in Tourism), ICCO (Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation) in the Netherlands, the German Church Development Service (EED) and the two Italian NGOs Intervita and Associazione Tremembè Onlus.

education and prosperity. Today, they are the ones who actively (co-)determine and implement, who intervene and organise themselves – for and together with their communities.

René Schärer, former Swissair Manager and development activist, was a lone fighter initially in the early 1990s in the resistance struggle against real estate speculators in Prainha do Canto Verde. Now he is surrounded with young, like-minded people willing to shape their own future. REDE TUCUM is therefore, as René Schärer aptly describes it, "a movement that is moving."

3. THE ORGANISATION

History and Objectives

The event that was decisive for REDE TUCUM to emerge was the "II. Seminário Internacional de Turismo Sustentável" (SITS II) conducted by Instituto Terramar in 2008, with 530 participants from 19 Brazilian states and 13 American and European countries. The seminar strengthened cooperation with the network "Red Tours" that works all over Latin America and is being supported by the International Labour Organization (ILO). And since then, an additional objective has also been to eventually establish a Brazilian movement on community-based tourism practised in a sustainable manner. In a nutshell, it means moving in an arena which is, in subtle ways, highly political.

While the Brazilian-Portuguese-Spanish financial establishment, the Inter-American Development Bank, regional and local prefectures still focus on the classic kind of large tourism projects, local people's resistance has long led to different solutions which are smaller and designed in such a way as to be socially responsible.

In other words: The members of REDE TUCUM are strong proponents of a tourism development that they initiated themselves – with their own ideas, at varying pace, with different abilities, at different stages of development, with different emphasis, products and services. Their general credo, repeatedly mentioned to the expert in charge: "We cannot hide from tourism. That's why it is important to think about what kind of tourism we want."

3.2 THE NETWORK REDE TUCUM

Not all the communities and network members have reached the same stage of development. Therefore, the pace of development needs to vary, and different benchmarks need to be applied. For details see the short portraits below.

The reason: Even for a local NGO like Terramar in some cases it took years to involve the disadvantaged or problematic coastal communities, to recognize their problems and needs and to apply for funding, to organise community associations structured like cooperatives, to conduct trainings and to initiate solutions. Among other things, the time lag was due to poor road connections, lack of communication facilities, and lack of contact persons in the communities.

Among the twelve member communities of REDE TUCUM, only the fishing village of Prainha do Canto Verde (which received the TO DO!99 award) already started in the early 1990s to organise itself – thanks, among other things, to the advice and guidance provided by René Schärer. The community started to build local structures and to overcome the post-feudal system which still prevailed at that time (a system in which the villagers even used to be threatened by force of arms, under the eyes of local provincial politicians).

From a tourism perspective and measured against current standards, Prainha do Canto Verde with its pousada accommodation standards at that time⁴ was a destination for low budget travellers or solidarity tourists at best. The somewhat awkward road connections and the lack of communication facilities were obstacles at that time. (But despite these obstacles, this "different" fishing village became a destination for field research trips and workshops for representatives of rural communities from all parts of Brazil. That's how a kind of grassroots seminar tourism developed in Prainha do Canto Verde which was, at times, more important than the regular kind of tourism.)

In the meantime, the situation has improved, thanks to the changed political conditions and a large number of investments. The pousadas of Prainha do Canto Verde have well-equipped bathrooms, nice rooms, good service, the place has bus connections, a paved road, internet access, and yet: Everything remains locally owned or taken care of and is organised by the village association's various groups.

The current conditions illustrate an impressive change which has led most of the people of Prainha do Canto Verde out of dependence and poverty – towards modest prosperity, along with (school and political) education and a fair degree of self-confidence. For many of the communities characterised in the following short portraits, the route taken by Prainha do Canto serves as a model.

REDE TUCUM Members and Communities West of Fortaleza (Litoral Oeste):

Fleicheiras: The fishing community with 3,000 inhabitants is situated directly by the sea. It has road access, restaurants owned by local families, a luxury hotel (owned by a non-local Brazilian), various holiday home estates and very beautiful beaches. Two pousadas are owned by local families. Fleicheiras was a community in danger of being overrun by a tourism development driven by outsiders. In the meantime, however, the local people have organised themselves and can now increasingly take part in decision-making processes. (See also 4.)

Caetanos de Cima: This very small and remote fishing community (about 230 inhabitants) can only be reached via sandy dirt roads (without signboards). It is in a kind of pre-touristic stage, but the community is politically highly organised. The first accommodation facilities are available, others are currently being built. The background is a simmering land rights conflict which the inhabitants of Caetanos de Cima want to prevent by creating facts. The political centre of the village community is the small community house "Ponto Cultura". See 4.

Curral Velho: This is a coastal community of almost 3,000 inhabitants. It has beautiful beaches and mangrove forests which are suitable for boat excursions. There is a road connection. On the highway CE 085, however, there are no signboards that would point the way to the community. The villagers mainly live on fishing and agriculture, hardly anyone has a regular income from paid labour. The tourism facilities which are currently being developed focus on the "Centre for environmental education and 'Turismo Comunitário'" (which currently offers only three rooms, bathrooms with shower, and food).

This guest house and centre for environmental education is at the same time the symbol of the villagers' strong political resistance against agro-industrial shrimp farming in the sea-water fed mangrove forests. The operations of what is often and in a trivialising manner called "shrimp farm" lead to the cutting down of mangrove forests and a conversion of the area into salt water basins. The villagers managed to bring this to a halt before the "shrimp farm" could start its

⁴ In Brazil, "pousada" means a usually small, family-run guesthouse in a rural area that provides accommodation and breakfast. In Brazilian Portuguese, the verb "pousar" means both "to land" and "to rest" in the sense of "taking rest" and "relaxing".

permanent operations. However, at that time a mangrove area the size of 20 soccer pitches had already been irrecoverably destroyed.

Tatajuba: This coastal and fishing community is situated 320 kilometres from Fortaleza, on the western border of the state of Ceará, and has about 2,000 inhabitants. There are several accommodation facilities. The large village is surrounded and interspersed with impressive white dune landscapes. The picturesque lagoon "Lagoa dos Reis" is not far. It is 13 kilometres long, has several restaurants, and is a popular destination for excursions. Usually, Tatajuba can only be reached via Jijoca, using vehicles suitable for sandy roads (no regular road connections). That's why it is a very popular destination for beach buggy "adventure trips" from Jericoacoara, about 30 kilometres away, which is a "hip" and noisy place that completely relies on tourism. For the coastal population, Jericoacoara is an absolutely daunting example. In *Tatajuba*, too, an unresolved land rights conflict is simmering in the background.

REDE TUCUM Members and Communities East of Fortaleza (Litoral Leste):

Pousada Tremembé: A guest house (twelve rooms), run by a cooperative, located directly by the sea, at the outskirts of the coastal community of Tremembé, which is 220 kilometres from Fortaleza on the Eastern border of the state of Ceará. The former farm house is a community project of the local/regional NGO Associação Caiçara, based in the small, nearby town of Icapui, and the Italian association "Associazione Tremembè Onlus," based at Trento/Italy. Pousada Tremembé was founded with the idea to provide poor local children, youths and school groups from the hinterland with the opportunity of spending an exuberant "beach holiday." This concern continues to be taken care of. Besides, more and more tourists (mainly from Italy) come to stay at the pousada.

Ponta Grossa: From a tourism point of view, Ponta Grossa is the most successful community after Prainha do Canto Verde. It has 280 inhabitants. The village, protected by a ridge (cliffy coast), lies directly by the sea. There are several pousadas (accommodation partly in rooms, partly in small chalets) and four beach restaurants, all owned by local families. Ten years ago, Ponta Grossa was in danger of being run over by tourists and beach buggy drivers who came on excursions from Canoa Quebrada, a sprawling place due to tourism. However, the community successfully resisted this development by choosing their own way of tourism development (without those streets with noisy bars, without drugs and sex tourism). Point 4.

Coquerinho: For the author one of the most remarkable village projects in the REDE TUCUM network. It is a village with about 120 inhabitants in the hinterland of the coastal town of Fortim, newly founded as part of the Brazilian land rights reform. It was developed on what used to be a huge coconut plantation and was built by former favela (slum) dwellers from Aracati. Today it is run as a kind of agricultural commune. What is special about it: Instead of beach holidays it offers "rural holidays" – including nice, small guest houses, tasty organic food in the community restaurant and guided excursions to the surrounding forests and gardens.

Jenipapo Kanindé: This village has a population of about 320 indigenous people and is situated in the hinterland of Batoque. The Jenipapo community was recognised as an indigenous group only ten years ago and has since then finally been getting the necessary government support (for example to construct a new school). It is an ideal and instructive destination for a day excursion to experience the practical and spiritual everyday life of the indigenous community. There are guided walks to the extensive organic gardens of the subsistence community. Its main source of life is the fresh water lagoon "Lagoa de Encantada" which is three kilometres long and translates as "The Enchanted" (as it seems that so far this lagoon has never gone dry). To ensure that the lagoon, which is regarded as holy, remains clean, the village community – headed by a women – has taken legal action against a well-known Brazilian rum producer (because of water pollution by the sewage produced in the processing of sugar cane).

And last but not least: The fishing village of **Prainha do Canto Verde**, with about 1,100 inhabitants, already described earlier in this chapter.

During the time available, it was not possible to visit all the members of REDE TUCUM, as some of them are located far away from each other (another reason were redecoration and renovation works). The following REDE TUCUM members could not be considered:

Bodega – a fair trade shop to market local/regional products in Aracati, which is currently being constructed and renovated. Furthermore, the **Associação de Mulheres em Movimento** (women's association/movement of Palmeiras, a suburb of Fortaleza) as well as the guest house **Alojamento Frei Humberto**, a school and training centre of the land reform movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra).

4. ASSESSMENT

The comparison of the activities conducted by REDE TUCUM with the **six TO DO! contest criteria and three additional questions** leads to the following assessment:

Evaluation against the TODO! contest criteria

1. Taking into account the different interests and needs of the local people through participation

As mentioned earlier, REDE TUCUM was established mainly because the interests and needs of the local population had not been considered for many years. That's why along the coast of Ceará a network has emerged as an increasingly self-conscious resistance movement. It works for a participatory tourism model under the title "Turismo Comunitário" and takes a holistic approach based on "chains of small value addition" on the basis of local village communities organised as cooperatives. The local people themselves are to provide tourism products and services which form a more or less complete tourism package, including accommodation, food (fish, vegetables, fruits) and excursions as well as cultural programmes and the sale of souvenirs or handicraft.

The income can thus stay in the community, can create jobs, reduce dependence of fishing and can ensure that young people are able to develop a vision for their future, without having their respective village run over by externally determined development.

The way REDE TUCUM works is particularly noticeable in the small fishing village of Caetanos de Cima. Even though the community is only at the beginning of tourism development and simultaneously has to fight out a land rights conflict (a group of real estate speculators claims to be the owners of plots on the beach), the community is politically and culturally extremely well organised in their village association. They even have their own "internet café" at the community centre "Ponto Cultura."

In the village association of Caetanos de Cima, the Associação dos Moradores, there are several groups working on concepts for the future (women's group, youth group, dance group, artisans). Furthermore, to present a fait accompli, the contested beach plots were "occupied" – by planting trees and by constructing pousadas, some of which are already in operation. Furthermore, the village association and its groups have agreed that tourism – now and in the

future – must not be the only source of income for the village. Apart from fishing, income is also earned from agriculture (cashew nuts, mangos, coconuts).

In short, Caetanos de Cima is a good, representative example of a politically and organisationally wide-awake village community that has deliberated on its future. But at the same time, the different stages of development also become visible. Prainha do Canto Verde, which was awarded the TO DO!99, is about ten years ahead in its development as compared to Cateanos de Cima. But REDE TUCUM is a network characterised by solidarity, which is aimed at gradually levelling out these development gaps.

2. Enhancing the awareness of the local people with regard to the chances and risks of tourism development in their everyday economic, social and cultural life

In the REDE TUCUM communities, these issues are present in people's minds, and through leadership training and workshops they have been dealt with in detail over the past few years, not least at the International Seminars on Sustainable Tourism (in 2003 and 2008) mentioned at the beginning, which were organised by the umbrella organisation Instituto Terramar. In some of the villages, the potential impacts of tourism also feature in the school curricula. Discussions at the seminars mentioned, in the families and in the village communities about the tourism development which took place over the past few years have contributed to a great awareness among the local population regarding the risks and opportunities associated with tourism.

3. Participation of broad local population strata in the positive economic, social and cultural effects of tourism

The concept of the above mentioned "Turismo Comunitário" is aimed at involving many people in the development of tourism. In some communities, especially in the villages west of Fortaleza, the objective of local participation in tourism development has not yet been fully achieved. In the communities east of Fortaleza it has – thanks to the model role of Prainha do Canto Verde – been achieved on a rather broad scale, e.g. in Ponta Grossa, Tremembé and Coquerinho, i.e. in almost all the REDE TUCUM communities east of Fortaleza.

In the communities on the western coast, Fleicheiras and Tatajuba, both can be observed: exclusion from as well as participation in the benefits of tourism. Therefore, these two village communities continue to be at risk. If tourism develops too rapidly or in an uncontrolled manner they might still be lost towards a development driven by outsiders.

In the fishing community of Fleicheiras, some of the families were displaced from the beach properties in the past and now live in the second, third and fourth line of simple brick houses in the settlement. But since the local people started to organise themselves in one of the village associations which are common here, there have been several pioneering initiatives, e.g. the two pousadas mentioned in the short portraits which are attractively located close to the beach and which are owned by local people.

Apart from fishing, which is still practised as it used to be, some of the people cultivate and process seaweed (predominantly for pharmaceutical use). The local restaurants also use the seaweed in their menus (salad, spaghetti). Some of the villagers produce handicraft, others manufacture cosmetics (soap, shampoo, etc.), yet others are involved in traditional lace-making. However, they lack a joint outlet in the village centre. Too few of the tourists visit their houses away from the centre.

The luxury hotel mentioned in the short portrait considers itself as an upper category "design hotel" and its management is not responsive to social concerns. Development perspective: open.

In Tatajuba, the people are divided into two camps, each with its own village association. One of them is a member of REDE TUCUM and supports the network's objectives. The other association is suspected to be infiltrated by a real estate group in Rio de Janeiro. Here, too, is an unresolved land rights conflict simmering in the background, as the said real estate group claims to own, since 1991, an area of 5,700 hectares, which is almost all of the community's territory. It was in 2001 that the inhabitants of Tatajuba first learned about this claim. As there is doubt concerning the title deeds' authenticity, the lawsuit which ensued has been pending for years. An attempt by the REDE TUCUM proponents in the community to have the whole area declared a biosphere reserve was prevented by the higher authorities. Development perspective: open.

4. Guarantee of the attractiveness of jobs in tourism for the local people by improving working conditions relative to payment, social security, working hours as well as education and training

In Curral Velho, with a population of about 2,000, it was explicitly pointed out to the author that only 20 people at most earn cash through paid labour. All the other activities are in subsistence farming or in the so called "informal sector"⁵. In view of this situation, i.e. the limited opportunities for local people to earn more than the monthly minimum wage of 135 Euro, this criterion is applicable only up to a certain point. From the author's point of view, this makes it even more important to promote the economic model of "Turismo Comunitário", as this is often the only possibility to feed additional cash into the local monetary circuit.

5. Strengthening the local culture and the cultural identity of people living in tourism destination areas

and

6. Avoiding and minimising any social and cultural damage caused by tourism in tourism destination areas

The coastal communities' cultural identity is very strong. It is rooted in the traditional term "Jangadeiros" (Fishermen who go to sea on their sail-rafts, called "Jangada"). Apart from a pronounced sense for their own history and culture, the people here have an obvious environmentally and socio-politically motivated inclination to protect their native place, even if the terminology is currently changing. So recently they have been called "Povos do Mar", "coastal population". One reason is that this choice of word finally also integrates the women (who are often actively involved in the village associations and play a significant role in bringing about change in the communities), another reason is that in the future the declining returns from fishing won't be the only source of income. At the moment, there is a mix emerging, with fishing, agriculture and tourism as sources of income.

From the author's point of view, "Turismo Comunitário" does not represent a danger to the cultural identity of the coastal population, but – as the solutions and initiatives are self-chosen – rather contributes to boosting the self-confidence of the local population. When asked about the damages in tourism destinations, many inhabitants in the REDE TUCUM member communities will mention the same "daunting" examples: Canoa Quebrada on the eastern coast and Jericoacoara on the western coast of Ceará. It is exactly this kind of externally determined and sprawling tourism that they are not ready to accept in their own communities. And since they have been under extreme pressure too often in the past (many years of partly violent land rights

⁵ Term for parts of the economy which escape the official market, characterised by labour intensive production, simple technologies, low qualification of workers, small business entities, processing of local raw materials, lack of minimum labour standards and social security, comparatively poor pay, and poor working conditions. (Source: Meyers Lexikon Online).

conflicts; rejection of mega tourism projects, fight against predatory fishing), the "Povos do Mar" will not easily allow others to push them aside.

Evaluation against the TODO! additional questions

A) Could you give some examples which document that your project/measure is in line with environmental compatibility?

Across several REDE TUCUM communities, we find very different aspects of practical as well as formalised environmental protection, often in the form of resistance struggles because of environmental crimes committed by people from outside.

For example, east of Fortaleza efforts are being made to establish a very large coastal and marine nature reserve for the conservation of marine biodiversity. Instituto Terramar and the fishermen's and fisherwomen's forum in the state of Ceará are involved in this effort. In Ponta Grossa and Prainha do Canto Verde, the fight is on, particularly against predatory coastal fishing and illegal lobster fishing.

In Curral Velho, neither the force of arms nor money nor the promise of jobs could intimidate and prevent the people from taking action against the establishment of a shrimp farm. However, by the time the local people at the location prevailed, a mangrove forest the size of 20 soccer pitches had already been destroyed.

The indigenous community of Jenipapo Kanindé continues a lawsuit against a major Brazilian rum producer who discharged sewage into the fresh water lagoon "Lagoa de Encantada" which is so important to them, also for spiritual reasons.

The people of Tatajuba are desperately searching for a possibility to have their fantastic dune landscape protected, which is used as a "leisure park" by beach buggy drivers from outside, especially on weekends. The effort to have the community territory declared a biosphere reserve failed because it was blocked by higher authorities.

The REDE TUCUM community of Ponta Grosso, which gets many visitors particularly on weekends, boasts a successful example of a measure for "environmental sustainability". Particularly for the four restaurants and pousadas, a remarkable toilet sewage system has been developed.

It consists of pit drainage water treatment facilities, with an underground brick pyramid, covered with soil, on which one or more banana trees have been planted. The sewage will run over the bricks. As one banana tree absorbs up to 300 litres of liquid per day which evaporates above the surface, compost will eventually develop underground.

B) Are there any examples in the framework of your project/measure which make clear that a just participation of women and men has been taken into account during the planning/implementation phase of your project/measure? Considering gender relation, can be found any improvement of the status/situation of women within your project/measure?

Apart from the fact that in the seminars and workshops organised by Instituto Terramar in Fortaleza, "gender issues" are regular programme components. In almost all the REDE TUCUM communities and initiatives it is rather the women who are setting the tone. It is mainly they who

are, as described, actively involved in the village associations, who play a major role in the changes in tourism in the communities and who are in fact the actual hosts. The local guides will often be youths, both boys and girls, or young adults. However, boat trips, horseback rides, excursions to the forests, crafts, etc. fall into the men's domain.

C) Through which measures/mechanisms is the economic and institutional sustainability of the project guaranteed? In the context of safeguarding the future of the project, where do you see problems and risks?

Since hardly any of the REDE TUCUM communities lives solely on the income from tourism, but also from fishing and agriculture, and since the concept is not aimed at quick, but at cautious success it seems quite likely that the projects will be sustainable. The number of guests staying in all REDE TUCUM communities is estimated at 5,000 to 6,000 per year, with most of the guests staying in the well known fishing villages of Prainha do Canto Verde and Ponta Grosso.

Institutionally, the risk is only small, since the degree to which the people are organised in village associations is rather high. In view of the different stages of development of the communities involved, the economic sustainability remains to be proven. However, as the possible income from tourism is in most cases an additional income, this aspect must not be overrated. The only exceptions are the owners of the pousadas in Prainha do Canto Verde and Ponta Grosso. In order to achieve good standards, they have invested significantly over the past few years and hope that they will be rewarded.

5. CONCLUSION

The expert in charge was most impressed by the determination of the people involved in the REDE TUCUM communities to help themselves. From their point of view, the principles of "Turismo Comunitário" provide the right kind of instruments for this purpose. In the coastal communities east of Fortaleza, the villagers have actively chosen this direction for more than a decade, and have been successful in this regard. The village communities have already experienced the positive impact of self-determined tourism development – which can be felt both in the form of hard cash, as well as in terms of an increasingly modern infrastructure (roads, electricity supply, IT and telecommunication, grocery stores, restaurants, etc.).

In the REDE TUCUM communities west of Fortaleza, some villages (with the exception of Fleicheiras) are still not connected to the official road network. There are no signboards and in some cases the villages can only be reached via sandy dirt roads. Medical care is difficult and tourism development in these villages has only just started. However, guests who are interested can by now get simple and clean food and accommodation. Ten years ago, the author saw a similar situation in the villages east of Fortaleza which are now well-developed. He is therefore convinced that the infrastructurally backward communities west of Fortaleza will catch up, not least because of their self-determined tourism development. They are well on the way.

It is surprising that despite all the threats that people experienced, despite the fact that they hardly ever have the prefectures on their side, the coastal communities do not act in anger, but remain certain that the right concept will prevail. In addition to the ways in which the communities go about their development, as described above, this deserves special recognition and encouragement.

English translation: Christina Kamp

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