Community Development Through Tourism examines the development of local communities through the healthy integration of community planning, business planning and tourism planning. It explores the most pertinent tourism and business theories, moving from strategic planning to community empowerment and practice. Research-based case studies are used to illustrate how things work in the real world, and the ways in which various theories can and have been applied.

This book will be an important resource for business development managers, tourism operators and community leaders, as well as students and teachers in courses that incorporate aspects of community tourism into their business, tourism, social sciences and arts programs.

The author
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The chapters in this book have introduced the concepts of communities and tourism from both theoretical and practical perspectives, considered the relationship between community tourism planning and development and power relations, the complex notion of community and individual empowerment, and looked in detail at tourism in rural areas as well as disaster management and recovery. This final chapter begins by discussing what has become a natural flow-on for many of those involved in tourism and community development, both from a corporate and individual perspective, namely ethical behaviour in terms of corporate responsibility and private philanthropy.

After the first of two case studies in this chapter are some comments on further developing our ways of looking at communities and tourism. Following these remarks is the final case study, which is about a situation in Hawaii where community concerns regarding the impacts of increased tourism were ignored by the tourism authority.

Unfortunately, this is not a positive note to finish on. However, it provides a timely reminder that we must do more than simply pay lip service to the concept of community and we must strive to better understand tourism’s role in community development. The book
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finishes with a ‘final word’ on the notion of *communitas* and a call for more strategic, inclusive planning.

**Ethics and tourism**

The term *ethics* relates to the study of morality’s effect on conduct (moral philosophy) as well as being a system of moral principles governing appropriate conduct (Encarta Dictionary). While principles may differ among cultures, notions of corporate responsibility and philanthropy as presented in this chapter stem primarily from Western philosophy. As the majority of tourists and the multi-national tourism businesses are from the developed world, such ethical beliefs as those found in countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australasia and much of Europe relate to tourism and community development as we have discussed in this book.

These notions of corporate responsibility in relation to tourism and community development are introduced in the next section, particularly in terms of ethical behaviour and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and public–private partnerships. Following this, ‘Pro-Poor Tourism’ is discussed – a concept that is central to this publication as it deals directly with using tourism to aid and develop impoverished communities.

While many of the concepts in this chapter and book relate to tourism businesses, there is also a shift with certain groups of travellers to become more directly involved in philanthropic projects related to their travel experiences. The first case study introduces one such group, Travelers’ Philanthropy.

**Corporate citizenship and community tourism**

In order to meet the requirements of triple bottom line management and reporting as introduced in Chapter 3, many businesses have adopted elements of corporate citizenship and corporate social responsibility (CSR). These elements are discussed towards the end of this section, after a discussion on the place of ethics in business. Public–private partnerships are also presented as an aspect of ethical business practice, which is not new in the tourism industry – however, along with CSR it
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has only been recently that they have become recognised and articulated as actual goals for an enterprise.

Traditionally, travel and tourism companies (among others) have tended to take a short-term view with a focus on financial profits, leaving the host communities to deal with the consequences of the behaviour. This has placed the responsibility for sustainable development on the host communities and not on the business. As the tourism industry tends to operate on low profit margins, responsible, ethical behaviour in terms of the sustainability of tourism has been seen as a luxury, not a practical business necessity. However, this does not sit with the shift since the late 1980s towards contributing to community responsibility, as in the niche field of ecotourism.

Many global (or transnational) corporations focusing primarily on financial profits wield a high level of economic power over national state governments. But there are increasing calls for corporate ethical business practice that goes beyond simply considering profits. Consumers have begun to make product choices based, at least in part, upon a company’s ethical reputation. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) notes that an increasing number of companies have developed a culture of corporate philanthropy, where they return a portion of their profits to charities and other causes such as environmental protection (WTTC 2002).

Contributing to environmental protection and the local community are among the tenets of ecotourism. However, there is a growing belief that the private sector’s role is greater than this and that organisations should be taking a more holistic approach towards their role in the world, becoming corporate citizens. Companies are looking at not only mitigating the environmental effects of various activities, but also the social issues that emanate from the emergence of a global economy. This is particularly relevant for travel (and tourism), which are by their very nature global activities – tourists travel the globe and contribute to the global as well as local economy.

An issue that is regularly raised when the annual reporting of the salaries of senior management of our multinational companies (including airlines and hotels) are presented is whether company profit should support high salaries (in UK up to $1 million for CEOs), or be
reinvested on training and development (in the business) and in the tourism product (such as the host communities). While the media is quick to criticise these high salaries, they seem to have limited effect on some companies that continue to focus on profit at the expense of all else, yet the tide is turning as they realise that profits can still be made through fair trading and ethics. For example, satisfied customers with lower levels of ‘guilt’ in terms of their travel practices will pay a premium if the price they pay covers a fair share for the people they are visiting, who no longer need to degrade themselves through activities such as begging.

An indication of the growing interest in ethical business practice is the emergence of specialist groups and organisations that focus on investing in so-called ‘ethical businesses’. For example, in 2000 the Bendigo Bank, a highly successful community banking organisation in Australia, formed an alliance with the Ethical Investment Trust (established in the 1980s) to introduce the country’s first ethical investment bank account, the Ethical Investment Deposit Account. A proportion of all money invested in the Ethical Investment Deposit Account is loaned to borrowers screened by the Trustees against the Trust’s investment criteria, which embrace social and environmental values. The alliance aims to deliver security for depositor funds, improved opportunities for socially and environmentally based organisations and enterprises to access those funds (http://www.bendigobank.com.au/specials/Ethical.htm).

Bringing together many ethical investment groups is the Ethical Investment Association in Australia (http://www.eia.org.au/). The aim of this group is to promote the concept, practice and growth of ethically, socially and environmentally responsible investing in Australia. Membership of the association is open to any business, organisation or investment professional (excluding listed companies) participating in the ethical investment field and committed to the association’s objectives. Their listings include managed funds, financial advisors, superannuation funds, commercial enterprises, government organisations, trusts, not-for-profit organisations and individuals.

However, in spite of the clear connection with tourism as a ‘clean’ industry and ethical practice, there are no leisure, tourism or hospitality members in EIA, nor does the Bendigo Bank actively promote investment
in tourism. One fact that has not encouraged the development of ethical business practices in tourism is that tourism investment is seen as financially risky, so has not been an area that ‘ethical investment companies’ (or any others) have become involved in.

However, ethical practice can be presented by a company as a quality standard and a point of difference, particularly in the highly competitive travel and tourism sector. This can be presented in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

**Corporate citizenship: Corporate social responsibility**

There is no simple, single definition of the term ‘corporate social responsibility’, however, as indicated above, it is more than simply giving money to charities that are more often than not separated from the organisation’s core business. CSR is about adopting business practices based on ethical values and managing all aspects of the enterprise in terms of its impact on employees, shareholders, the environment and communities. According to the organisation Tourism Concern:

> Corporate Social Responsibility is of growing importance to the Travel and Tourism industry as part of sustainable tourism development. With an increasing percentage of customers favouring tourism that benefits the local community and surrounding environments, this issue is an essential one to be addressed by modern progressive management (Tourism Concern 2000).

As noted above, taking an ethical stance and promoting an organisation’s CSR can be smart business practice, and many of the larger travel companies are starting to include concepts of CSR into their organisation and promotional activities. This is particularly the case with the highly competitive and volatile airline industry. For example, British Airways (BA) now includes a section on ‘social performance’ in its Environmental Report, where they demonstrate both environmental and community based activities and achievements such as working with communities affected by aircraft noise and sponsoring various environmental and community based awards. They have a Community Relations Department that is responsible for:
… the management of all community investment activity in the UK and further afield. Our aim is to develop strategic partnerships with a range of organisations, which include local community groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as UNICEF. We believe that it is important to invest in the communities that we fly to and serve – this is done by supporting local events or by giving assistance to community and conservation programmes that have a long-term impact on their communities. Our Community Investment programme is closely aligned to our business priorities and focuses on five key themes: Education and Youth Development, Sustainable Tourism, Environment, Heritage and Supporting our staff. (http://www.britishairways.com/travel/crhome/public/en_)

BA has a Corporate Responsibility Manager who oversees the above activities as well as projects with the airline’s subsidiaries, such as British Airways Holidays who have adopted community based projects that are funded by the group at £1 per booking (Tourism Concern 2000). However, BA is yet to attempt to address environmental greenhouse gas issues of air travel itself. Every flight produces carbon dioxide, which contributes significantly to global warming. One single short-haul flight produces roughly the same amount of the global warming gas as three months worth of driving a 1.4 litre car (http://www.carbonneutral.com/shop/results.asp?cat1=Flights). In 2002, UK environmental company The Carbon Neutral Company (previously Future Forests) and responsibletravel.com developed a Carbon Neutral program where the general public (and organisations) can contribute to forestry projects that can offset the effects of their travel.

On the Carbon Neutral website is a calculator that works out your carbon emissions for any flight, based on data from the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Management. According to the site, a flight from Melbourne to Los Angeles of 12 755 km produces 1.4 tonnes of carbon dioxide, which can be offset by planting two trees or supplying two energy saving light bulbs to a small community in a developing country (http://www.carbonneutral.com/calculators). They also have a calculator and offset program for road travel. There are other similar enterprises being established around the world, including the MyClimate program with
Sustainable Travel International in North America that also estimates the emission costs of their tours as well as flights (see www.NatHab.com). Such opportunities for individuals to contribute to the sustainable future of tourism have certain synergies with the Travelers’ Philanthropy case study at the end of this chapter.

Qantas Airlines has developed a ‘Sharing the Spirit’ community initiative that fosters links with youth and regional communities by bringing sports people to regional centres (such as football clinics) and providing awards for young talent across the arts, science and design. Their cabin crew are encouraged to volunteer for community programs, and the airline has assisted in numerous disaster recovery efforts such as conducting mercy flights for the victims of the 2002 Bali bombings and their families. The benefits of CSR are outlined in a speech given by Qantas’ CEO, Geoff Dixon, on receiving the 2003 Queensland Community Foundation Award. Dixon saw the benefits as bringing Qantas closer to its communities and customers, being good for staff morale and building skills and teamwork. He also noted that such activities strengthen the Qantas brand, increasing the staying power of the company, while at the same time strengthening communities. Significantly, Dixon noted that businesses do not exist in a vacuum.

As inferred at the beginning of this chapter, there are some tourism organisations that have been practicing CSR before the term was coined, and Qantas claims to be one such enterprise.

**Corporate citizenship: Public–private partnerships**

While there have traditionally been difficulties in obtaining funding for tourism ventures, some financial institutions have taken on tourism as part of their community development role. By developing public–private partnerships between the community, local government, local businesses, tourism operators and private sector capital and intellectual property, such organisations are able to leverage the ethical benefits of tourism development in communities. Generally speaking, Public–Private Partnerships (PPP) cover any contracted relationship between the public and private sectors to produce an asset or deliver a service (New South Wales Government 2001).
In an address to the South Asia Sustainable Tourism Forum in February 2005, the president of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), Peter de Jong, stated that:

What is needed of course is a convergent path where the public policy framework allows the private sector to enter and compete on an open, transparent and free basis, allowing market-forces to dictate the winners and the losers ... Sustainability in our industry cannot, in our view, be achieved without first recognising that a balance needs to be struck and then working to establish that balance. Ideally that necessitates an open partnership between the public and private sectors (de Jong 2005).

In 2005, the World Tourism Organisation (now known as UNWTO) held a seminar on Public–Private Partnerships in Tourism in Moscow. Speakers included the heads of tourism in Russia, Austria and Spain, private organisations from the UK and France and senior UNWTO officials. UNWTO is a strong supporter and facilitator of PPP. PPPs have been utilised in over 140 countries worldwide. While there have been significant developments in Europe, Asia and the Americas, many consider Australia and the UK to have developed the most comprehensive PPP strategies and sophisticated financial markets for investment in infrastructure. Prior to 1997, most of the PPPs in Australia were involved in projects such as toll roads, hospitals, prisons, power, seaports and water. Since 1998, there has been an increase in leisure/tourism related partnerships such as airports and rail, with the growth in sustainable urban and community based PPPs coming to the fore from 2003 (Macquarie Bank 2003). Simply put, community partnerships can combine the best skills and experiences of both the private and public sectors. Table 8.1 outlines the benefits and potential risks of PPPs to the public sector.

The government of Ireland considers PPPs to be a significant element of their strategy to facilitate the development of the tourism industry in a balanced manner. They acknowledge that such projects can be used to provide leisure services and amenities at the local level where community members also have access to those facilities developed for tourism through a public–private partnership.

Peter Wright, CEO of Macquarie Bank, acknowledges that regional tourism growth relies on building sustainable communities. He states
that such ‘sustainable communities’ will be built in the next wave of Public–Private Partnerships in his organisation, such as the Macquarie Bank Community Partnerships (Macquarie Bank 2003). Macquarie’s Banking and Property Group (BPG) is one of the organisation’s biggest, most diverse and profitable Groups with over 900 employees across many industry sectors including banking, property, public sector, golf and leisure. In the Asia–Pacific region, Macquarie’s Property Group is one of the largest players in property as lender, principal and adviser to both private and public sectors.

The bank considers that regional growth prospects are far greater than for the cities. Where governments have struggled to provide the hard and soft infrastructure necessary to facilitate tourism outcomes, community private–public partnerships can provide the solution for regional tourism growth. They have witnessed many instances where regional tourism has outperformed that of the capital cities over the last five years, and yet as noted previously, leisure assets are still not perceived as an investment of choice. Such assets include hotels and resorts, regional airports, marinas, rail tracks, regional roads and scenic roads, regional attractions, rejuvenation projects and theme parks. Macquarie Bank’s stated vision for future community public–private partnership projects includes the creation of community-driven, sustainable community developments that function on an environmental, economic and social scale (Macquarie Bank 2003).
In addition, the World Bank, a source of financial and technical assistance for developing countries, actively supports and promotes partnerships, particularly as the organisation is itself owned by its 184 member countries. Its mission is to reduce global poverty and improve living standards (www.worldbank.org). The Bank does not operate as a commercial banking service, rather as a source of low-interest loans, interest-free credit and grants to developing countries. Over the past 20 years, the Bank’s focus and approach has moved towards dealing with more social issues in its partnership roles. These include social services such as health, nutrition and education as well as the more traditional areas of construction and infrastructure development. Consequently, many of the loans are partnerships that provide skills and expertise needed to meet such goals, and include tourism.

PPPs are referred to by many other names, with certain projects and approaches often taking on a specific, descriptive title. One such example, supported by the World Bank, is the Bulldozer Initiative, launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2002. It is an example of a public–private partnership that adopted a bottom-up approach by mobilising local businesses to identify issues and lobby for their implementation – the private sector was partnered with local government representatives. The initiative’s goal was ‘to bulldoze away the roadblocks to a good business climate’ (Herzberg 2004, p. 17). As the initiative was focused on small-scale reforms it was able to deliver fast results, with 50 reforms in 150 days. This in turn won the confidence of the private sector, and as a consequence many permanent groups were established.

While PPPs can relate to aspects of tourism and community development in nations such as Ireland and Australia, many such partnerships can be seen in developing countries. One particular type of partnership is that of pro-poor tourism, which is discussed below.

**Pro-poor tourism**

Because tourism in developing nations is often driven by foreign, private sector interests focused on individual financial gain, it is not well placed to contribute to the reduction of local poverty, rather it promotes it (PPT 2004a). Tourism can disadvantage the poor in terms of increased costs of living, social disruption and disenfranchisement;
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However, when managed carefully it can also be a ‘power for good’ and work to alleviate poverty. Indeed, many of the countries where tourism plays a significant economic role are among the world’s poorest and least developed (PPT 2004a).

In an effort to identify the links between tourism and poverty reduction, a review was held in the UK by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), who coined the term ‘pro-poor tourism’ (PPT) to refer to the potential of tourism to alleviate poverty. As a result, PPT also became an agenda item on the 1999 United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (Ashley & Roe 2003).

Since then, pro-poor tourism has come to refer to tourism that results in increased net benefits for poor people, usually (but not exclusively) in developing countries (PPT Partnerships 2004b). Importantly, it is not a product, but an approach to tourism development and management that enhances the linkages between tourism businesses and poor people in order to leverage and increase tourism’s contribution. PPT enables more effective participation in the development of sustainable tourism. Table 8.2 outlines the benefits associated with such practices, illustrating its connection with PPP and general community development.

Table 8.2 Benefits of pro-poor tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic benefits</th>
<th>Non-financial livelihood impacts</th>
<th>Participation and partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand local employment and wages</td>
<td>Capacity building, training</td>
<td>Create more supportive policy/planning framework that enables participation by the poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand local enterprise opportunities</td>
<td>Mitigate environmental impacts</td>
<td>Increase participation of the poor in decision making by public and private sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism service suppliers (food etc.)</td>
<td>Address competing use of natural resources</td>
<td>Build pro-poor partnerships with the private sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who sell to tourists (crafts, art, guides etc.)</td>
<td>Improve social and cultural impacts</td>
<td>Increase flow of information and communication between stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop collective income sources (fees, revenue shares, equity dividends, donations etc.)</td>
<td>Increase local access to infrastructure and services provided for tourists (roads, communications, health care, transport)</td>
<td>Lay the foundation for future, ongoing dialogue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PPT 2004c.
Community development through tourism

A key element here is that there are many instances where it is the poor of the world who actually own the resources that tourism is based upon, such as natural capital and their cultural festivals and activities. In the past, such ownership has tended to be ignored. However, by acknowledging this particular reality, governments, development agencies and tourism organisations are able to develop strategies to assist many developing communities (Sofield et al. 2004).

While the benefits listed above are impressive (and many relate to community development in all parts of the world), there are also potential areas for care or concern, or ‘disbenefits’ of which we must be aware. These have been summarised by Sofield et al. (2004) as:

- Exposure to risk and exploitation – poor communities invariably lack the education and sometimes the worldly knowledge to avoid exploitation by tourism interests
- Adverse impacts on traditional structures resulting in community instability (e.g. intergenerational conflict between young skilled members and untrained elders in a community; between women and men)
- Adverse impacts on cultural elements (e.g. mass production of artefacts, changes in festivals, song and dance to cater to visitors rather than remaining anchored in traditional values, resulting in facile spectacle with deeper meaning pushed aside), commoditisation
- Materialism and individualism replacing collective community based organisation capacities and values.
- Loss of access to natural resources such as coastlines and lagoons, water, forests – where poor communities are dependent upon these for survival they may be particularly threatened by inappropriate tourism development (but equally by mining, agricultural development or urban expansion)
- Physical security may be weakened by tourism development which leads to an increase in outsiders taking up residence, increases in crime, and drugs and prostitution (Sofield et al. 2004, p. 6).
However, many of these impacts are not limited to tourism, but tend to come hand-in-hand with modernisation in all its forms, such as the drift from rural to urban areas for work and the impact of television and the Internet on the poor. In fact, as noted elsewhere, tourism can be used to counter some of the same adverse impacts it facilitates. It all depends on our recognition of the possible drawbacks and their subsequent management. A number of strategies that can apply to PPT have been identified, as outlined in Table 8.3. These strategies fall into three distinct categories, namely economic, non-financial livelihoods and participation and partnership (or empowerment).

Table 8.3 Types of PPT strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase economic benefits</th>
<th>Enhance non-financial livelihood impacts</th>
<th>Enhance participation and partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand local employment, wages: commitments to local jobs, training of local people.</td>
<td>Capacity building, training.</td>
<td>Create a more supportive policy/planning framework that enables participation by the poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand local enterprise opportunities – including those that provide services to tourism operations (food suppliers etc.) and those that sell to tourists (craft producers, handicrafts, guides etc.).</td>
<td>Increase local access to infrastructure and services provided for tourists – roads, communications, health care, transport.</td>
<td>Increase flow of information and communication between stakeholders to lay the foundation for future dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop collective income sources – fees, revenue shares, equity dividends, donations, etc.</td>
<td>Address competing use of natural resources.</td>
<td>Increase participation of the poor in decision making by government and the private sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve social and cultural impacts.</td>
<td>Build pro-poor partnerships with the private sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mitigate environmental impacts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PPT Partnerships, 2004c.

While it is relatively easy to recognise and recommend strategies such as those outlined above, there are many barriers to the participation of the poor in PPT, as noted in the discussion in previous chapters on empowerment and power relations. These include lack of human capital and finance (or credit), as well as a lack of organisation and market power. In addition, regulations and red tape can exclude the poor from access to opportunities, as well as the limited capacity of many poor
community to understand and meet the requirements of the tourism market, which they also find difficult to access. With government support often targeted to the formal (predominantly foreign-owned) tourism sector, relationships with remote and/or poor local communities are often strained or non-existent (Ashley et al. 2000).

Nevertheless, in a further study of PPT, Ashley et al. (2001) concluded that, while at times difficult to quantify, PPT can play a significant role in poverty reduction and, in turn, livelihood security. ‘For the poor where it happens, PPT is invaluable’ (Ashley et al. 2001, p. 41). While they are cautious with their results (tourism is NOT the panacea to all the world’s problems!), they found five advantages for PPT from the poverty alleviation perspective:

1. It appears possible to ‘tilt’ the tourism sector at the margin, to expand opportunities for the poor;
2. PPT initiatives have been able to develop two of the key characteristics of pro-poor growth within tourism: increasing demand for goods and services provided by the poor, and increasing their asset base;
3. Current thinking on poverty reduction highlights the need to support diversified livelihoods through the non-farm rural economy;
4. Impacts of PPT initiatives can extend beyond their specific location by contributing to pro-poor change in policies and processes;
5. The existing movement for ‘sustainable tourism’ which could be harnessed to contribute more to poverty reduction (Ashley et al. 2001).

This final point is considered in the first case study in this chapter, and while such encouragement is currently piecemeal, it does have some momentum. The second case study also relates to notions of sustainability (or the lack of) in tourism, but where the community and its environment have been ignored.

Participatory projects such as pro-poor tourism have become increasingly important in the work of the World Bank, and there are many instances of tourism being used as a tool in their projects. In assessing
the effectiveness of their support for community based development, the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) of the Bank noted that

Projects which involve community participation have increased from less than 5 percent of total Bank lending in 1989 to about 25 percent in 2003. The study finds that these approaches are potentially a powerful mechanism for channeling development assistance to the grass roots level, but highlights several challenges in ensuring effective use of external support (IEG 2005).

For example, one of the World Bank’s projects is to strengthen the various cultural industries that they have identified as being ‘pro poor’. This includes community based tourism as well as artisans, music and ethno-botanicals. In 2000, the World Bank’s Cultural Assets for Poverty Reduction Unit sponsored a workshop to raise awareness as to how low impact tourism projects can be a means to reduce poverty (www.worldbank.org).

As some readers may also be thinking, there are those who consider the term ‘Pro-Poor Tourism’ to have negative connotations in that it may seem that sounds as if it is more about keeping people poor rather than assisting them to develop. Because of this confusion, others have developed different terms when speaking about poverty alleviation through tourism. The UNWTO has coined the phrase, ‘Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty’ (ST–EP) as a more acceptable term. Regardless of the terminology, the aim of reducing/alleviating poverty is the same.

From theory to practice #1: The case of encouraging the philanthropic traveller

The US based group Business Enterprises for Sustainable Tourism (BEST) is an initiative of The Conference Board in association with WTTC and several foundations that provide support. Its mission is to serve as ‘a leading source of knowledge on innovative travel industry practices that advance community, business and travelers’ interest and support the economic and cultural sustainability of destinations’ (www.sustainabletravel.org).
BEST advances business, community and travellers’ interests in sustainable tourism by profiling positive cases of cutting-edge business, community organisations and travellers in the field of sustainable and community focused tourism. The organisation has three main areas of activity, namely university level education (discussed in part in the previous chapter in terms of its Think Tanks), community tourism and travellers’ philanthropy. It is the last of these, Travellers’ Philanthropy, which we focus on in this case study.

Where CSR, PPP and even PPT centre on the businesses related to tourism, Travellers’ Philanthropy focuses on the traveller as well as the business, and is based on the premise that individual travellers can make a difference. The term ‘travellers’ philanthropy’ was coined to cover the many ways in which travellers can contribute to the destinations they visit, including making donations to charitable foundations that support those destinations, socially or environmentally. A growing number of civic-minded travellers and travel businesses are giving financial resources, time and talent to further the wellbeing of the communities they visit. This is a powerful demonstration of the emerging voluntary travel movement.

They also have a strong emphasis on encouraging travellers to adopt sustainable practices when they travel, and to leave places better than they found them by preserving irreplaceable natural resources and honouring traditional cultures, as well as acting to advance positive economic development.

The organisation considers that the need for travellers’ philanthropy is great, with an estimated 23 per cent of the world’s people living in extreme poverty. A study by the Travel Industry Association of America, in collaboration with BEST and National Geographic Traveler, found that more than 55 million US travellers exhibit a high degree of commitment to travel that protects the local environment, engages visitors in the local culture and returns benefits to the community (BEST, www.sustainabletravel.org). Such data augurs well for the future of travel and must be capitalised upon in all aspects of tourism, but particularly when considering its role in community development.
One area of particular interest is BEST’s encouragement of individuals to become ‘civic travellers’, which is the focus of this case study. By promoting the message that travellers enrich their own trips when they seek to contribute to the wellbeing of the places that they visit, BEST has been able to support many positive programs. Though their size, emphasis and approaches may differ, the various programs set up and promoted by Travellers’ Philanthropy share a number of common features as outlined in Table 8.4.

**Table 8.4 Features of travellers’ philanthropy programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote face-to-face, authentic connections between people of different cultures</td>
<td>Establish new partnerships between local businesses and non-profit organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicit donations and determine needs and projects at the local level</td>
<td>Generate a new stream of cash, goods and volunteer services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable local residents to get involved in funding allocation and governance</td>
<td>Engage individual donors – the greatest single source of philanthropic dollars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The aim here is to channel resources to grassroots efforts, while offering a new framework for constructive internationalism and global community building, as well as cultural and environmental stewardship. The programs generally occur in destinations where the need for economic development and humanitarian assistance is high, such as developing countries, which brings it in line with PPT and ST–EP.

Through its communications via its website and face-to-face presentations, the organisation demonstrates to travellers the range and extent of projects that they can contribute to and, as outlined in Table 8.5, they are not all necessarily financial.

While the information in Table 8.5 is broad, making travellers aware of what they are achieving is important, as is providing concrete ways that they can make a difference while they are travelling. Examples are provided such as through patronage, gifts of time and talent and charitable contributions. In addition, they encourage travellers to be informed about their destination
Table 8.5 Ways that a philanthropic traveller can contribute

| Economic and social sustainability of rural, urban and endangered communities |
| Protection of cultural and natural assets |
| Assist in gaining a higher standard of living for local residents |
| Contribute to their cultural pride |
| The preservation of a ‘sense of place’ |
| By gaining greater cross-cultural understanding, and an appreciation of diversity |
| Making sure that a higher percentage of tourism revenues stays in the local market (less financial leakages) |

Source: Seltzer 2003.

Before they go, making realistic suggestions of some valuable resources, such as scanning local newspapers online using www.newstrove.com, a particularly interesting resource. Newstrove is more than a source for local newspapers, however, indexing news content, blogs and websites primarily from the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India and Israel, as well as English editions of publications from Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and South America. You are able to search it from a particular cultural, religious or political perspective, which provides for some interesting reading!

BEST provides some pertinent and inspiring cases of travellers and enterprises behaving philanthropically. For example, Lindblad Expeditions, an up-market adventure cruise company, has undertaken extensive research into ‘persuasive communication’ in order to encourage its guests to assist in the preservation of many of the places they visit. They have been particularly successful in protecting and restoring habitat and communities in the Galapagos Islands, one of the world’s most unique ecosystems. They are now also working with their guests to protect and develop whale watching on the Baja Peninsula in Mexico.

Another case that BEST promotes is that of a shantytown in Lima, Peru, which is home to many displaced rural peasants. Travel volunteers work on a program that provides some
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150 residents with meals — many of whom are elderly and the program provides their only meal for the day. In addition, two couples on a sailing holiday in the Caribbean found that they could not believe the lack of reading material available for island children. They founded ‘Boaters for Books’, which gathers reading material in North America and ships them to students in the Caribbean. All of these initiatives are contactable via the BEST website (www.sustainabletravel.org).

By promoting these and many other examples of different types of philanthropy, BEST has been able to encourage many travellers to realise what they can do in terms of assisting the places they travel to. They are moving the responsibility for ‘responsible travel’ on to the actual travellers (or tourists) themselves, not just the travel businesses. It is this type of groundswell support that is able to create movements of change — not only are communities being empowered, but also their guests, the tourists.

Studying communities and their relationship with tourism

In today’s ever more rapidly changing environment, we need to keep studying and developing our understanding as to how we can achieve community development and empowerment, with tourism as one of the many tools in the box.

While throughout the book I have suggested many ways that tourism can assist communities, new and innovative concepts and ways to do so are continually evolving. Over the past year, I have become aware of a type of community that is becoming better understood, known as ‘authoritative communities’. This new term comes out of the public policy and social sciences areas, coined by the Commission on Children at Risk in relation to improving the lives of children. The report introduces the concept in ‘Hardwired to Connect’ (Commission on Children at Risk 2003), explaining that children are ‘hardwired’ for close connections to others. They gain moral meaning through those connections. The authors claim that recent neuroscience studies have shown that children begin with the need for connection with those
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close to them (parents and other relatives) and then extend out to the wider community. They argue that groups promoting this type of connectedness to strengthen their work and consequent influence are ‘authoritative communities’.

Authoritative communities … are groups of people who are committed to one another over time and who model and pass on at least part of what it means to be a good person and live a good life (Commission on Children at Risk 2003).

Such communities have traditionally been families, civic and community groups, houses of worship, political clubs and even professional-based associations, however, the report claims that the presence and influence of such groups has weakened over recent times. As tourism can be a tool for community development and engagement, it may also be a tool that can increase the influence of authoritative communities by increasing cohesiveness and empowering its members.

The project has not studied whether connectedness hardwiring persists as we grow older. However, if we desire our community members to be empowered and travellers (and tourism businesses) to act ethically, there may be an opportunity to take the concept of authoritative communities into the wider world. Personal experience in working with various communities has shown that many people are looking for an authority figure to guide them, so if this comes from a respected group from within, it may actually empower rather than restrict them, as in the case of an external authority.

At this stage, this is simply an idea that needs far greater thought, study and application, yet it is one that I believe is worth pursuing. As tourism can also improve lives and work with people (including children), we should have a look at whether the concept of authoritative communities can be applied here, or whether tourism can support authoritative communities, and in turn assist the children in our communities. At the very least, tourism can assist in developing empowered, authoritative communities.

The final case study for this book is one that doesn’t quite fit into any specific chapter. However, it is an important case in that it provides a warning that, while there is a great deal of rhetoric surrounding communities, community development, empowerment and so on (including
parts of this book), they can still be easily ignored. While the circumstances of this case are a few years old, the issues appear to have not been resolved. Sometimes, it appears that we use our communities when it suits us and ignore them when other imperatives come into play. This is not good enough, and while practical issues can temper pure theory, we are obligated to continue to strive for that perfection of community engagement and development through tourism.

**From theory to practice #2: Community? What community? The case of the Hawaii Tourism Authority and the Sierra Club**

The Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) was formed in 1998 to promote tourism to Hawaii. Its board consists of industry leaders, the majority being non-indigenous Hawaiians, and in 2000, when this case study is set, there was only one indigenous Hawaiian member, who had no voting rights. The HTA's mission is to:

> strategically manage the growth of Hawaii's visitor industry in a manner consistent with our economic goal, cultural values, preservation of natural resources and community interests. [own emphasis] (http://www.hawaiitourismauthority.org)

In 2000 the HTA set a goal to add 30,000 visitors *per day* to the islands by 2005 from a total annual base of 6.7 million. This equates to over 10.9 million additional day visits, and while most individuals will stay more than one day, it is still enormous growth in actual visitor numbers. To actively desire such growth is anathema to current global tourism planning and trends. While many in the tourism industry were moving away from mass tourism and chasing more numbers towards encouraging a higher yield (more individual spending and increased length of stay), the HTA's aim for an additional 10 million visitor days certainly appeared misplaced and out of step.

As it turns out, the 2005 figures do not reflect this planned outcome. There was a massive drop in travel to Hawaii after the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York in 2001, which changed the face of tourism, particularly in the US. While this may have played into the hands of those opposing the growth Hawaii
was planning for, it does not mean the issues surrounding aiming for such exponential, unregulated growth as in 2000 has actually been resolved.

There were those in the community, particularly the indigenous and environmental communities, who were extremely concerned about the environmental effects such an increase in visitors would have. The Sierra Club, a US-based grassroots environmental organisation founded in 1892 with a Hawaii chapter membership of 4000 people, took up the cause. The Sierra Club’s grassroots advocacy has made it among America’s most influential environmental organisations.

The Club filed a lawsuit against the Hawaii Tourism Authority in January 2000, requesting that they perform an environmental assessment of their goals, as is required for any physical development. In Hawaii, environmental reviews are required by law on construction projects, and the Sierra Club argued that this should also relate to areas such as tourism promotion, due to the fact that it has measurable effects on the natural environment. The court filing claimed that:

> While the economic benefits which may be derived from the expenditure of these State funds have been established, the countervailing environmental, ecological and social adverse impacts caused by an increased number of visitors were not addressed by Respondent THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY… (Sierra Club 2000)

The media took up the case, initially presenting the Sierra Club’s move as frivolous. However, as many began to think more about tourism and development, the emphasis of the reports began to shift towards the Sierra Club’s perspective. As often occurs with such cases, much of the battle was fought in the media, with the CEO of the Hawaii Tourism Authority reported as saying:

> ‘To say that there is an inherent environmental responsibility in the marketing of tourism is a bit of a stretch. We could
make the case that every program should have those responsibilities.’ Bob Fishman, CEO Hawaii Tourism Authority (Choo 2001).

In the same article, the Sierra Club responded:

'We aren’t talking about clear cutting or mining... This is tourism and we should be sharing the work. They should be with us every step of the way.’ Jeff Mikulina, Executive Director, Hawaii Chapter, Sierra Club (Choo 2001).

In October 2002, the verdict was passed down, with the Supreme Court dismissing the Sierra Club’s petition for an environmental review in a close three to two decision, after what appears to have been ‘lively’ debate. Interestingly, the two dissenting justices who supported the Sierra Club’s petition stated that ‘risk occurs when the uninformed decision is made, irrespective of whether the threatened harm will actually occur’ (Sierra Club News Release, 23 October 2002).

Regardless of the legal outcome, this case raises numerous concerns about community consultation and corporate social responsibility. Clearly interest groups had not been considered when the HTA proposed its dramatic increased numbers of visitors, creating an opportunity for an influential environmental group such as the Sierra Club to act. I concur with the Sierra Club, believing that it is the responsibility of all tourism marketing organisations to assess the impact of its marketing proposals, socially and environmentally as well as economically.

So, even though they won (by the smallest margin), has the HTA learnt anything from this high profile case? In 2005 the HTA implemented its 10-year Strategic Plan. Hawaii’s nominated strengths include one entry relating to the natural environment:

- Brand awareness
- Climate
- Culture and history
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- Destination allure and appeal
- High visitor satisfaction
- Natural resources
- People and aloha spirit
- Quality and variety of accommodations
- Safe but exotic
- Variety of activities and attractions
- Geographic isolation (Hawaii Strategic Tourism Plan, 2005–2015, p. 5).

This is surprising, as much of Hawaii is national park, with high level natural attractions such as its volcanoes and beaches. When noting its weaknesses, there is no mention of understanding environmental issues such as carrying capacity, with the list focusing more on business and physical infrastructure issues:

- Geographic isolation
- Inadequate public and private infrastructure
- Insufficient visitor–resident interaction
- Lack of ‘new’ experiences
- Lack of accurate pre- and post-arrival information
- Lack of stakeholder consensus
- Lag in business tourism
- Visitor expectations and misperceptions
- Volatility of the inter-island transportation services
- Volatility of the national and international airline industry
- Maintenance of public facilities
- Limited awareness and limited access to new experiences
- Lack of professional (certified) guides (Hawaii Strategic Tourism Plan, 2005–2015, p. 5).

The entire plan has a very strong business focus, with only a minor focus on the natural environment. At least there are
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The final word

In Chapter 1, I spoke of the term *communitas* as referring to the spirit of community, quoting from Turner that it was ‘a whole group of people cross[ing] a threshold and together enter[ing] a liminal time and space – that is, an in-between that is neither past nor present, and a space that is neither here nor there’ (Turner 1969, p. vii). I noted that this anthropological perspective is important for those of us wanting to better understand how tourism can assist the development of communities. What I was referring to was the concept that communities do not simply exist in a physical, geographic dimension (such as a town), but more so through the members’ shared aspirations. I also noted that community groups may be sharing a profession, belief (religious, political or secular) or interest (creative arts, sport, recreation, conservation groups and so on) and can exist in other dimensions such as ‘virtually’ through the Internet. While, for ease of discussion, I have often throughout the book referred to communities from a spatial perspective as groups from certain regions, these groups also share certain attitudes and aspirations.

Tourism by accident or design?

While I stress the importance of planning for tourism in order to gain the maximum benefit, there are examples of successful tourism and community development that appear to simply have happened, almost by accident. However, if you look more closely at such cases, you can usually find a ‘champion’ who has inspired his or her community to work with tourism. There may be no strategies actually written down, but this person (or people) is able to articulate them when pressed. In effect, the planning has been done, and it is rare to find successful tourism in healthy communities without it.

Nevertheless, it certainly is advisable to have strategies in place and written down, as eventually the community leader or champion will
leave, either burnt out, moving on or passing away. It is then when a community truly sees if it is empowered and knows what to do next.

Those communities who have had tourism thrust upon them, either by multinational organisations, well-meaning volunteers or the travellers themselves (who simply turn up), face many challenges if they wish to truly benefit from tourism. The negative effects of overcrowding, loss of amenity, environmental damage, increasing prices and so on are incremental – they are not immediately evident. By the time they become issues that the community needs to address, it is often too late to resolve them – once a cultural or environmental aspect is lost, it is extremely difficult to regain.

We cannot afford to wait for tourism to ‘do it for us’, as we run the risk of having tourism ‘do it to us’.