

Our programme in Jamaica

Our Objective

To increase the scale and spread of tourism revenue to local businesses and communities.



Current situation

Tourism is a mainstay of the Jamaican economy, providing over US\$2.3BN in earnings annually. The tourism industry is dominated by large self-sufficient resort complexes providing high quality tourist offerings. In order to increase the positive impact of tourism for local businesses and communities there is a need to provide more opportunities for them to be integrated into the tourism supply chain.

Our approach

Using Montego Bay as the demonstration model, we are working with public and private sector tourism stakeholders to create better market linkages, improve tourism products and inspire tourists to spend money in the local area.

Projects

Identifying the barriers to getting out and about (research)

2012 - 2013

Our Jamaica programme began with research into the main issues preventing customers from spending more time and money outside of the hotel. The research found that: lack of information about what to see and do; a concern about being hassled; and the quality and range of products on offer were preventing holidaymakers from leaving the hotel. This research informed the following two projects.

Rastafari Indigenous Village (product development)

2012 - 2015

We began working with the Rastafari Indigenous Village (RIV) in 2012, providing training and development sessions on vision, mission and group





cohesion so that the community members could further develop their tourist product.

Aim

To help the village become 'market ready' to receive international visitors.

Key activities

- We engaged a mainstream operator to provide feedback on how RIV could achieve market-readiness
- We worked with the community and provided market guidance and product development training
- We delivered training on customer expectations

Results

RIV became officially licenced as a tourist attraction by Jamaica Tourist Board in 2015.

They also signed their first contract to be included in an excursion with mainstream operator, TUI. In 2016, a trip to RIV was included in TUI's 'Culture and City Montego Bay tour'.

The Travel Foundation opened our eyes to the business of tourism. We thought we knew what we were doing until we got into partnership with them. They showed us how to price our business and provided training, financial and other support for us to now sign a contract, for the first time, with a major tour operator.

Firstman, Rastafari Indigenous Village.

Stimulating Customer Demand

2015 - ongoing

Research into the barriers to customers getting out and about in Montego Bay was conducted in 2014, and it highlighted the following key issues:

- a lack of information available to tourists on Montego Bay
- the lack of tangible tourism-related benefits for many local people, including existing tourism suppliers
- the perception and occurrence of tourist hassle and the lack of, in some cases, local readiness for tourism, in terms of the quality and consistency of the 'offer'
- safety concerns among tourists about leaving their hotel complex

Aims

TF's objectives are to work in collaboration with cross-sector stakeholders to increase tourist footfall and spend, in Montego Bay, by:

1. Improving visitor communications and promotional materials to help create a positive identity for Montego Bay
2. Implementing hassle-reduction initiatives to improve visitor experiences
3. Enhancing the product and excursion offer to improve opportunities for visitors to spend more locally
4. Building the capacity of government agencies to support SMME attractions through train-the-trainer training
5. Facilitating market access for local SMMEs

through their inclusion in excursion portfolios

6. Working with the destination stewardship group to improve its capacity to manage the sustainable development of tourism in Montego Bay

Key activities

The Travel Foundation has worked with the Jamaica Tourist Board to develop free materials for visitors, including an "Insider Guide" and visitor map.

The guide and map are designed to help holidaymakers get out and about in Montego Bay, and address customer perception that there is little to do outside of the hotel.

Results

- 15,000 Insider Guides have been distributed to visitors
- The tourist map now includes 'insider' information about downtown Montego Bay, arming visitors with the information that they need to explore the area.

Montego Bay Craft Market

2016 - ongoing

The Harbour Street Craft Market in the popular tourist area of Montego Bay has been operating for around 40 years, but has recently seen a substantial fall in the number of visiting tourists. The resulting fall in sales is affecting the livelihoods of the 250 or so local market traders, impacting their families and the wider community.

Aim

We aim to stimulate the sustainable economic growth of the market, enabling the craft market

traders to earn a living from tourism. To do this, we aim to increase the number of tourist visits and improve income from sales.

Key activities

Research:

Our research with tourism suppliers, traders and visitors has pointed to four key challenges for the market, that we aim to address:

- To improve the relationship between tourists and traders.
- To meet visitor and industry expectations:
- To ensure continued support for the traders in developing their businesses.
- To improve the marketing and management/governance of the markets

Bringing stakeholders together:

We have engaged the local parish council, mayor, local and international tour operators, and the Jamaican Tourism Product Development Company to support the project.

Training:

Our strategic approach to this project is to train government tourism trainers so that the benefits can be spread to other craft markets in the country.

Following a train-the-trainer course, the craft market traders are being trained to enable them to:

- meet market needs, so that the products they sell are attractive to tourists.
- approach tourists without hassling them, so that tourists are not deterred from visiting the market.



- strengthen their business skills, so that they ensure the sustained profitability of their businesses
- make use of opportunities to buy and sell locally-made craft products, to spread the benefits to the wider community.

We are also training members of the local parish council and craft trader association executives who run the craft market to enable them to support the sustainable economic growth of the market in the future.

Engaging the tourism industry:

We are encouraging local and international tour operators to send their customers to the market. Feedback from tour operators and their customers on the quality of the products and the overall experience will be an important part of the project evaluation. Plus, volunteers from international tour operator, TUI, are inputting to workshops for the craft market traders to share their market insights.

Results

So far, approximately 90 traders have been certified through the course.

Expected impact and outcomes

We expect to see increased visitor spend in the local economy, leading to better long-term security of livelihoods through tourism.

We also hope to see the following outcomes:

- Increased tourist footfall and spend in Montego Bay
- Improved quality of local SMME attractions to meet international tourism demand
- Improved market access for local SMMEs
- Increased collaboration between tourism stakeholders to enable the sustainable development of tourism
- Improved capacity of government agencies to support SMMEs

Working in collaboration

We're working in collaboration with TUI, Jamaica Tourist Board, TPDCo and local enterprises in the Montego Bay area.

References

Gross foreign exchange earnings in 2014 2.2BN, and 2.3BN in 2015 (Source: Minister of Tourism)

Supporting resources

www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/destination/jamaica

Last updated in January 2017 by Katie James, Destinations Programme Officer.



Travel Foundation's work on this programme is extremely awesome. I think it's a great opportunity for the craft traders to be involved in something that will help them to be much more aware. I think it will broaden their horizons, and they will be able to use the skills that they gain in their day to day work. I don't think there's anything that tops this programme right now based on what I've seen and experienced so far. I think the craft traders who apply what they learn here will do extremely well in their business. So hats off to a great programme Travel Foundation.

Cavelle Gordon, Trainer for the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo)