

MASTER DISSERTATION

Rural Tourism and strategies for its development in Basse-Casamance (Senegal)

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Abstract

The origins of rural tourism in Basse-Casamance date back the early 1970s, but for a better understanding, it is important to explore the concept of "integrated rural tourism" which was first experimented in Basse-Casamance, southern Senegal. Given the impact derived from the development of "mass tourism" in other areas of the Ziguinchor region, it is proposed to look for new tourism formulas taking more into account the well-being of the population and the conservation of the environment.

The objective of this work is to propose formulas for reviving rural tourism in the Basse-Casamance that guarantee an equitable distribution of benefits and protection of the human and natural environment.

For this, a survey has been carried out in village camps located in rural areas that are: Enampore, Oussouye, Djembering, Seleky and Karabane. The results show a slow recovery of the tourist activity, in which the tourist actors face great difficulties. The investigation revealed a gap between supply and demand and a lack of rigor and reactivity in camp management.

Key words: "rural tourism", "environment", "gap", "recovery", "camp"

Resumen

Para comprender la originalidad de esta experiencia lanzada a principios de la década de 1970, tenemos que partir de los fundamentos del concepto de "turismo rural integrado" cuyo laboratorio fue Basse-Casamance en el Sur de Senegal. Ante el impacto derivado del desarrollo del "Turismo de masas" en otras áreas de la región de Ziguinchor, se plantea buscar nuevas fórmulas de turismo teniendo más en cuenta el bienestar de la población y la conservación del medio ambiente.

El objetivo de este trabajo es proponer fórmulas de reactivación del turismo rural en el área de Basse-Casamance que garanticen una distribución equitativa de los beneficios y la protección del medio ambiente y del entorno humano.

Para ello se ha realizado una encuesta en campamentos de pueblos ubicados en áreas rurales que son: Enampore, Oussouye, Seleky, Djembering y Karabane. Los resultados muestran una lenta recuperación de la actividad turística, en la que los actores turísticos se enfrentan a grandes dificultades. La investigación reveló una inadecuación entre la oferta y la demanda y una falta de rigor y capacidad de respuesta en la gestión de los campamentos

Palabras clave: "turismo rural", "medio ambiente", "inadecuación", "recuperación", "Campamentos"

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INTRODUCTION

Famous for the beauty of its landscapes, the originality of its architecture, the diversity of its ethnic groups and the richness of its culture, Casamance spreads its beautiful sandy beaches from The Gambia to Cap Skirring. Through the natural and cultural riches of its territory, it has significant tourism potential and very little economic development, notably due to the conflict. Indeed, the Government is facing an armed rebellion in Casamance which has been demanding independence since the early 1980s. The twenty years of armed conflict (from the 80s to 2000) have put the region into insecurity with catastrophic effects for the whole economy of the region. People in Casamance are living under a lack of economic activity and have great difficulty in accessing basic social services

The conflict remains very present in certain areas; however, the rest of the region is gradually stabilizing. In stable areas it is possible to promote the development of economic activities, particularly in the tourism sector. Despite its weakness today tourism is a sector in a process of restructuring. In recent years, tourism authorities have been working to make Casamance an international tourist destination as tour operators and airlines have been prospecting in the area over the past few years.

Knowing that tourism is back in this natural region, the development of an integrated rural tourism in the territory is more than necessary. In rural areas, tourism can be a real tool in the fight against poverty as stated by a fair sustainable tourism triangle which is comprised of economic vitality and social equity

Integrated rural tourism, introduced in the late 1970s in Casamance, has been an example in the setting of a sustainable tourism. However, today the economic activity of the village camps is relatively unstructured since they have operated at a slower pace due to the crisis and their methods of organization have not undergone changes. We can ask ourselves today, how will the campings cope with the requirements of international tourism and thus allow economic development and reconstruction of Casamance? Yet, as a destination, Basse-Casamance is quite austere. Its people are known to be plaintive to a tourism that may bring a market producing territorial inequality, through their own cultural guidelines and institutions. Governance aiming at applying processes of economic growth and territorial development, following the guidelines of the market economy could hardly match the requirements of Basse-Casamance

First of all, this work recalls the terms of the theoretical framework and more particularly the stakes, the objectives and the methodology applied to guarantee the relevance of the results. Then, to assess the dynamism of tourism supply and demand in Casamance, this research provides an overview of tourism in the region this tourism assessment then makes it possible to carry out a diagnosis of the territory in which the strengths and weaknesses of the sector are identified, in particular integrated village camps. This observation gives the first ideas of possible actions to revive rural tourism

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I. Theoretical framework

This section intends to offer theoretical references¹ that contribute elements to the construction of proposals for rural tourism in Casamance, which empower rural communities and not, as it has already been presented several times, that become situations of dispossession and profit investors, without real benefits for the guardians of the resources, inhabitants of the Basse-Casamance. It is about defining terms such as rural development, sustainable tourism, nature tourism, strategic planning and governance.

I.1 Rural development

According to the approaches to alternative development applied in experiences throughout Africa, the concept of Rural Territorial Development (DTR) is aimed at linking the agricultural sector with other economic sectors that affect natural resources, such as agriculture, livestock, fishing, mining, ecotourism, bioenergetics crops or environmental services and agro-environmental transformation activities, services, construction or commerce (Boucher, 2000; Cabana & Maldonado, 2015 cited by Guzman 2017). The concept of new rurality is meant to the promotion of employment and non-agricultural rural income, as a strategy that allows combining various economic activities. Among the alternatives to conventional agricultural production, rural tourism, sustainable agriculture, rural service companies or the development of local handicrafts are increasingly gaining strength (Hernandez, 2010). Within this approach of the new rurality, agritourism is considered to be multidimensional, because tourism activities involve administration and management of natural resources. When considering its sustainability and the preservation of its biodiversity, communities must be involved in decision-making processes and also control what happens in their territories (Muñoz, cited in Guzman 2007).

Therefore, these economic activities must be considered as an inherent part of the economic activity of the rural environment and the management by the communities of the strategic ecosystems that maintain urban life and the approval of the rural communities take on special value. -sustainable waste of natural resources (Sánchez, Rivero and Gallego, 2013)

Another important consideration is that tourism is an economic activity that belongs to the tertiary sector of the economy because it requires a high volume of labor, with highly qualified positions and others with very low qualification, including to historically marginalized groups such as women or young people (Baromey, 2008). The approach to tourism issues is considered taking into account the

¹ The 5 concepts detailed in this chapter are taken from other authors' works. Their references will be mentioned in the bibliography

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principles of Sustainable Development in its three components, economic, social and environmental, from the systemic approach, as a problem of complex systems.

I.2 Sustainable tourism

The World Tourism Organization (2002) defines Sustainable Tourism as: “a model of economic development designed to improve the quality of life of host community, provide the visitor with a high quality experience and maintain the quality of the environment of both the host community and the visitors depend” (Muñoz, 2006). The WWF World Union for Nature adds elements to this definition, which must be a process that promotes conservation, with low environmental and cultural impact and that promotes an active and beneficial involvement for local populations (Jiménez, 2010).

The global criteria of sustainable tourism are no longer a distinctive factor for the provision of tourism services, but are imposed as a necessity for all enterprises (Arguello et al., 2017), which must guarantee social benefits by contributing to community development; they must be ecologically tolerable in the long term by reducing the consumption of resources; offer economic benefits to improve the quality of life and be equitable from an ethical and social perspective for local communities (Martínez, Pitarch, García & Solano, 2005).

Sustainable tourism is often also referred as responsible tourism, which has been adopted as a term used by industry who feel that word sustainability is overused and not understood. Responsible tourism is any form of tourism that can be consumed in a more responsible way. Responsible tourism puts more emphasis on the responsibility of tourism industry through generating greater economic benefits for local people and enhancing the well-being of host communities, improving working conditions, involving local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances, making positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, providing access for physically challenged people and encouraging respect between tourists and hosts. It also strives to minimize negative social, economic and environmental impacts, (Borini, Khothari & Oneido 2004).

I.3 Nature Tourism

History has taught us the beginning dates back the 18th century fascination with the elemental nature of Romanticism as being opposed to the ever more civilized urban and industrialized world, has produced issues and discussions in Africa as well as in foreign literature. The term *Nature Tourism* is often used interchangeably with green, alternative, soft, sustainable or ecotourism (Krippendorf, 1986). Additionally, there are forms of tourism directly associated with the natural environment. However, their structure refers to a given ecosystem, for example forest tourism, lake tourism, polar tourism... or other such as birds watching, adventure, at the heart of the nature but terminologically associated with types of activity.

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In the context of conceptual difference, it is particularly important to present the different perspectives. Primarily, it should be pointed out that all forms of tourism, despite their differences, are able to resist mass tourism although Dudek and Kowalczyk (2003) think that nature tourism can itself be a mass form. Secondly, most researchers such as Ceballos-Lascurain (1996) and Goodwin (1996) agree that nature tourism is in fact any kind of tourism taking place in the natural environment, on the condition that the nature tourist's source of satisfaction predominantly stems from being in touch with the natural environment. Similar opinions are voiced involved with tourism management (Zwolinska & Spychala 2013) who consider it to be a form of leisure taking advantage of natural assets in a particular manner. It is clear that not all the activities undertaken in a natural environment, untransformed by human activity, are undertaken with the intention of being close to nature. In such a situation, the best solution seems to be provided by Grenier (2004) who subdivided nature tourism into:

- *Nature-based tourism* where the natural environment is the background for the performance of various activities
- *Nature-oriented tourism* in order to contemplate the essence of nature, closely associated with it as a rule, it should be in a practically untouched natural environment”

I.4 Strategic Planning

The concept of planning, specifically the strategic planning of tourism has undergone changes and is differently viewed, assuming the capacity of innovation in the transformation processes that implies the fact of strategically organizing the future over a particular territory. “Tourism being a development activity, it needs a planning process that guides its initiatives”. According to UNWTO (2002), tourism planning at different scales (international, national, local) is essential to achieve success in the development, and management of the activity.

Entering the field of conceptualization of tourism planning, since Ripoll (1986) placing it as a research carried out about social and economic reality require guidelines that allow the rational use of tourism resources to put supply and contact demand and qualitatively increase tourism activity. Going through Inskip (1991), who gives it as a continuous and flexible process; Solsona (2009) conceives it as an orderly and rationalized process in a tourist destination, or potentially tourist that integrates all the elements of the offer adapting them to the needs of the demand and the market trends. On the other hand, numerous authors have defined and created methodologies on tourism planning, noting that tourism planning is not a unique and uniform method that is equally applicable in all spaces.

It cannot be denied that tourism strategic planning is a tool and not an end in itself, which gives way to the phenomenological understanding of various positions that converge on the legitimization of a flexible, creative, dynamic and systemic planning scheme that provides the opportunity to

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coincide with the cultural values of science and technology (Corpozulia 2005 as cited in Faria et al. 2016).

On the other hand, Pulido (2012) and Ferrer et al, (2014) point out that the changes that occur worldwide have served as an incentive to reorient tourism planning approaches. For García (2004), in the last decade tourism planning has worked on two ideas: a horizon of continuous growth of tourism (more mobility, more trips per year, more visitors at the destination) and the periodic adaptation of the offer to innovative services tastes and demand preference.

1.5 Governance

In fact, participation, commitment, identity and responsibility towards the destination and its management has kicked off the search for new instruments that enable carry out a comprehensive and prospective planning and management (Nordin, & Svensson, 2005). In recent years it has a concept emerged that allows to realize the importance of the agents in the development: Governance. According to Ferrer, Fariña, J. and Ramón (2014), this concept refers to the creation of networks of cooperation and coordination, horizontally, between the actors directly and indirectly involved in the tourism value chain, which are characterized by having your own rules and regulations. In other words, governance translates into concertation of actors to improve decision-making processes.

Bustos Cara (2008) conceptualizes it as being the articulation between public, private and collective action. The development of these cooperation networks would allow the destination to achieve competitiveness through the formulation of policies and comprehensive planning, where the different dimensions that constitute the tourist phenomenon according to Velasco (2010) and Torres & Rodó (2004).

Velasco (2008, pp. 61-77) describes in his article the qualities of tourism that make governance a necessary instrument for its management:

- “The tourist attractions of a destination are characterized as public goods, appropriate by the host communities, but at the same time require the installation of service providers and a value chain linked to the sector private to be able to develop an enriching experience for the tourist. It is that is, cooperation between the public and private sectors is required.
- The consumption of a tourist experience is linked to a particular territory and to “Natural, historical and cultural characteristics” (Hiernaux, 1991) of a community, so it is important to involve it within management process

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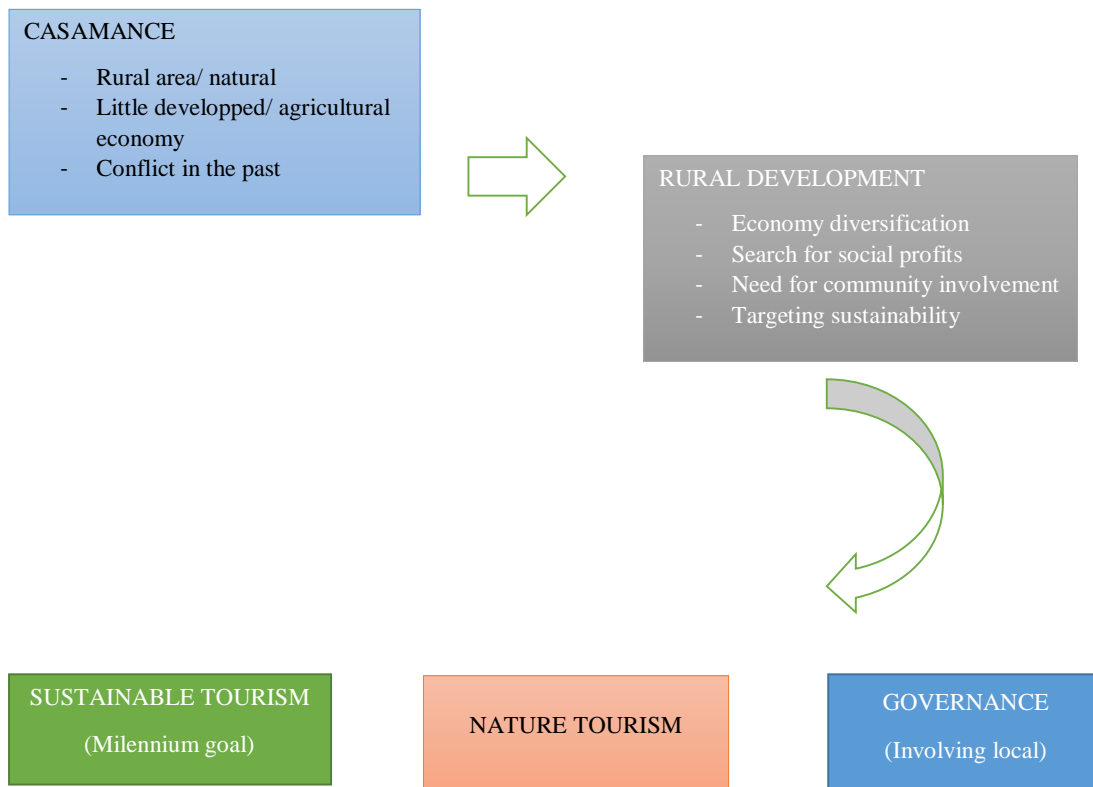
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- Finally, the nature of tourism is transversal to different sectors such as multidisciplinary and linked to different disciplines which presents certain complexity, since each sector and discipline has its own logic of functioning (Moscoso, n.d)

Figure 1:Key concepts and ideas of the theoretical framework



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II. Objectives and Methodology

II.1 Objectives

This study firstly draws up an overall assessment of the tourism sector in Basse-Casamance, then secondly analyzes the possibilities of new strategies for rural tourism, taking into account the following parameters:

- The expectations of local population today with regard to tourism;
- Local development programs for rural communities and the possible economic, social and environmental benefits at the local level;
- Development prospects;
- Potential demand and Casamance supply;
- Relevance of the organizational and management methods in the campings hosting tourists.

II.2 Methodology

The data collection strategy combines secondary and primary sources:

- Data collection from reports dealing with the topic
- Field survey (via google drive)

The choice of the delimitation of the study area was made in relation to the situation of operational campsites: Enampore, Oussouye, Carabane, Djembering and Seleky

The work of information collection in the villages consisted first of all in carrying out a number of individual interviews.

Within the camps, the manager is interviewed using a questionnaire made up of four headings: infrastructure, camp management, tourist potential and the future of the campings. Interviews with other people directly linked to the campsite (staff, board of directors) complete the interview for better objectivity. The objective is to understand the place of tourism in the global orientations of their local development plan. The whole questionnaire can be consulted in annex A. Some questions, mainly those related to the impacts of rural tourism do not appear in the questionnaire. They were realized by other means and their answers will be evidenced by further research.

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During the field work, 17 questionnaires have been collected from local managers of the camps based in different localities.

Table 1: Interview distribution

	Seleky	Djembering	Oussouye	Enampore	Karabane
Managers	1	3	3	2	2
Other people	1	1	2	1	1

Source: author's own materials, based on data

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III. General Presentation of the destination

The natural region of Casamance has boundaries that draw on both nature and history. They are to the west the Atlantic Ocean, to the east the Kuluntu river (tributary of The Gambia river), to the north the Gambia, and to the south Guinea Bissau. 28,350 square kilometers or 1/7 of the area of Senegal. The region is narrow and elongated from east to west on both sides of a 300 km river which gives its name to the region. Ziguinchor, the largest city in southern Senegal, the administrative capital has 130,000 inhabitants. Located on the south of the Casamance river, it is the main access point to the region.

Casamance presents seaside tourism as a whole, symbolized by the complex of Cap Skiring. Rural tourism is a complementary product to tourism seaside. It consists in the creation of camps built, managed and animated by the population guaranteeing minimum comfort. It is an opportunity to discover the culture of the region, its beautiful landscape, offering thus the possibility of real contacts between visitors and visitors. This relatively tourist offer varied, places the region third among Senegalese destinations, after Dakar and the Petite Côte. The climate is, as in most wetlands, an essential element of activity tourism and recreation (Besancenot, 1990; Gomez Martin, 2005; Smith, 1993).

Basse-Casamance is the zone where tourism is expected to flourish. In Basse-Casamance, the vegetation covers very low plateaus (60 meters maximum altitude) limited by networks of backwaters (bolongs) made up of mangroves and very salty clay areas called *tann*. These natural assets combined with cultural motivations largely determine the tourism in Casamance.

The main tourist cities in Casamance are: Ziguinchor (450 km from Dakar, Bignona, Oussouye and Cap Skiring On the Atlantic coast (small fishing village), gradually since the 1970s, a renowned tourist resort with its magnificent beaches and its quality seaside facilities, or the tradition of welcoming its village camps. But the lush, traditional Casamance is also this "Deep Africa" which is amazed by the liveliness of its traditions and the richness of its cultures. It facilitates human encounters through the diversity of its landscapes and environments: a permanent wonder for the most demanding bird watchers and naturalists.

The region is mainly inhabited by the Diola ethnic group with assimilated groups (Floup, Diamate, Mandjak, Balante) whose language is Diola (jóola) with its Boulouf dialects, Fogny and Kasa. The Diolas, Christianized, also practice traditional cults. The explorers, then visitors to Casamance have always been amazed by the talent of architects Diola, only in Africa to have used the technique of the impluvium box and the two-story box (in Enampore and Oussouye for example).

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Casamance has a humid tropical climate with an average long rainy season 1,230 millimeters per year against only 400 millimeters in the Senegalese capital and one abundant vegetation. It is a splendid region made up of forests, rivers, backwaters and streams and the Casamance river. The hydrographic network, the precipitation of the rainy season and the temperature (sometimes higher than 35 °) contribute to Casamance the richest agricultural region of the country (rice, sorghum, millet, corn, peanuts, palm trees oil, date palms or fruit trees).

Fishing as well as family poultry and possibly pig farming completes the crops to provide abundant food. In the years 1960-1970, the drought in the north of Senegal (Sahelian region) made the Wolofs flock to Casamance for the most part Muslims and peanut farmers, to this agricultural "El Dorado".

Rice, the cultivation techniques of which were introduced by the Chinese in the 1950s and 1960s, is an important local production in Casamance but rice is cultivated more in recent years in irrigated areas along the Senegal River in the North. The Casamance is not without attraction and remains very charming for those who visit it.

III.1 Tourism in Basse-Casamance

There is currently an average arrival of 1,007,000 tourists per year in Senegal, including 67.348 in Casamance. The camps are mostly visited by backpackers and also by foreign partners in the villages (town twinning, cooperation). The tourist activity is seasonal (from November to April). In rural areas the Spanish come every year in the off season, from June to September, which allows the activity to be sustained. They come either alone or on a tour organized by the Bassari Rutas agency. Otherwise, apart from the French and the Spanish, it regularly happens to come across tourists of all nationalities (Italian, German, Dutch, American) in the village camps. Integrated rural tourism, consisting of several village camps, is a product complementary to classic tourism in the region and allows tourists to experience the realities the deepest localities, but also the populations to fully benefit from the benefits from these community infrastructures.

“Rural tourism is mainly done in village camps and allows better understanding of local culture. Cultural and ecological tourism offered by the majestic Casamance River, which the Amazon, flows into the Atlantic Ocean creating a tangle of mangrove, real labyrinth of plant Minos welcoming animal species into its mangroves among the rarest on the planet. On the Casamance river delta, there are islands (Carabane, Diogué, Hilol Hitou, Niomoune) presenting a particular landscape. The island of Carabane, with the nostalgic charm of its rich history and its Breton church, without road or current. Also, its colonial type houses built in stone is one of the facets that deserve to be discovered. The architectural

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originality of the habitat with notably the majestic Casamance impulvium huts in Enampore, the houses in floors in Mlomp, one of a kind in Africa, is an asset for vision tourism”.

Integrated rural tourism was launched in 1974 in Casamance by Christian Saglio, a French volunteer, with the support of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT, which has since become the Intergovernmental Agency of *La Francophonie*²). This form of tourism allows people to take charge of their needs from healthy lucrative activities. This form of tourism is generally aimed at associative customers’ sensitive to community development problems in the South. In a few years, about fifteen camps appeared in Casamance and, for the best of them, attracted 2,000 to 5,000 tourists a year. Residents have built accommodations based on traditional architecture to welcome and accommodate travelers. For the traveler, this is the occasion for real contact with the population; for the villagers, it is a way to create an exchange, to preserve a natural heritage, to maintain activities and the populations. Part of the revenue is collected by the village and used to finance community investments.

But this integrated tourism unfortunately suffered from the crisis. It has therefore been weakened for several years and remains today rather slow. However, it undoubtedly represents an alternative economy on which new initiatives could be based.

If the integrated village camps have represented an exemplary success in using tourism as a catalyst for sustainable development of the territory, how today, when the situations have changed considerably, can they represent a new opportunity to respond to the challenges in the long term Casamance reconstruction. More precisely, we can ask ourselves how will they adapt to tourist demand, or how will the camps deal with regional, national and international competition and eventually how can the camps keep the village spirit while ensuring the sustainability of their tourist activity.

However, the 30 years of instability have deeply affected tourism in the region. Their consequences have resulted in a strong regression of the destination. It has dropped significantly since that time, from over 43,000 arrivals in 1991 to 22,000 in 2005, and the tourism sector is operating at a slower pace 10,000 tourists in 2014, according to figures from local tourist authorities (regional tourism inspection) in 2014.

Table 2: Impact of the political instability on tourism arrivals

Years	1991	1995	2000	2005	2010	2014
Arrivals	43.000	36.000	20.000	22.000	17.000	10.000

Source: Regional tourism Inspection. Gueye, 2019

It is therefore far from succeeding in expressing its full potential, whether in terms of creation

² World organization of French speaking countries

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jobs and income or as a catalyst for economic and social development. Some European countries are responsible for this since they do not hesitate to advise their nationals not to "Avoid non-essential travel to the region of Casamance ". This is the case of the Embassy of Canada and France in Dakar, which specifies that "the persistence of armed attacks in Casamance requires great caution during a travel in this region".

III.2 Supply analysis

The Casamance crisis has dealt a severe blow to tourism in this region and most of the camps have long been lethargic. Tourism in this southern part of the country is booming today.

The changes in the security situation especially have revived the dynamic. The Federation of Village Camps is restructured and seven camps (Baïla, Coubalan, Affiniam, Enampore, Elinkine, Kafountine and Oussouye) have been renovated, thanks to the aid of French and German cooperation. As far as the tour operation is concerned, *Jet Tour*, *Club Med* and *Look Voyages* have been operating there.

Table 3: Geographic profile of the camps

Camps names	Opening date	Villages involved
Seleky	1979	Seleky, Etama, Dioromat
Oussouye	1984	Oussouye, Elubaline, Edioungou
Djembering	1971	Djembering
Enampore	1974	Enampore, Essyl
Karabane	1975	Karabane

Source: Principaud, 2010

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It can be noted that all the camps, except for Oussouye, were launched in the 70s. The period corresponds to the years when the tourism activity began at a national level. Another information here is the geographical dimension or the distribution of the camps within the region of Basse-Casamance.

Furthermore, our research has found out the building and the re-building of the camps are realized by foreign and national private actors with huge involvement of local population. Djembering is a clear example of that. In the 80s, years of tourism booming in the South, foreigners have helped built campings. From the 1970s, the region has seen the development of several forms of tourism, focusing primarily on the seaside with the construction of several hotel complexes around Cap Skirring³. Then, driven by Adama Goudiaby and Christian Saglio, the concept of integrated rural tourism was created. With the ambition to develop a new form of tourism where the rural population could directly benefit from the presence of its hosts and thus minimize the rural exodus of young people. Then were born under the leadership of a federation (the FECAV) the integrated village camps of Senegal. It was then a question of creating rural inns built, animated and managed by the population.

Figure 2: Geographical situation



Source: Wikipedia

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Accommodations made up of impluvium and adapted to local climatic conditions can be found in the villages of **Enampore** and **Seleky**. They are located nearly 10 Km from the south of Ziguinchor. The island of **Karabane**, the former capital of the region hosts a beautiful body of water and heavenly landscapes. In Oussouye, we can see upstairs huts built in mud and a very old sacred cheese trees. Almost all the camps have kept the same structure as in the 70s.



Figure 3: One camp in the village of Karabane

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Ile2Carabane/posts>

Table 4: Touristic profile of the camps (2017/2018 data)

Camps names	Accommodation capacity	Room rate	Food and beverage price
Seleky	10 rooms	20 € 13.000 cfa	All inclusive
Oussouye	17 rooms	Night occupancy: 5 € 3000 cfa	Full-board:10.000 cfa Half-board:3500 cfa Breakfast: 1800 cfa
Djembering	16 rooms	15 € , 10.000 cfa	Full-board: 15.300 cfa Half-board:3500 cfa Breakfast: 1800 cfa

Enampore	10 rooms	Night occupancy: 5000 cfa , 7 €	Full-board:12.000 cfa Half-board:3500 cfa Breakfast: 1800 cfa
Karabane	32 rooms	16 € , 10.000 cfa	Full-board: 24.000 cfa Half-board:21.000 cfa

Elaborated by the author. Source: Senegal tourism official website ausenegal.com,

As it can be noted, the supply in Basse-Casamance differs from one camp, or zone to another. But it should be mentioned before any further analysis that the FECAV⁴ has implemented standards on half and full boards regarding some camps. In fact, depending on the comfort offered by the camps, the prices of a night stay are unbalanced.

Moreover, the discrepancy in the rate may be explained by the unconsidered activities and services within the camps. That is to say there is a clear lack of innovation. According to our study, the main touristic activities are pirogue trekking, artisanal fishing, excursions. But the intangible assets are much more important in southern Casamance. The history of the region and its social mix has generated a rich cultural diversity. Many ethnic groups joined this region because it had the advantage of being isolated and difficult to access, a major asset for these populations fleeing persecution and the enslavement. These populations are known to be proud and attached to their traditions. At over time, meetings, exchanges, and cohabitation have forged the appearance of a rich culture recognized at national level, diversified and fairly preserved from acculturation world.

It is possible thanks to these different factors to discover a preserved and intact heritage, which can be exploited in collaboration with local populations and make it benefit visitors. From a promotional point of view, it is therefore possible to communicate on the "authentic" aspect of the destination. The buildings show that the society belongs and is rooted in its territory, as:

- ❖ Traditional housing is still widespread, as well as its building techniques,
- ❖ Shell clusters, islands made up of shells, have an undeniable charm,
- ❖ Christian and Muslim places of worship,
- ❖ The granaries on stilts, vestiges of the past but which still mark the landscape

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III.3 Demand analysis

According MTTA⁵ and ANSD⁶, the annual number of tourists would be 1,400,000 in 2017, with an increase of 40% since 2014. For 3/4, tourists come from Africa and 23% from Europe. Revenues from tourism represent nearly 500 billion CFA francs, that's to say 7% of GDP. For Casamance, 3rd destination of Senegal, the arrivals are estimated at 67.348 tourists in 2014 but there was an increase of 17% in 2015 with 79.101 tourists.

As far as rural tourism is concerned, data have been collected from regional reports and other studies. Yet, the data on rural tourism in Basse-Casamance are not official, but this does not mean they are unsourced.

Table 5: Tourism demand in 2017

Camps Names	Tourists' origins ⁷	Number of tourists	Night stays	Average stays
Oussouye	France Spain Netherlands	1000	1400	2 days
Enampore	France, Portugal	150	65	1 day
Seleky	Spain, France	70	Unavailable	Unavailable
Djembering	Italy, France, Nigeria	200	Unavailable	Unavailable
Karabane	France, America, locals	605	1100	2 days

Source: TÉOROS. Parc National de Basse-Casamane, 2017. Rapport annuel,

Taking advantage of visits to the surrounding protected areas, it was determined that the vast majority tourists are from Europe with 95%, especially France and Spain; a 2% of them from America, 2% neighboring countries like Nigeria, and the remaining are locals.

It can be noted that, according to the results (see fig 4) following the data collection, we arrive to an average of 2025 tourists per year since the season 2008-2009, but with very contrasted attendance according to the camps. Only Karabane and Oussouye have been doing well and total 79.25% of the annual flow. They represent the two most comfortable camps with a capacity allowing regular reception

⁵ Senegal Tourism Department and Air travels

⁶ National Agency of Statistics

⁷ This is an average arrival between 2008/2009 and 2016/2017

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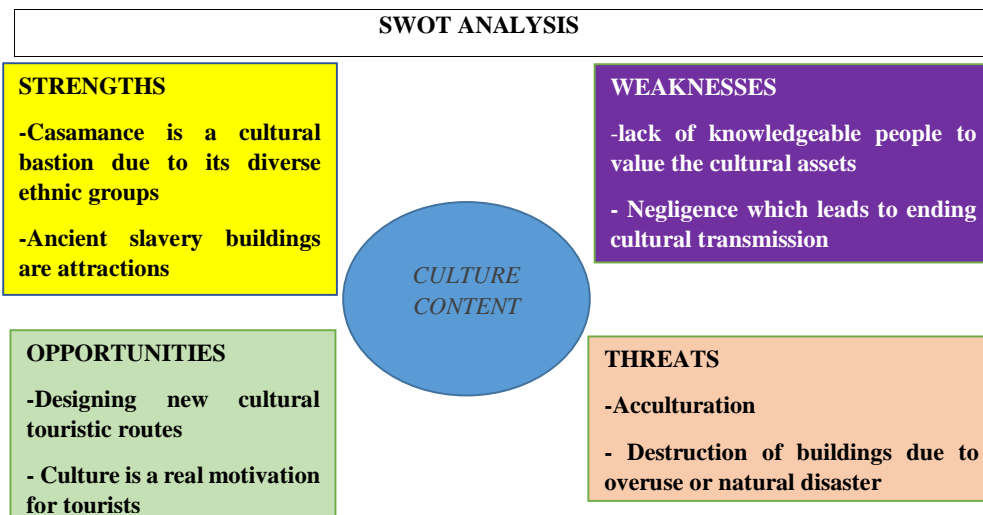
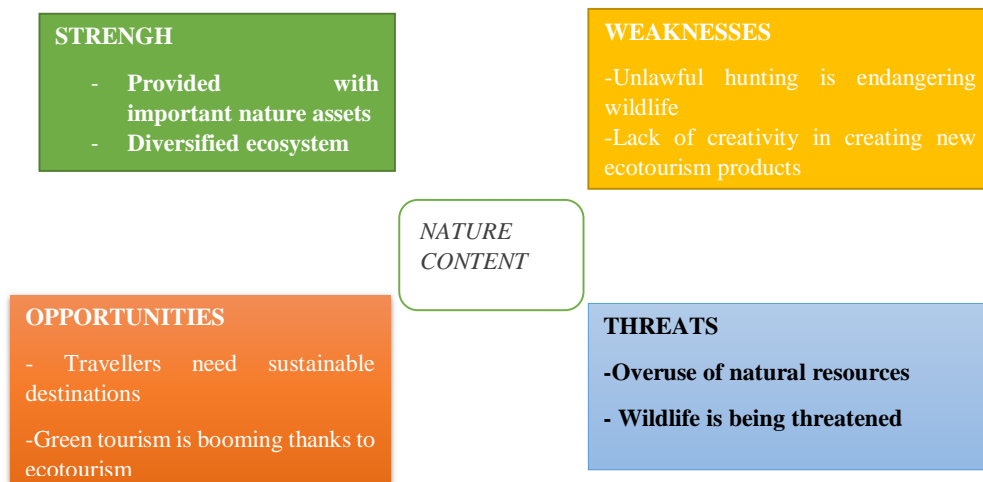
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of groups. Recreational and cultural activities are highly supported during the stay of tourists. This also explains why they keep larger stays average with 2 days. Enampore comes up with 1 day. The rest of the camps did not provide data on this regard.

III.4 DAFO analysis

In Basse-Casamance, it is known that the rural tourism is quite specific from one village to another, but the problems that tourism is facing may be general. In this respect, we have made an overall insight analysis to point out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats



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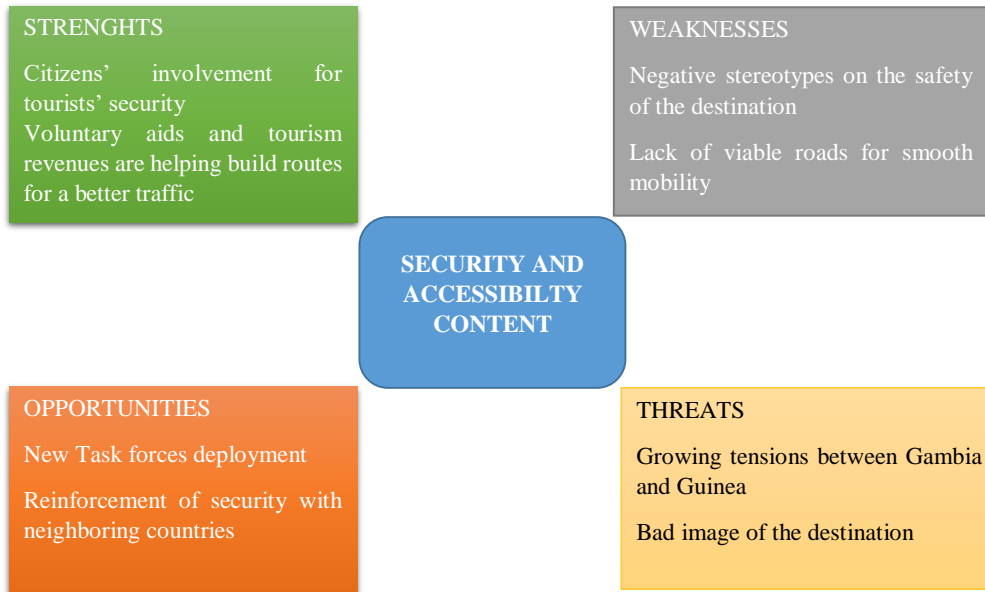
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III.5 Connectivity of the destination

It is known that the destination of Basse-Casamance is isolated due to its past with separatist rebellion and its geographic location. Over the past few years, the Senegalese government have put into action a set of measures to help the region get its touristic life. In this regard, the transportation seen some changes since the wreck of Le Joola⁸.

➤ **By flight we have three modalities**
Direct flights from Europe

The only flights from Europe to Cape Skirring are operated in high season by the company Transavia. Aside from this solution, scheduled airlines offer flights to Dakar from major European cities.

Domestic flights

The Transair company offers flights from Dakar to Ziguinchor, Cap Skirring (two planes of 30 and 17 seats, baggage allowance 20 kg, 35 min flight). The new Senegalese airline Air Senegal also offers a domestic Dakar Ziguinchor Cap-Skirring flight

Private Flights:

Airline and private jet rental agencies also offer travel packages to Casamance. These are: *Arc-en-ciel* and Fly Africa Airways (soon).

⁸ The Joola is the famous boat that sank in September 2002, over 2000 people lost their lives

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➤ **By seaway**

Three ferries managed by Cosama⁹ provide the Dakar-Ziguinchor connection with a stopover at Carabane (one of the villages we studied). The Aline Sitoé Diatta Ferries, which replaces the Joola, performs Dakar-Ziguinchor rotations twice a week. These are Aline Siteo Diatta boats (500 passengers, several dozen vehicles), Diambogne and Aguene boats (since March 2015), more modest, which only offer armchairs are two new ferries put into service since March 19, 2015. They provide alternating connections. It must be mentioned that online booking for travel tickets with the Aline Siteo Diatta boats is impossible.

➤ **By roads from the airport**

To join Casamance from the back country, one must cross a neighboring country, The Gambia. As the political situation is calm now, travelling is not that complicated. The journey would be long, but pleasant for adventurers as you will get to know the landscapes different from one region to another.

Another way to get to Casamance is possible by crossing the Senegalese national, a world heritage due to its biosphere.

⁹ Cosama is the national corporation managing sea travels in Senegal

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IV. Investigation results

The outcome, or results that are based on the findings from investigation and the surveys we have handed to the different camps managers (workers, staff, etc).

IV.1 Integration of tourism in local development of communities

- Tourism is an area of interest to rural communities. They support projects in the tourism sector, however they show a lack of initiative in this area. Rural communities are working to improve infrastructure including opening up (road conditions, for example) and access to electricity and water in villages. In the long term, these initiatives are beneficial for the development of tourism.
- For rural communities, integrated tourism is very important since the benefits of the camp can be reinvested in their projects (education, health, environment, etc.).
- On the other hand, they think that only the camp construction is a solution to develop tourism. They neglect the organization of tourist activities, yet a source of enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage and the tourism promotion.

IV.2 Impacts at a social, economic and environmental level

- Many of the people interviewed believe that the camp is beneficial for the population since it has brought a lot in the past few years. Indeed, if tourism is well managed, it is a promising sector because it creates direct and indirect jobs and contributes to the dynamization of other economic sectors of the region. Indeed, in many villages, the profits have been changing people's lives in many ways.
- Presently, the low profits of the camp are managed informally. However, they provide support to the poorest families during difficult times; they make it possible to safeguard cultural particularities by supporting traditional ceremonies and rituals; they support as far as possible the projects of the rural community. In Djembering for examples, Tourism revenues are an important, indeed crucial, part of the budget of the municipality (Sène, 2018). According to the municipal secretary, 85% of this budget comes from the tourism and its related activities. As such, they contribute significantly to the functioning of the community. Overall, households benefit from the following impacts. The impact of tourism on the locality are satisfactory (*ibid*)

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Table 6: General overview of rural tourism achievements in Basse-Casamance

Villages	Achievements
Djembering	1 Maternity Ward ¹⁰ , 1 elementary public school
Oussouye	Grinder machines for women, 1 health center
Seleky	Yearly financial support to farming projects
Enampore	1 Public school, 1 health center
Karabane	New pirogues to support traditional fishing are bought

Source: by the author, based on data from Fédération des Campements Villageois

- The ecological measures are not really taken into account by the local communities who are not aware of the environmental impact of tourism. Tourism can therefore also be the source of an awareness of the importance of safeguarding its environmental heritage.

IV.3 Demand and supply

- Currently, the camps meet the demand of *backpackers* or from cooperative partnerships. This market is generally not very beneficial and less demanding in terms of comfort. This type of clients does not allow the camps to be profitable. They must therefore turn to clients who have more means and wish to travel in a responsible way. However, these tourists exist and are growing. However, this type of clients seeks a minimum of comfort in terms of accommodation and organization in terms of tourist activities. To be in accordance with the demand, the camps must improve their services and organize ecotourism activities.

Given this worrying situation and the difficult solution of the structural problem facing the rural tourism sector in the region, where the low percentage of occupation, low average stays, seasonality stand out as negative elements. It is worth betting on a different development model, where what prevails is a better adaptation between the vocation of the territory and the tourists' enjoyment. For this, the planning of the activity should be a key element, although an exhaustive understanding of the authentic development potential that can exist in each space is required, taking as a basic reference the available attractions, the preferences of the demand, as

¹⁰ This is a facility that enables women to give birth without going to the administrative city of Ziguinchor

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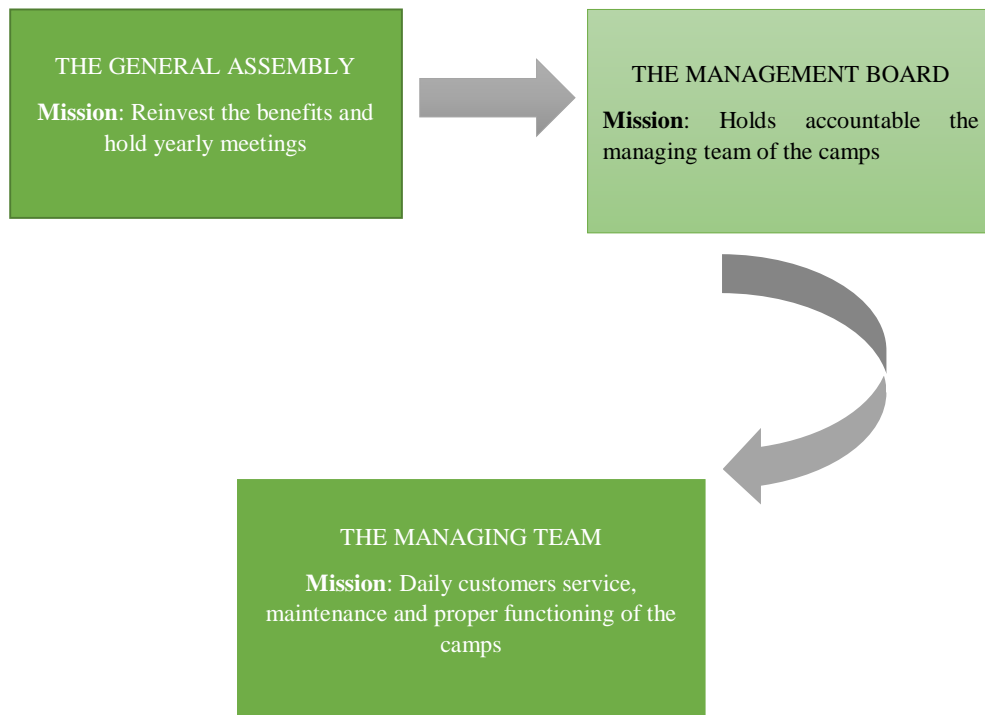
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well as other territorial issues that will serve to configure a realistic model that represents the capacity of Basse-Casamance to promote tourism.

IV.4 Camps management

- The majority of the managing teams are composed of a president, a secretary, a treasurer and other members, elected by all the villagers at an annual or biannual meeting during a General Assembly. They elect the managing team (Concil d'Administration in French) which consists of a manager, his assistant, two cooks and a caretaker.
- The CA¹¹ holds the accounts of the economic activity. At the end of each month, they control expenses and receipts and calculate the profits. 45% of the profits are shared equally between the employees and 55% is intended for the village funds for local development.



¹¹ Conseil d'Administration is the governing body of every camp

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Indeed, the manager needs the agreement of the CA for every expense to be carried out. If he does not notify the CA before acting, he may be penalized. This form of management does not allow for sufficient reactivity. It is no longer adapted to the rhythm of tourist activity. Having flexibility in these actions makes it possible to act quickly so as not to disappoint customers.

This form of management suffers from the slowness of the "community" nature of tourism activity. The collective good loses responsibility for individuals.

In addition, in this covid-19 post-crisis climate, enthusiasm is mixed for this resumption of activities. Interest and generational conflicts lead to disagreements between the villagers on the development of tourism.

The CA must be trained in practical project management and management tools to learn how to manage funds and manage a tourist activity. The idea is to give more autonomy to the management team by granting it each month, within the 55% dedicated to the village, a percentage for the maintenance and promotion of the camp.

The management of the camp by a private team has been mentioned several times to meet this need for development of integrated rural tourism. On the other hand, some are against this idea of privatization for fear of losing the "soul" of the village camps if financial profitability is at stakes. In addition, as said several times all along this research, the lack of qualifications within the tourism workers is a hindrance to tourism in Basse-Casamance. 59 % of the worked have not had any training related to tourism. This explains the lack of understanding of tourism trends and reactivity towards some issues in which their expertise is needed. On the other hand, only 12 % of them have basic skills of tourism. The remaining part which is the 29% have studied, but represent other graduates for communicative purposes.

Table 7: Tourism actors training

	Basic general training ¹²	Tourism-related training	No training at all
Managers	5	2	5
Others	0	0	5

Source: Author's own materials based on data

¹² Basic general training refers here to any other training, except for tourism

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V. Strategies for rural tourism in Basse-Casamance

In Basse-Casamance, Rural tourism has enormous potentialities if we take a look at the diverse attractions and the number of arrivals over the last few years. But, the tourism activity is lagging behind due to many factors, some structural and others conjectural. After the insight analysis of the situation, and accordingly to what is going on in the region, it would be interesting to **meet European standards in terms accommodation** management while **diversifying products and services**. Then comes the **coordination of the touristic activities** which goes together with a meaningful **strategic planning** and the **promotion** of the destination.

V.1 Professionalizing camps management

The above results show how traditional the camps in Casamance are managed. It can be understood that rural tourism does not go hand-in-hand with luxury and high professional management, but travelers are more and more demanding. This means, beyond the need of conservation of the architectural heritage, it is necessary to come up with some innovative ideas by setting up new buildings which guarantee safety and comfort. This would be a first step towards meeting international standards.

Moreover, the management of the camps must be more autonomous with less involvement of villagers in decision-making. Rural tourism has changed over the years, that's to say there is new reality that enables less collective management of camps. There is new paradigm which is the clients' expectations and the factors of competition with other destinations. Human resources are fundamental for the competition of rural tourism in Basse-Casamance. Even if tourism is basically a social activity, it does not prevent it from requiring qualified people because, in the end, it is a very competitive economic activity. To adapt to the evolution of tourism at a global level, workers and tourism actors must go through some training programs to get the required qualifications such as professional guiding, accountability, health and hospitality know-how. Internship programs with students from the faculty of tourism, collaboration with National department of Tourism and fair partnership with Tour operators may help the process of professionalization begin.

However, it is obvious that the concept of Community-Based Tourism has its advantages. We may take the example of Haut-Badakhshan, in the Republic of Tajikistan where the model of Community-Based Tourism is being experienced. Tourism is a new economic activity that emerged in 1999 in Tajikistan; its recognition by the Tajik State as a foreign exchange earning activity dates back to 2005 (Rakhmatova, 2012a). In fact, it is still underdeveloped. It's a very recent activity, which means *Pamiri* communities do not have the experience, practical knowledge or technical and financial means

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to implement a tourism project (Rakhmatova, 2013). But, with the foundation of a local entity called Mourghab Ecotourism Association (META), international NGOs are proving to be effective in expanding their fields of action by integrating the community-based ecotourism component to help local people improve their daily lives (Rodary, 2007; Payen, 2012). Between 2003 and 2008, great changes have been visible. For example, the demand has risen from 20 tourists in 2003 to 300 in 2006, with a small drop in 2007 and a return to growth in 2008.

Moreover, a network of village homestays managed by the Mourghab community was set up, bringing a significant income to village households; this activity also provided an income supplement to support subsistence farming activities. In addition, a group of more than 50 local service providers (experienced drivers, guides and food-processing workers) has been created around the Mourghab Ecotourism Association (Rakhmatova, 2012b)

Community-based tourism in Africa is widely present in Morocco, Burkina Faso, Benin and Mali (Gueye, 2019). For example, in Burkina Faso with "*Tourisme et Développement Solidaire*", it is the villagers who control the tourism activity. It is a Village Development Council, elected by the inhabitants like in Base-Casamance, which is responsible for this activity and manages the profits. The houses where the travelers are accommodated belong to the inhabitants. It is also the Council that sets up a management committee responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the project, recruiting and supervising homes employees and defining the program of stays. These countries are known for the implementation of solidarity tourism projects which today are examples of controlled and sustainable tourism. The socio-economic contexts in West Africa are different, but we can be largely inspired

V.2 Diversification of products and services

We have previously mentioned the state of demand and supply in the region as being monotonous. There is a huge gap between what rural tourism in Basse-Casamance is offering and what should the destination offer. Rural tourism has a lot to give in terms of services and products supply. In addition to these few natural potentials, there is a remarkable cultural richness. Indeed, the region's reputation is best seen through its many historical sites and monuments formed by the vestiges of traditional society, ritual ceremonies (initiation, "*Kankourang*", etc.) which occupy an important place in the traditional Diola culture, the museums of Djembering. By elsewhere, the traditional habitat with its original architecture (the impluvium huts d'Affiniam, d'Enampore-Séléki) and the multi-floor houses built in Banco de Mlomp are also particularly worth visit

Culturally speaking, Basse-Casamance is one the regions where we find several traditional activities. This an opportunity to design cultural-based products that value the heritage of the region, because the cultural aspect is driving many visitors. Local religions such as animism is fascination there. Tourism authorities have to take advantage of that so as to create new "cultural routes" they will include

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the *boit sacré*¹³, the festivals, the cultural fairs, etc. Here is a non-comprehensive list of top events to be explored and promoted: Zig Fest, Siteo Diatta Carnaval, Djembering cultural festival, Baila Festival.

It has become essential that each reception structure has its own guide who benefits from understanding of the biodiversity and culture (customs and traditions) of its region. The new generation are less knowledgeable due to Western influence and modernity. It would be interesting to collect the knowledge of the elders, the wise men of each village, on the one hand, to preserve and disseminate it within the framework of ecotourism. The camp is also a place to save traditional cultures and lifestyles. Associations in France such as “*memories vives*” have the mission to collect the knowledge of the elders by transcribing it on paper and thus making it last much longer.

Internationally known as *la region verte*¹⁴, Casamance is famous for its nature. Ecotourism is typical of the region, but is still not valued as it should be. Hiking is probably the most important activity. It is necessary to design new nature-based products, accordingly to international standards so as to meet the expectations of local and foreign visitors. Among these products: pirogue excursions with fluvial routes, interpretation sessions of botanic discoveries in the forest.

V.3 Coordination of tourism activities and promotion

One of the main issues of rural tourism pointed out in Basse-Casamance is, without any doubt, the lack of coordination within the destination when it comes to make important decisions. This situation has made it difficult to have regional perspectives and objectives of tourism. But, it would be possible thanks to the establishments of regional **Department for Rural Tourism**. Such an organization would aim at coordinating every rural tourism related activity, designing routes with new products and services, and ultimately creating a brand new image of the destination for its promotion.

There are several solutions to structure the promotion of rural tourism in Casamance. Either, the camps promote themselves individually and go in partnership with hoteliers and specialized tour operators (POINT AFRIQUE, Origine Africa, Kaicedrat, Ecotour) to attract visitors. Each camp can also create communication supports on *flyers* and on the internet. They must communicate on cultural events to promote their destination.

Either, the camps are brought together and pass through a neutral structure which ensures their promotion by Internet for individuals and by travel agency for groups (by proposing the marketing of routes passing through the various camps). Private and village camps have the possibility of working together by offering routes to agencies or individuals via Internet.

¹³ Local rituals based on ancient beliefs

¹⁴ The green region in French

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The Internet tool has become essential for tourism promotion and it is largely under exploited by the actors of rural tourism in Casamance for lack of know-how and means. For this, it is necessary that this structure has the competence to develop a tourist product (logistics, security and guidance). Two structures exist to federate the camps, including the federation of village camps and the Ethics and Discovery Network (which federates private and communal structures with a view to sustainable tourism).

V.4 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning should be the first strategy suggested for rural tourism in Basse-Casamance, but knowing the emergency of the region, it seems logic to deal with it later. The south region of Senegal is characterized by informality, lack of controls, limited training of the local personnel, but also a recent participation of public entities in the joint management of environmental areas. Progressive interest was also identified from the population in establishing new initiatives for local development. The main issues that generate uncertainty in the region are: population movement, inter-institutional weakness and little involvement of the community with local politics. Faced with such a reality, Basse-Casamane requires a set of tourism policies and strategies that support the idea of responsible and sustainable tourism that benefits local development. Through the rise of quality and development of productive chains, it is needed to benefit the experiential actor of the tourist activity. The proposed policies are based on models of sustainable development, decentralized management, cultural revaluation, democratization of leisure, competitiveness and local contribution.

The Strategy of Product is meant to diversify the offer based on new tourist experiences that facilitate the arrival of visitors throughout the year minimizing considerably seasonality (which is an issue for tourism in Senegal). Rural Tourism is a driving force for local development, although. It needs considerable investment for international marketing.

Here are 3 rural tourism-orientated programs

Strengthening touristic decentralization

- Consolidation of decentralization of Tourism
- Assessment of local capacity.
- Training for decentralized municipalities.
- Municipal tourism management (tourism councils)

Development of touristic destination

- Execution of local plans of tourism dynamization.
- Integration of cultural heritage sites and tourism centers community to regional tourist destination

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- Consumption of local ecological products by tourists
- Municipal coordination for the rehabilitation, mapping and design of complementary facilities

Development and strengthening of rural tourism and cultural heritage

- Provision of basic services for rural areas and their people.
- Territory management by nationals
- Strengthening the cultural identity by locals
- Autonomous management of the territory.
- Productive initiatives to promote tourism centers

However, today, as the world is going through a deadly Covid-19 pandemic, the most urgent priority is to prepare the post crisis situation by communicating with tourists and travelers. The need to feel safe has never been as important as today. For Senegal in general, and Casamance in particular, it will be necessary to be coherent in the way of communication from airports to camps. The task is not only on the hands of tourism officials at national level, but also at medias' and political authorities'. The idea is to build and brand-image of a safe destination, to make sure the sanitary risk is rolled back. The current period must also be used to reflect on solutions to adapt the Basse-Casamance tourist offer to the post-covid: develop local tourism, find new markets, promote Business to Business and Business to Client models, and above all work with all skills in a constructive approach.

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Conclusion

To understand the difficulties of the camps, they must be put in the context of the crisis. The past twenty years have been so hard for the villagers that the enthusiasm to restart the tourist activity remains weakened. In this slow rebound of tourist arrivals, the camps managers find themselves in a complex situation. The lack of dynamism is threatening their activity. The actions proposed in the work are essential for rural tourism in Basse-Casamance as they set new paradigms. We have seen through the research the socioeconomic impacts of tourism activity in the establishments of basic social services such as health and education. This shows that tourism is rolling back the poverty we mentioned in the introduction. The overuse of common resources is not a serious topic in the region, probably because these rural areas are not meant to experience mass tourism in a long period.

The village camps are not structurally ready to receive a certain number of tourists. On the one hand, there is a gap between the demands of tourists and the services offered by locals. In fact, the infrastructures are old and the services unprofessional. The tourist offer does not necessarily meet the requirements of demand. On the other hand, the management method lacks rigor and suffers from the slowness of the community system (low reactivity, taking responsibility and rare initiatives, conflicts of interest, fears of judgments ...). Reinforcement in different areas is essential to support tourism stakeholders in Casamance: Professionalizing the methods of organization and management of village camps; Creating management tools; Rehabilitating village camps; Training workers in tourism management and hotels; Sensitizing people on the expectations of foreigners; Developing ecotourism products; Supporting the development of sectors related to tourism; Coordinating and promoting the actors of sustainable tourism in Casamance.

This support will involve financial and technical partnerships with different structures such as foreign cooperation and tourism organizations such as the Regional Tourism department, federations, trade-unions, tourism corporations, local communities, etc.

The research clearly shows the deficiency of camp managers in the management of their activity. Indeed, first of all, project holders need support, on the long run, for the professionalization of their camps. Those responsible (managers) must be encouraged to bring more rigor and rationality to the management and vivacity and activeness of the camps. To guarantee the success of projects and ensure their sustainability, it is necessary to take the time to set up solid fundamentals with qualified and trusted people.

This research provided an outside and professional perspective to help tourism authorities redirect their tourist activities in order to meet the requirements of the market. The administrative region of Ziguinchor counts on numerous assets to develop sustainable tourism directly benefiting local populations. The revival of tourism is a real challenge for the development of rural communities and the rebuilding of Basse-Casamance.

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Annex

QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Accommodation

1. The camp

Name	
Village	
Department	
Interviewee	
Manager name	
Contacts	
Year of foundation	

2. Infrastructure

Number of buildings	
Type (concrete, mud...)	
Roofing	
Revetment	
Inside lining (decoration, security, furnitures)	

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3. Personnel

Name	origin	role	studies	notes

4. Quality

	shape	cleanness	comfort	safety
Buildings				
Rooms				
Sanitation				
Furnitures				
Others				

5. Food assessment

Supply of products	
Origin of products	
Menus (local dishes, European ones)	
Quality (diversity, cleanness, coolness)	

II. Camping Management

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1. Way of managing

Distribution of roles	
Members election	
Frequency of meetings	
Foreign aids	
Profit use	

2. Economic indicators

	2017	2018
Annual night stays		
Average stay		
Annual turnover		
Room rate		

3. Training

Employees training	YES					NO
	Where	By who	when	content	certification	Why?
Precision						
Need of training						

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4. Touristic activities proposed to tourists

Name	place	guide	duration	Description	price

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