




ISSN: 2617-6548

URL: [www.ijirss.com](http://www.ijirss.com)



## Evaluation of the potential for community-based tourism development in Tra On district, Vinh Long province

 Thanh Xuan Duong

*Tay Do University, Vietnam.*

(Email: [dtxuan@tdu.edu.vn](mailto:dtxuan@tdu.edu.vn))

### Abstract

This article evaluates the potential for developing community-based tourism in Tra On district, Vinh Long province, within the context of sustainable tourism development. Using a mixed-method approach, including quantitative surveys of 198 participants and qualitative interviews, the study examines key factors such as tourism resources, infrastructure, community participation, policy support, and tourist demand. Findings indicate that Tra On possesses significant advantages in natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and local hospitality, yet still faces limitations in management capacity and regional connectivity. The author proposes solutions such as developing signature tourism products, enhancing community capacity, and improving local policies. These recommendations aim to effectively leverage the district's existing potential and position Tra On as an attractive and sustainable community-based tourism destination in the Mekong Delta region.

**Keywords:** Community-based tourism, Potential, Sustainable development, Tra On district.

**DOI:** 10.53894/ijirss.v8i4.8544

**Funding:** This study received no specific financial support.

**History:** Received: 21 May 2025 / Revised: 25 June 2025 / Accepted: 27 June 2025 / Published: 15 July 2025

**Copyright:** © 2025 by the author. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Competing Interests:** The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

**Transparency:** The author confirms that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

**Publisher:** Innovative Research Publishing

### 1. Introduction

In the context of sustainable development, community-based tourism (CBT) has emerged as an appropriate approach that harmonizes economic growth with cultural preservation and environmental protection. By emphasizing the active involvement of local people, CBT not only generates income but also strengthens cultural identity and raises community awareness about sustainability. Tra On district, located in Vinh Long province within the Mekong Delta region, is endowed with rich natural landscapes and a vibrant cultural heritage, including traditional festivals and craft villages. These features present considerable potential for developing CBT as a strategic direction to enhance livelihoods while promoting the uniqueness of the local area.

However, tourism activities in Tra On remain limited in scope and largely spontaneous. The lack of structured planning, weak infrastructure, and insufficient community engagement continues to hinder the full realization of its tourism potential. These challenges underscore the need for a comprehensive assessment of CBT development capacity at the local

level. This study aims to explore the key factors influencing CBT development in Tra On, providing insights that contribute to policy formulation and sustainable tourism planning. By identifying strengths and addressing existing gaps, the research aspires to support the district in building a distinctive and resilient community-based tourism model.

## **2. Literature Review and Research Methodology**

### *2.1. Literature Review*

Community-based tourism has emerged as a sustainable development model increasingly promoted in many developing countries, including Vietnam. CBT not only generates economic benefits for local communities but also contributes to preserving indigenous cultures and protecting the natural environment. According to Scheyvens [1] this model holds potential for empowering communities by expanding economic opportunities, enhancing social status, and reinforcing cultural identity. However, for CBT to be truly effective, it requires the genuine participation of local residents throughout all stages of tourism development [2].

A number of international studies have highlighted that factors such as local leadership, external support, and even elements of chance can significantly influence the success of CBT initiatives [3]. Moreover, policy backing, capacity-building programs, and investment in infrastructure from both governmental and non-governmental organizations play a vital role in supporting these efforts [4, 5]. Nevertheless, CBT faces several ongoing challenges, including conflicts of interest, unequal benefit distribution, and the risk of cultural commodification [6, 7].

In Vietnam, CBT has gained attention since the early 2000s and has seen notable growth in regions such as the Northern Highlands, Central Highlands, and the Mekong Delta. According to Le and Tran [8], the model in Vietnam benefits from increasing trends in experiential tourism, interest in cultural exploration, and policies related to rural development. However, several barriers persist, including limited organizational capacity, weak coordination among stakeholders, and uneven community awareness [9].

Domestic research also underscores CBT's role in safeguarding traditional culture and promoting sustainable livelihoods, particularly in ethnic minority areas and regions rich in natural resources [10]. The central question, however, is how to harness local potential in a way that ensures economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Against this backdrop, Tra On district in Vinh Long Province presents a promising case for assessing the feasibility of CBT development. The area is endowed with a rich cultural heritage, scenic landscapes, and traditional craft villages. By drawing from international experience, analyzing domestic practices, and identifying local conditions, this study aims to lay a solid theoretical and practical foundation for developing a sustainable CBT model in Tra On.

### *2.2. Research Methodology*

#### *2.2.1. Quantitative Method*

This study employed a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 – Strongly Disagree to 5 – Strongly Agree) to assess perceptions from different stakeholder groups regarding community-based tourism development in Tra On district [11, 12]. The survey sample consisted of 198 participants, categorized into four key groups: 170 tourists, 20 local residents, 3 officials from cultural and tourism authorities, and 5 representatives of travel businesses.

The questionnaire was designed to investigate five primary factors:

- (X<sub>1</sub>) Tourism resources
- (X<sub>2</sub>) Infrastructure and tourism services
- (X<sub>3</sub>) Local community participation
- (X<sub>4</sub>) Development potential and supporting policies
- (X<sub>5</sub>) Tourist demand and perceptions

After cleaning the data, statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS software [13]. Analytical techniques included descriptive statistics, reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha, and correlation or linear regression analysis where appropriate [14].

The general form of the linear regression model applied was:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y: Overall assessment of community-based tourism development potential

X<sub>1</sub> – X<sub>5</sub>: Independent variables representing influencing factors

$\beta$ : Regression coefficients

$\varepsilon$ : Random error term

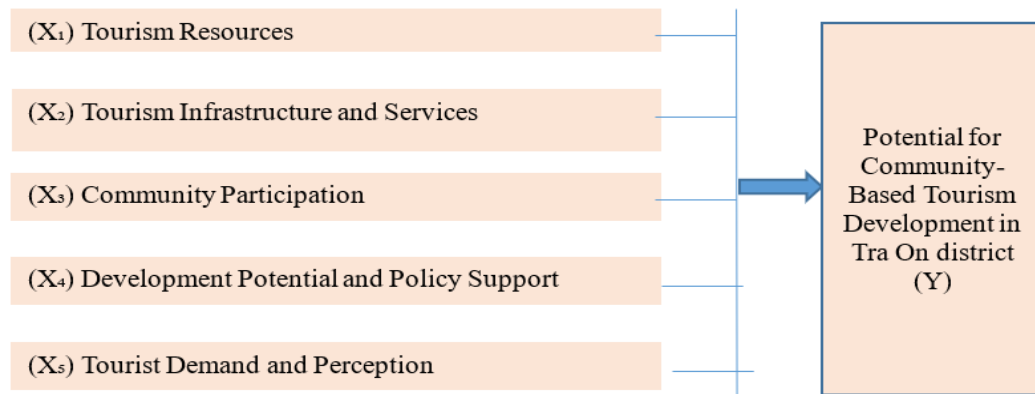
#### *2.2.2. Qualitative Approach*

In addition to the quantitative method, a qualitative approach was also employed to gain deeper insights into the research findings. This included field observations, semi-structured interviews, and consultations with local government officials and tourism businesses [12, 15]. Content analysis was applied to enhance the interpretation of quantitative data and to better identify practical constraints and context-specific solutions.

Key themes explored included: the readiness of local communities to engage in tourism activities, the effectiveness of current policy support mechanisms, and barriers related to skills, infrastructure, and regional connectivity.

#### *2.2.3. Conceptual Research Model*

A conceptual model was developed to illustrate the relationships between the identified factors and the potential for CBT development in Tra On district.



**Figure 1.**  
Conceptual framework for evaluating the potential of community-based tourism in Tra On district.

### 3. Research Findings and Discussion

#### 3.1. Overview of Community-Based Tourism Activities in Tra On District

Tra On district, located in Vinh Long Province in the Mekong Delta region, is known for its diverse ecosystems and characteristic riverine landscapes. This locality boasts great potential for tourism development due to its rich traditional culture, local craft villages, and destinations reflecting the authentic rural lifestyle. In the context of increasing interest in sustainable tourism and local experiences, community-based tourism in Tra On is considered a feasible approach to harness local values and improve residents' livelihoods. The development of this tourism type not only contributes to preserving traditional culture but also promotes sustainable socio-economic development for the district, adding a unique appeal to Vinh Long's tourism map.

**Table 1.**  
Major Tourism Resources in Tra On District.

Resource Type	Tourism Resource	Notable Features
Floating Market	Tra On Floating Market	Vibrant from morning to evening, features boats selling fruits and produce typical of the Mekong Delta culture.
River Islet	Cu Lao May	Lush fruit gardens, a traditional rice paper-making village, and fresh air are ideal for ecotourism.
Ancient Pagoda	Long An Ancient Pagoda	Ancient architecture, solemn ambiance, attractive spiritual destination.
Traditional Craft Village	Rice paper craft village in Cu Lao May	Over 100 years of tradition, diverse specialty rice papers.
Ethnic Minority Culture	Khmer Culture	Including traditional festivals such as Chol Chnam Thmay, the unique architecture of Khmer pagodas, distinctive culinary traditions, and the Khmer language.
Intangible Cultural Heritage	Lang Ong Tien Quan Thong Che Dieu Bat Festival	National intangible cultural heritage showcases local cultural identity.
Art & Culture	Folk singing, Don ca tai tu (Southern amateur music)	Western Vietnam's intangible cultural heritage reflects local life and spirit, attracting visitors.
Local Fruits	Mangosteen, durian, rambutan, pomelo, etc.	Economic value and tourism potential through experiential activities.
Cuisine	Tra On burnt fish, grilled field rat, crab hotpot, stir-fried snails, grilled goby in reed tubes	Rich flavors, typical of the Mekong Delta.

Tra On district boasts a rich variety of tourism resources deeply rooted in local culture. The bustling Tra On floating market reflects the vibrant river life of the Mekong Delta, offering a unique glimpse into traditional trade practices. Cu Lao May, with its lush fruit orchards and century-old rice paper craft village, provides an ideal setting for eco-tourism and hands-on cultural experiences. Long An ancient pagoda stands out with its serene atmosphere and timeless architecture, attracting visitors interested in spiritual journeys. The rice paper village on Cu Lao May also showcases the enduring value of traditional craftsmanship. Meanwhile, Khmer cultural heritage shines through colorful festivals like Chol Chnam Thmay, distinctive temple designs, and traditional cuisine, enriching the area's cultural tapestry. Intangible heritages such as the Lang Ong Tien Quan Thong Che Dieu Bat festival and the art of don ca tai tu (southern folk music) add depth and character, drawing visitors closer to local life. A wide variety of tropical fruits like mangosteen, durian, rambutan, and pomelo further enhance the destination's appeal, especially for agri-tourism. Local specialties grilled field rat, ca chay fish,

crab hotpot, and oc lak snails complete the experience with rich and authentic Mekong flavors. Together, these resources form a strong foundation for developing sustainable and community-based tourism in Tra On.

**Table 2.**  
Community-Based Ecotourism Sites in Tra On district.

Location	Type	Address / Location	Activities
Tra On Homestay	Homestay	201/1, Area 3, Tra On Town	Local life experiences, suitable for small groups or families
Tam Trong Tourist Area	Ecotourism site	Phu Xuan Hamlet, Phu Thanh Commune	Fruit garden visits, fishing, riverboat rides
Tra On Ecotourism Area	Ecotourism site	Cu Lao May (Lục Sĩ Thanh – Phu Thanh)	Fruit garden tours, food tasting, folk games
Bay Gat Tourism Site	Community tourism site	Xuan Hiep Commune	Experience traditional agriculture and rural life
Co Tu Tra On Homestay	Homestay	Tra On Town	Traditional Southern-style homestay, cozy atmosphere
Tu Du Ecotourism	Ecotourism site	Thien My Commune	Fruit garden tours, rustic meals, folk games

Community-based tourism models in Tra On currently showcase a diverse range of forms and experiences, spread across key areas such as Tra On town, Phu Thanh, Thien My, Luc Si Thanh, and Xuan Hiep. Homestay options like Homestay Co Tu and Homestay Tra On offer visitors a chance to engage with the everyday life of local people in an authentic Mekong Delta setting. Meanwhile, eco-tourism sites such as Tam Trong, Tu Do, and the Tra On ecological area on Cu Lao May make effective use of the region's orchard gardens and river landscapes, blending in local cuisine and folk games to enrich the visitor experience. Bay Gat community site in Xuan Hiep is a notable example of tourism integrated with traditional farming, reflecting the area's agricultural identity. Overall, these destinations provide a solid foundation for Tra On to expand and enhance its community-based tourism initiatives in the coming years.

### 3.2. Potential for Community-Based Tourism Development in Tra On district

The study assessing the potential for community-based tourism development in Tra On district involved four key stakeholder groups: 170 tourists, 20 local residents, 3 local government officials (at district/commune levels), and 5 travel businesses with either existing or potential partnerships in Tra On. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, focusing on elements such as tourism resources, infrastructure, services, community engagement, development potential, supporting policies, and visitor perceptions. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

### 3.3. Tourism Resources

**Table 3.**  
Evaluation of Tourism Resources.

No.	Criterion	Average Score	Standard Deviation
1	Attractiveness of natural landscapes	4.07	0.15
2	Preservation of natural attractions	3.93	0.15
3	Uniqueness of festivals and local customs	4.16	0.10
4	Maintenance of historical sites and craft villages	3.97	0.10
5	Overall appeal of tourist destinations	4.08	0.12

Source: Survey conducted in June 2025, n=198

Survey results reveal that Tra On's tourism resources are generally rated from "good" to "very good," with average scores ranging from 3.93 to 4.16. The relatively low standard deviation (0.10–0.15) indicates a high level of agreement among stakeholder groups. The district boasts abundant cultural and natural assets, particularly in terms of traditional customs and local identity. Nonetheless, challenges remain in conserving natural resources and leveraging heritage value. A well-defined strategy and targeted investment will be essential. The high overall appeal score suggests strong potential for sustainable community-based tourism growth in the future.

### 3.4. Tourism Infrastructure and Services

**Table 4.**  
Evaluation of Infrastructure and Services.

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Average Score	Standard Deviation
1	Accessibility and transportation	3.6	0.9
2	Availability of suitable accommodations	3.8	0.7
3	Variety and safety of food services	3.7	0.8
4	Availability of tourist support services	3.5	1.0
5	Overall rating of infrastructure and services	3.7	0.85

Source: Survey conducted in June 2025, n=198

The survey results on tourism infrastructure and services in Tra On district indicate a generally positive level of visitor satisfaction, with an overall average score of 3.7 out of 5. Accommodation facilities received the highest rating (3.8 points, standard deviation 0.7), suggesting that most tourists felt secure and satisfied with the current lodging conditions. Food services were also viewed favorably (3.7 points), reflecting both variety and safety in local culinary offerings. Meanwhile, transportation infrastructure (3.6 points) and visitor support services (3.5 points) showed room for improvement. Notably, support services had the highest standard deviation (1.0), indicating a wider range of opinions among respondents. These findings provide a valuable foundation for guiding future investments in infrastructure upgrades and service quality enhancements, aiming toward more effective and sustainable development of community-based tourism in the area.

### 3.5. Community Engagement

**Table 5.**

Community Participation in Tourism.

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Average Score	Standard Deviation
1	Awareness of CBT among residents	4.1	0.65
2	Willingness to participate in tourism activities	4.2	0.70
3	Tourism service skills among locals	3.8	0.75
4	Community involvement in tourism management	3.6	0.80
5	Economic benefits from tourism to locals	4.0	0.60

Source: Survey conducted in June 2025, n = 23

Feedback from local participants (20 residents and 3 local officials) indicates a relatively strong level of community involvement in CBT, with an average score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.70. Respondents rated local awareness, enthusiasm, and perceived economic benefits positively. Notably, many locals expressed interest in participating in homestay hosting, local culinary services, and guiding. However, skill limitations and minimal involvement in tourism management remain challenges that require targeted training and capacity building to ensure long-term development.

### 3.6. Development Potential and Policy Support

**Table 6.**

Development Potential and Policy Support.

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Average Score	Standard Deviation
1	Supportive local policies	4.2	0.65
2	Investment or assistance from organizations	4.0	0.72
3	Regional linkage in tourism development	3.9	0.84
4	Clarity of development planning	3.8	0.78
5	Overall CBT development potential	4.3	0.58

Source: Survey conducted in June 2025, n=28.

The results presented in Table 6 indicate that the potential for developing community-based tourism in Tra On district is viewed positively, with an overall average score of 4.3 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.58, suggesting a high level of agreement among respondents. Factors such as government support policies (4.2) and investment or assistance from external organizations (4.0) received favorable evaluations, highlighting the notable role of both public and external resources. However, aspects like regional connectivity (3.9) and particularly the clarity of development planning (3.8) scored slightly lower, with higher standard deviations, reflecting more diverse opinions or some level of uncertainty. These findings suggest the need for targeted solutions to strengthen inter-regional collaboration and improve strategic planning, thereby ensuring the sustainable growth of community-based tourism in the area.

### 3.7. Tourist Perceptions and Demand

**Table 7.**

Tourist Perceptions and Demand.

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Average Score	Standard Deviation
1	Satisfaction with CBT experiences	4.2	0.7
2	Likelihood of return visits	4.0	0.9
3	Willingness to recommend to others	4.3	0.8

Source: Survey conducted in June 2025, n=170

The results presented in Table 7 indicate generally positive feedback from tourists regarding community-based tourism experiences in Tra On district. The average satisfaction score is 4.2, with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.7, suggesting a broad consensus among respondents. This implies that most visitors had favorable impressions of the local tourism offerings.

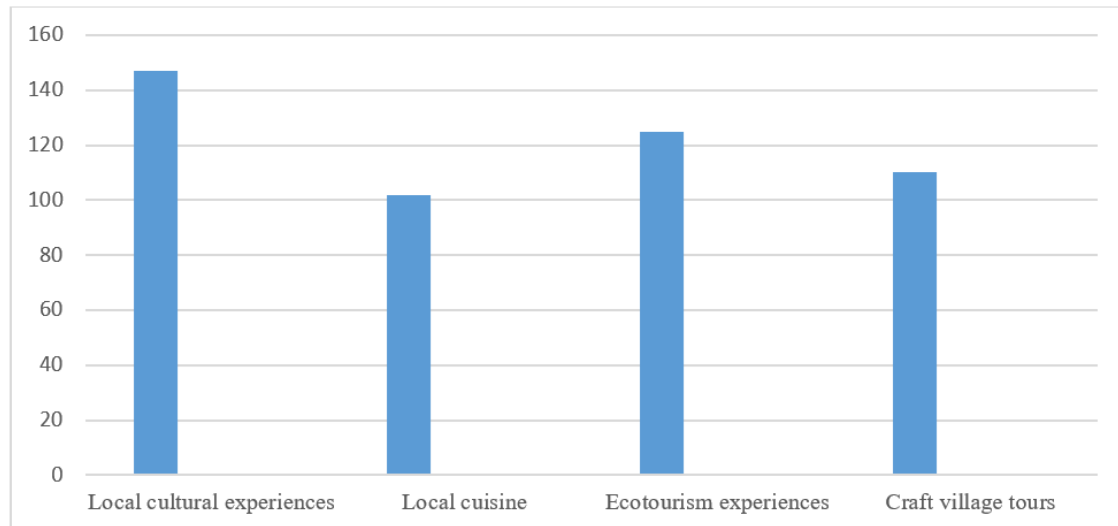
The intention to return on future trips scored an average of 4.0. Although slightly lower than the other indicators, this still reflects promising potential for encouraging repeat visits, especially as community-based tourism in the area is still in

the process of development. The standard deviation of 0.9 suggests some variation in responses, hinting at areas where service quality and visitor experiences could be further improved to strengthen destination loyalty.

Notably, the willingness to recommend Tra On to friends and family received the highest score, averaging 4.3. This is a positive indicator that tourists not only enjoyed their visit but are also inclined to share their experiences with others a critical factor in promoting community tourism through word-of-mouth and digital platforms.

Overall, the survey results suggest that Tra On's community-based tourism leaves a favorable impression on visitors and holds considerable potential for sustainable growth.

Continued investment in enhancing service quality and diversifying tourism products will be key to maintaining momentum and attracting both returning and new visitors in the future.



**Figure 2.**

Tourist Preferences for Community-Based Tourism Experiences in Tra On district.

Source: Survey conducted in June 2025, n=170.

The chart illustrates tourists' preferences for various types of community-based tourism experiences in Tra On, highlighting both diversity in visitor interests and the locality's rich development potential. Most favored are local cultural experiences, indicating that travelers are especially drawn to exploring indigenous lifestyles, customs, and traditional values. This suggests that Tra On's cultural heritage is a key asset that should be preserved and thoughtfully promoted. Ecotourism activities come next, reflecting tourists' growing interest in nature-based experiences well aligned with the region's rivers, fruit orchards, and rural landscapes. Local cuisine and craft village tours also attract significant attention, underscoring the appeal of everyday cultural expressions and local specialties. These findings affirm that community-based tourism in Tra On holds considerable promise, especially if development strategies focus on sustainability and authenticity rooted in local identity.

### 3.8. Comprehensive Assessment of the Potential for Community-Based Tourism Development in Tra on District

**Table 8.**

Summary of Survey Results on Community-Based Tourism Resources in Tra On district.

No.	Variable Group	Average Score	Evaluation Level
1	Tourism Resources	4.04	Good
2	Tourism Infrastructure and Services	3.66	Fair
3	Community Participation	3.94	Fair
4	Development Potential & Policy Support	4.04	Good
5	Tourist Demand and Perception	4.17	Very Good

The survey results indicate that the potential for community-based tourism development in Tra On district is relatively positive. Among the evaluated factors, both "Tourism Resources" and "Development Potential & Policy Support" received an average score of 4.04, classified as "Good," reflecting advantages in natural and cultural resources and support from local authorities. "Tourism Infrastructure and Services" and "Community Participation" were rated as "Fair," with scores of 3.66 and 3.94 respectively, suggesting areas needing improvement to enhance visitor experience and increase local community involvement in tourism activities. These results reaffirm that Tra On has a favorable foundation for sustainable community-based tourism development, provided that appropriate strategies and investments are implemented.

### *3.9. Proposed Solutions for Developing Community-Based Tourism in Tra On*

Based on the analysis of potentials and current conditions, to develop sustainable community-based tourism in Tra On district, it is essential to implement a series of coordinated solutions tailored to the local realities and specific characteristics of each commune and destination.

#### *3.9.1. First, Develop Distinctive tourism Products Associated with Local Cultural and Ecological Values*

To promote sustainable community-based tourism in Tra On, it is important to focus on creating tourism products that bear a strong local identity, reflecting traditional cultural values while effectively leveraging the ecological strengths of the riverine landscape. Tra On boasts a diverse ecosystem, with an intricate network of canals, fruit-laden orchards, and a unique cultural space shaped by the Khmer, Kinh, and Hoa communities. This provides favorable conditions to build experiential tours linked to local livelihoods, daily life, and traditional beliefs.

Initiatives like “A Day Making Rice Paper” on Cu Lao May (Luc Si Thanh commune) not only allow visitors to better understand long-standing traditional crafts but also engage locals directly in the tourism value chain. Visiting Tra On floating market at dawn offers tourists an authentic taste of river life, from boat-based trading scenes to the vibrant calls of vendors selling regional specialties. Additionally, agro-ecological tours with homestay options in fruit gardens of Phu Thanh and Thien My are well aligned with the growing demand for green and environmentally friendly tourism.

Moreover, tapping into spiritual culture and traditional festivals can add unique highlights to Tra On’s tourism offerings. Celebrations such as Chol Chnam Thmay (Khmer New Year) by the Khmer in Tan My commune, or the Lang Ong Festival in Tra Con commune, could be incorporated into exploration itineraries, offering culturally rich and memorable experiences. Evening performances of don ca tai tu music, especially those paying tribute to legendary cai luong (Vietnamese reformed theater) artist Ut Tra On, can enrich the emotional connection between visitors and the land.

#### *3.9.2. Second, Improve Infrastructure and Enhance Service Quality*

One of the key conditions for sustainable community tourism development in Tra On is upgrading current infrastructure and tourism services.

Tourist spots such as Tam Trong eco-tourism site (Phu Thanh), Bay Gat community-based tourism site (Xuan Hiep), and various homestays in Tra On town demonstrate significant potential but still face limitations regarding facilities. Investment is necessary to enhance accommodation standards, sanitation systems, signage, parking, and safety while maintaining the unique local cultural elements.

Transport connectivity between the district center and tourism-potential communes such as Luc Si Thanh, Thien My, and Tra Con should also be expanded and regularly maintained to facilitate travel and enhance the tourist experience. Alongside physical infrastructure, the human factor is equally important. Locals should be trained in customer service, communication, and hospitality to improve overall service quality.

The local government should implement supportive policies to develop “local homestay” models connected with organic farming, gardening experiences, traditional cooking, and cultural exploration. This model not only generates income for residents but also helps preserve and spread the unique cultural identity of Tra On to a wider audience.

#### *3.9.3. Third, Enhance Capacity Building and Training for Local Communities*

Sustainable community tourism development relies on the active and capable participation of local people. In communes with high potential, such as Vinh Xuan, Tra Con, and Phu Thanh, targeted training programs should be implemented. These should include communication and customer service skills, on-site guiding, homestay management, and showcasing regional cuisine.

Furthermore, the district authority should collaborate with universities offering tourism programs and travel agencies to launch “learning tourism with the community” initiatives. These programs allow students to gain real-world experience while simultaneously providing hands-on training for locals.

This dual-benefit approach improves local skills, generates early income, and gradually builds confidence and professional attitudes in tourism activities. It also fosters a culture of respectful, professional, and identity-driven tourism development.

#### *3.9.4. Fourth, Improve Policy Support and Strengthen Regional Linkages*

To ensure sustainable community tourism, Tra On’s government needs to urgently develop a clear action plan for 2025–2030. Key areas with outstanding potential, such as Cu Lao May with its rich orchards and traditional craft villages, Tra On floating market representing vibrant river culture, or rural communes like Thien My and Tra Con rich in local heritage should receive prioritized and focused investment to form specialized tourism clusters balancing conservation and development.

At the same time, supportive policies must be implemented, particularly offering low-interest loans to households wishing to invest in tourism services such as homestays, local food, and guiding.

The district should also assist in establishing OCOP (One Commune One Product) display and sales points, both to boost local livelihoods and to strengthen the region’s tourism identity.

A key strategy is to foster interregional cooperation. Linking with neighboring areas such as Binh Tan (Vinh Long), Ninh Kieu (Can Tho), or My Tu (Soc Trang) can help build appealing interprovincial tourism routes that blend waterway experiences, orchard visits, folk culture, and regional cuisine.



Through this approach, Tra On can transform from a single destination into a vital connector within the Mekong Delta tourism network.

#### 3.9.5. Fifth, Apply Digital Transformation in Tourism Promotion and Management

In the context of rapid technological advancement, adopting digital solutions is crucial to improve the promotion and management of community-based tourism in Tra On. One strategic move is to develop a comprehensive digital map of major attractions such as the floating market, Cu Lao May, the rice paper craft village, and various orchards. This map should be integrated into platforms like Google Maps, Zalo, and Facebook to enhance accessibility for both domestic and international visitors.

Implementing QR codes at each tourist spot can offer modern and interactive experiences. With a simple scan, visitors can access historical backgrounds, photos, videos, and reviews from past travelers.

The district should also establish an official online tourism portal dedicated to Tra On community-based tourism. This portal would serve as a central hub connecting tourists with local service providers, offering detailed tour information, prices, schedules, and optional services. Online booking, activity registration, and visitor feedback collection can all be integrated to enable professional, transparent, and flexible management, thus enhancing both service quality and brand identity in the eyes of modern travelers.

#### 3.9.6. Sixth, Develop Complementary Products and Enhance Destination Appeal

To enrich tourist experiences and extend their stay in Tra On, investing in supplementary products is crucial. Local specialties such as Cu Lao May rice paper, fermented tofu (chao), and soft tofu (tau hu) from Khu 10B are not only delicious but also hold potential as culturally valuable souvenirs. Additionally, handcrafted products made from water hyacinth in Tra Con and Vinh Xuan can be refined into high-quality, practical items that preserve traditional crafts while expanding market reach.

Beyond physical products, seasonal cultural-tourism events should be given greater attention. Organizing a "Fruit Garden Week" in Luc Si Thanh during harvest season would create opportunities for interaction between tourists and farmers, while boosting sales of fresh produce. Similarly, an annual "Don Ca Tai Tu Festival" in Tra On town could honor this unique Southern art form and enrich the community's cultural life.

Culinary showcases featuring dishes like grilled goby in bamboo tubes, roasted field rat, or coconut heart pancakes would create a distinct culinary identity and attract tourists through genuine and memorable local experiences.

If implemented comprehensively and flexibly, these strategies have the potential to significantly boost community-based tourism in Tra On, helping preserve local heritage while generating sustainable livelihoods for its residents.

## 4. Conclusion

Community-based tourism is increasingly recognized as a sustainable development approach in many localities. Among them, Tra On district in Vinh Long province stands out for its rich potential, including riverine landscapes, folk culture, and traditional handicraft villages. Based on fieldwork and analysis, this study affirms that Tra On possesses the core elements needed to develop CBT effectively, such as unique tourism resources, initial support from local authorities, and growing interest from visitors. However, several limitations remain, including inadequate infrastructure, insufficient service skills among local residents, and weak regional linkages.

To ensure sustainable development, a comprehensive strategy is required, one that focuses on enhancing community capacity, prioritizing investment in distinctive tourism sites, and promoting active local participation in tourism operations. Integrating cultural preservation with innovation in tourism organizations is essential for Tra On to build a unique identity within the tourism landscape of the Mekong Delta.

With proper orientation and collaborative efforts among stakeholders, Tra On has the potential to become a model of successful community-based tourism that delivers both economic benefits and long-term cultural value.

## References

- [1] R. Scheyvens, "Ecotourism and the empowerment of local communities," *Tourism Management*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 245-249, 1999. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0261-5177\(98\)00069-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0261-5177(98)00069-7)
- [2] A. Giampiccoli and M. Saayman, "Community-based tourism development: A critical review of theoretical approaches," *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 1-18, 2014.
- [3] N. Kontogeorgopoulos, A. Churyen, and V. Duangsaeng, "Success factors in community-based tourism in Thailand: The role of luck, external support, and local leadership," *Tourism Planning & Development*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 106-124, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2013.852991>
- [4] S. Asker, L. Boronyak, N. Carrard, and M. Paddon, *Effective community based tourism: A best practice manual for Australia's coastal tourism*. Gold Coast, QLD, Australia: Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, 2010.
- [5] UNWTO, *Making tourism more sustainable: A guide for policy makers*. Madrid, Spain: United Nations Environment Programme and World Tourism Organization, 2020.
- [6] N. B. Salazar, "Community-based cultural tourism: Issues, threats and opportunities," *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 9-22, 2012.
- [7] H. Goodwin and R. Santilli, "Community-based tourism: A success?," 2009.
- [8] H. P. Le and T. M. P. Tran, "Community-based tourism in Vietnam: Opportunities and challenges," *Vietnam Tourism Review*, vol. 6, pp. 18-22, 2020.
- [9] H. T. Nguyen and T. M. H. Tran, "Community-based tourism development in Vietnam – Current situation and solutions," *Vietnam Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 5, pp. 25-32, 2020.



- [10] T. H. T. Nguyen and T. M. H. Nguyen, "Developing community-based tourism associated with preserving indigenous culture in Northern mountainous Vietnam," *Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 4, pp. 45–53, 2021.
- [11] D. T. Nguyen, *Scientific research methods in business*. Hanoi: Labor and Social Publishing House, 2011.
- [12] J. W. Creswell, *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014.
- [13] General Statistics Office, *Guidelines for using SPSS software in sociological data analysis*. Hanoi: Statistical Publishing House, 2020.
- [14] J. F. Hair, W. C. Black, B. J. Babin, and R. E. Anderson, *Multivariate data analysis*, 7th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2014.
- [15] M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2002.