

N baabaa la baa be baabaa kono: My  
Father's Goat is in the Big River [Again!].  
Reflections on fostering cultural  
interaction and learning through student  
field trips in The Gambia, West Africa.

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# Academic Rationale For Field Trips

- Teacher centred approach (Xie 2004)
- Participation in real life context = many benefits (Boud et al 1993)
- Chickering and Zelda (1987) :
  - students understand abstract concepts better
  - use their experiences for future research,
  - are able to test theories and compare different sources of data,
  - instructors become more enthusiastic about the course.

# Tourism Field Trip Rationale

- Issues in context
- Learning
- Not be part of 'the problem'
- Socio-cultural interaction

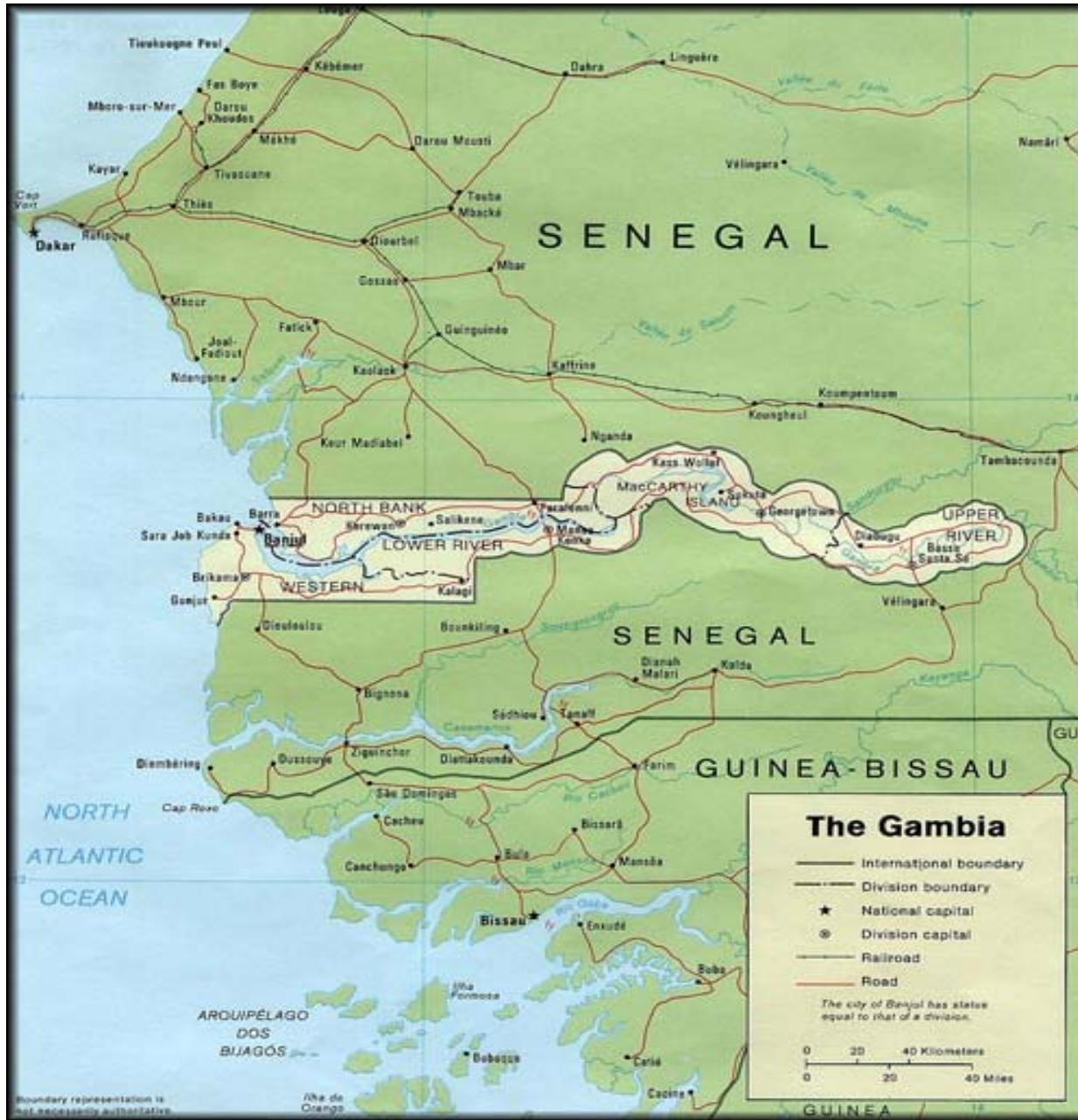
# **Tourism Field Trip Requirements (Learning)**

- Anticipate and build in learning opportunities
- Provide a means of evidencing learning
- Create space, time and the means for reflection

# Tourism Field Trip Requirements (socio-cultural/destination)

- Motivation (Cohen 1972; Fisher & Price 1991)
- Broker (Cheong & Miller 2000; Wearing & McDonald 2002)
- Gain cultural currency
- Create space for encounters (Bleasdale and Tapsells 1999)
- Create time for encounters

# Why choose The Gambia?



### Day 1

Arrival Banjul. Met by cultural broker Gam-World taken to hotel in Tourism Development Area, Kotu.

### Day 2

Visit to Arch 22 a symbol of modernity and one of the largest buildings in the city built to commemorate the bloodless coup of 22nd July 1994.

Visit to local market.

Visit to Banjul National Museum, documenting the material culture of The Gambia.

Visit to Tanje Village Museum, 'the whole of The Gambia under one roof'

Visit to Tanje Fishing Village.

Evening talk on tourism in The Gambia by Gambia Tourist Authority representatives.

### Day 3

Depart for the ferry crossing point in Banjul.

Cross and depart for Tendaba ecotourism camp & conference centre located opposite the Baobolong Wetlands travelling on north bank of river.

### Day 4

Visit to Tendaba village. Group split up into pairs and invited into the villagers' homes.

Language lesson.

Culture lesson.

### Day 5

Depart for Kanilai camp in the Presidents' village Sindola.

Cultural entertainment.

### Day 6

Depart for Tumani Tenda eco-tourism camp, situated 25 km East of Brikama and 3 km from Kafatu.

Meeting with the village Chief/Alikalo.

Tour of the village.

Tour of the village market garden.

Opportunity to assist with lunch preparation.

Cultural entertainment by all village members: Marriage Ceremony.

### Day 7

Opportunity for students to be interviewed on radio programme at West Coast Radio.

Opportunity for students to be interviewed on national television.

Cultural entertainment at Faji Kunda Village for performance by Jalikebba and the Voice of Manding (Afro-Jamano traditional new generation music).

### Day 8

Visit to International Business College Banjul for Tourism Careers Conference.

Depart for the UK.

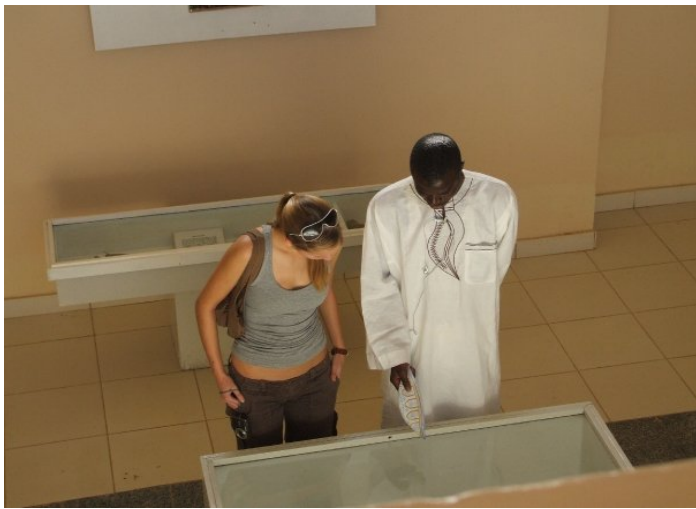
# Enclave Tourism: The tourist bubble





Acquiring cultural currency





Activity	Anticipated Learning Opportunity (ALO)	Learning Evidence in student journals
<b>Day 2, The Gambia National Museum, Banjul</b>	ALO •Information Gathering  •Context Setting	<p>“Learnt a lot about the whole of Gambia, especially Banjul. Also learnt about the recent Mayors and Chairmen of Gambia and about Gambian music”</p> <p>“Learning the different colours on the flag was quite interesting. The three colours represent different things red is sun, blue is Gambia river, green is agriculture white in between stand for peace and purity”</p> <p>“It was too much information with whole plaques with written info, too much to read.....and it was a bit unorganized. What I read was interesting however it didn’t grab me and it might have been the heat or not enough water but I couldn’t concentrate and felt a bit lost in a way”</p> <p>“There was a great deal of information there.....I felt we may have learnt more if pieces of writing were cut down, as there was a lot to take in”</p>



TANJE  
VILLAGE MUSEUM  
THE REAL  
GAMBIAN NATURE  
AND CULTURE  
EXPERIENCE



<p><b>Day 2 Tanjee Village Museum. Open Air and interactive</b></p>	<p>ALO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Information Gathering</li> <li>•Context Setting</li> <li>•Sense Making Experience</li> <li>•Active Learning</li> </ul>	<p>“ Excellent way of learning about the Gambian traditional way of life enjoyed the music at the end”</p> <p>“Something I found very interesting in Tanji museum was the trees that are used for illnesses. It is amazing how people use everything what’s around them to survive and provide food”</p> <p>“I really enjoyed this trip to the village museum we could touch and feel the articles in the museum, watch a craftsman weave and musicians perform. We got actively involved and I thoroughly enjoyed myself”</p> <p>“very informative, hands-on museum we could experience former life style”</p> <p>“loved the hands on instruments, although I have no rhythm I tried the drums with mixed results “</p>
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**Day 3  
Language  
lesson  
(Up  
country)**

- ALO
- Experience
  - Rote Learning & Memorisation

"Afterwards we tried to talk to some of the children who don't talk any English and they actually understood us!"

"The language lesson was educational and made me feel more comfortable because I could actually greet people/staff around the camp without being a complete idiotic tourist who refused to speak in the country's native tongue"

"Asalaama Leekum... I really, really enjoyed the language lesson we had I wish we would have had more. After the lesson I directly had a little conversation with a girl from the village in Mandinka"



<p><b>Day 2 Evening lecture on the Gambia Tourism Master Plan by Gambia Tourist Authority representatives</b></p>	<p>ALO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Information Gathering</li> <li>•Context Setting</li> <li>•Integration of new knowledge with old</li> </ul>	<p>“The talk is really interesting and useful as we are doing Gambia in our marketing presentation”</p> <p>“Very educational. Learnt a lot about Gambia and its marketing and human resources and future plans. Interesting to see what other countries do compared to England and how they go about things”</p> <p>“We learnt that the UK and Scandinavia are the largest markets. We also learnt that customer service, education training for locals are the main priorities within the country in order to get repeat visitors and to ensure the Gambia remains a very friendly country”</p> <p>“I found the talk fascinating on every level and was able to relate it back to almost every area that I have studied in the last three years”</p> <p>“The talk lasted for about an hour and was very interesting and educational, as I could relate what they were saying to the subjects at uni. At the end I asked a question on female sex tourism, and the answer given was very good and will be used in our sex tourism presentation”</p>
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# Contact Spaces



<p><b>Day 2</b> <b>Tanjee</b> <b>Fishing</b> <b>village</b></p>	<p>ALO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Experiencing</li> <li>●Context Setting</li> <li>●Sense Making experience</li> <li>●Challenging perceptions</li> </ul>	<p>“I really did not understand the purpose of this visit ”</p> <p>“Did not enjoy this experience at all. It was difficult to know what we were suppose to do”</p> <p>“It was very upsetting moment and very eye-opening how spoilt western society is, nevertheless I think it was a necessary experience makes you understand why tourists only stay in the hotel complex and never go outside! Nobody wants to ruin their holiday by looking at the reality. I would try to do something like that in a <u>more respectful</u> way next time (or maybe it was just me who felt really embarrassed)”</p> <p>“made us quite guilty. It was educational on the other hand, as it made me think about how to do something for others”</p> <p>“Humbling, frustrating, angry, upset. Initially I found it really hard to understand why we had to see this aspect of Gambian life. But then realised that a holistic view of the Gambian way of life helped see how tourism development could help the region economically, and how the Gambian government needed to find a way for the nation to receive tourists and behave in a way that was benefiting to the country”</p>
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Wel Come  
To  
TENDABA CAMP





<p><b>Day 3 &amp; 4 Tendaba Ecocamp &amp; Tendaba Village (Up country)</b></p>	<p>ALO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Experience</li> <li>•Context setting</li> <li>•Sense making</li> <li>•Gathering new information</li> <li>•Active Learning</li> </ul>	<p>“This was an amazing experience. We had the opportunity to interact with the local community and get a greater understanding of their culture”</p> <p>“This was a brilliant experience, it was a more authentic experience of what Gambia is like”</p> <p>“Tendaba camp was a great example for a sustainable tourism camp”</p> <p>“The walk around Tendaba village provided a great insight into the way locals actually live. Very graphic and emotional especially the living conditions but they seemed very happy and pleased to greet you but for what benefit to them? It was hard to see the pros and con’s that tourism was bringing to their community”</p>
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- “A real eye opening experience/event. We had a girl with us she lived in the village and she was our guide, showed the village around and explained all the cultural elements of their society. She showed us how they live, how they cook and just their general everyday life. It was all very fascinating and at the same time very shocking. We went to see our guide Jainata’s house, where we danced with her and her friends. It was a real cultural experience, where we were an active participant and had a real taste of their culture. Further walking through the village we saw women who were washing their clothes, cleaning their homes and preparing their dinner. This was an educational experience and made me appreciate what I have at home. It was great to see how other people lived in another country from a ‘more than a tourist’ point of view. This event gave us more I find myself constantly comparing the way of life at home to things here”
- “More than a ‘touristic’ experience, we were able to really engage with the event, made us become an active participant and gave me a real feel for their culture.”







<p><b>Day 6</b>  <b>Tumani</b>  <b>Tende</b>  <b>Ecocamp</b>  <b>(Up</b>  <b>country)</b></p>	<p>ALO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Experience</li> <li>•Context setting</li> <li>•Sense making</li> <li>•Active Learning</li> <li>•Immersion &amp; deeper reflection</li> </ul>	<p>”This camp, smaller than Tendaba camp, very basic but nice community area, more cosy and friendly than Tendaba. If we would have known we could have bought some kola nuts for the chief”</p> <p>“Being absorbed into the culture of the Jola community felt incredibly good and although it was extremely staged being able to participate really helped to feel part of their community. The success they enjoyed as an eco-camp is obviously a recipe for success and I sincerely believe it could be used in communities throughout the Gambia”</p> <p>“The success with which they obviously run their garden business added to the full cultural eco-tourism business was a lesson in how successful small communities can be”</p>
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- “Very interesting and very entertaining. Its absolutely priceless to learn what we’ve had a chance to learn there. We won’t read that in tour guide books. You have to be there to experience the atmosphere of the ceremony. The local community did everything to show how the traditional Gambian marriage ceremony works. I took part by joining in to dance with local people. I really appreciate that they did that for us, went into this effort and accepted us as their friends”
- “This was just a short insight for us the proper ceremony would be for 3 days!”
- “We all took part, and each joined in some local dancing this also gave us more of a chance to learn about Gambian culture and their traditions. I thought this was really entertaining as well as educational everyone joined in and had a real good time dancing was especially fun and the locals were more than willing to teach us the traditional dancing”



## On Reflection.....

- Motivations
- Broker invaluable
- Identify Learning/Teaching Opportunities
- Limitations

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