



Co-funded by
the European Union

Fodele Beach & Water Park Holiday Resort

Case study



Context

Type and size of SME: approx. 200 employees, family-owned company

Rural setting: Fodele village, a traditional – historic village in Crete

Fodele Beach & Water Park Holiday Resort, is situated 25 km west of Heraklion international airport in Crete and lies in a unique location with a breathtaking view, on the exquisite sandy beach of Fodele area (birthplace of the world-wide famous painter Dominikos Theotokopoulos, well known as EL GRECO).

The Resort has been implementing environmental management system for over 20 years whilst since last year it has been certified as a Sustainable tourism accommodation.



F O D E L E B E A C H



ESG challenge and opportunity faced



FODELE BEACH

Although controversial for a resort / water park situated next to a traditional village, the company administration has always been focused on the local community, providing employment to the local workforce, supplying local products and collaborating with local initiatives.

Its ESG strategy is strongly connected to the local context, support of the community, local entrepreneurs and local culture.

The Resort focused its ESG strategy on the support of local community by co-creating activities and events tailored to local needs.



A luxury hotel next to a traditional village



Promoting local culture by adapting in house events with the collaboration of local SMEs and initiatives

“It Smelled Like Crete” – A Night of Culture, Craft & Culinary Soul at Fodele Beach

The gardens of Fodele Beach transform into a living, breathing tribute to Cretan tradition. Together with the Cultural Association of Fodele, guests, locals, and the Fodele team are brought into one joyful celebration of life on the island — its rhythm, its flavor, its people.

- Music & Movement from the Heart of the Island
- Women of the Village: Artisans of Soul
- Rakokazano: Where Spirit Meets Flame
- We Made Cheese (And We’re Proud of It!)
- Wines that Tell a Story
- A Visit That Honors Local Roots

COMMUNITY-CENTERED

CO-CREATED

ASSET-BASED

SUSTAINABLE

CO-LEARN

RELATIONAL

Supporting local schools, environmental awareness, and youth development



At Fodele Beach, the connection with the **local community** is deeply valued and their role as a hospitality provider goes far beyond offering luxurious stays. Days like this reflect our ongoing commitment to **education, sustainability, and social responsibility** — core values that the hotel aims to integrate into every part of its operations.

RELATIONAL

INCLUSIVE

EQUITABLE

PURPOSEFUL

RECIPROCAL

COMMUNITY-CENTERED

They proudly host initiatives that blend **learning with joy** as part of their continuous effort to support **local schools, environmental awareness, and youth development**.

Contributing to the health and well-being of the local community



Fodele Beach organized an important health prevention initiative as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility activities. In collaboration with the “**Doménikos Theotokópoulos**” **Cultural Association** and the **Region of Crete**, they hosted a free mammogram screening day for the women of Fodele village, supported by the Mobile Mammography Unit.

This initiative aimed to raise awareness within the local community about the importance of preventive care in women’s health. Through this action, 22 women from the village had the opportunity to undergo mammograms at no cost and without the hassle of travel, ensuring they could take a crucial step in monitoring their health.

Collaborative initiatives for supporting local population

SUSTAINABLE

CO-LEARN

RELATIONAL

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PURPOSEFUL

COMMUNITY-CENTERED

Health Awareness Event in Fodele Village

A health awareness event was organised in Fodele village, by Fodele Beach Hotel and the Fodele Cultural Association, with the support of the hotel's Occupational Doctor.

The event addressed important health topics with the goal of raising awareness and informing the local community. Participants had the opportunity to learn about:

- **Flu Vaccination:** The Occupational Doctor explained the importance of vaccination for preventing the flu, particularly for vulnerable groups.
- **Prostate Cancer Prevention:** Information was shared about the significance of regular screenings and early diagnosis for prostate cancer, one of the most common cancers in men.
- **Breast Cancer Prevention:** Attendees were informed about modern prevention and diagnostic methods for breast cancer, including the importance of self-examination and regular mammograms for women.
- **Shingles:** The causes and symptoms of shingles were discussed, along with prevention strategies and available vaccines.



**Focus on the needs of the ones
that built the community**

SUSTAINABLE

RELATIONAL

INCLUSIVE

ASSET-BASED

EQUITABLE

COMMUNITY-CENTERED

Supporting local festivities

- The Orange Festival brought together locals and visitors for a joyful day full of colors, aromas, and authentic Cretan tradition — and Fodele Beach Hotel was honored to stand by this beloved celebration as its Grand Sponsor.
- The festival was a vibrant tribute to the region's citrus heritage, featuring tastings of fresh local oranges, delicious orange-based dishes, and traditional music and dance.
- Visitors experienced the true essence of Cretan culture and hospitality in a festive, welcoming atmosphere.



SUSTAINABLE
RELATIONAL

ASSET-BASED
EQUITABLE

PURPOSEFUL
COMMUNITY-CENTERED

**Focusing on the
local needs**

What did they do?



At Fodele Beach & Water Park Holiday Resort, supporting local initiatives reflects its commitment to sustainability, culture, and giving back to the community that surrounds it.

What did they do?



Local Employment and Support

One of the hotel's primary objectives is to contribute to the local economy by providing employment opportunities to surrounding community residents. It prioritizes hiring local staff members, enabling them to gain valuable skills and secure a stable income. By doing so, it supports individuals and families and foster a sense of community pride and empowerment.

What did they do?



Partnerships with Local Organizations

Collaboration is essential for creating a lasting impact. The Hotel actively seeks partnerships with local organizations that share its environmental protection and sustainable development vision. By working together, it combines its resources and expertise to achieve more remarkable results. These partnerships may involve joint initiatives such as community clean-up events, conservation projects, or educational campaigns that benefit the local environment and its inhabitants.

What did they do?



Implementation of Sustainable Practices

Fodele Beach has taken various initiatives to ensure that it operates in an environmentally responsible manner. These include:

- **Energy Efficiency:** It has implemented energy-efficient technologies throughout the resort, such as LED lighting and motion sensors, to minimize energy consumption.
- **Water Conservation:** It has installed water-saving fixtures and implemented smart irrigation systems to reduce water consumption and prevent unnecessary waste.
- **Waste Management:** The resort has a comprehensive waste management system in place, which includes recycling programs, composting organic waste, and proper disposal of hazardous materials.
- **Green Procurement:** The resort prioritizes purchasing eco-friendly products and materials, supporting local suppliers whenever possible.

What changed?

- Fodele Beach & Water Park Holiday Resort has earned numerous certifications and accreditations for its commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development.
- It has also managed to:
 - Secure fresh products
 - Employ local staff
 - Establish collaboration with local community
 - Achieve high environmental performance
 - Improve customer satisfaction
 - Be characterised as a Highly-rated luxurious stay

Key reflection & message



Challenges for other SMEs:

- Difficult to built trust in local communities
- Lack of initiatives in nearby communities
- Need for investment
- Local supply of goods may be limited

Message to SMEs:

“Partnerships with the local community support your sustainability efforts”

“Provide guests with a more genuine and authentic experience by engaging local businesses”

“Build trust and improve your reputation”

”Grow local tourism and contribute to the development of the local community”

“Increase brand recognition amongst locals and beyond”

SOURCE

- <https://www.fodelebeach.gr/>

