

TOWARDS UNIVERSITY INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM MONITORING & EVALUATION EDUCATION

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Community-based tourism aim is towards holistic development of disadvantaged community members. While universities possess various characteristic values to assist in CBT projects, monitoring and evaluation is seen as a fundamental component in CBT projects. However, there is a dearth of information regarding the monitoring and evaluation of CBT. This paper, based on an array of various literature and the above-mentioned issues advances an interactive model between University and key stakeholders in a CBT project in relation to M&E. The interaction model proposes three main groups, namely, the M&E process; stakeholder management and the activities that work synergistically to achieve the CBT impacts. The paper support the need to enhance M&E of CBT projects and to research the possible positive role that universities can have in CBT.

Keywords: *Community-based tourism, Monitoring and evaluation, Education, University community engagement*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been beneficial in aiding economic and employment growth of various communities around the world (Álvarez-García, Durán-Sánchez, & de la Cruz del Río-Rama, 2018, pp. 1). However, tourism has its own contradictions. Despite its possible economic benefits, its unplanned development has been reason for environmental and social-cultural negative impacts (Álvarez-García et al., 2018, pp. 1). These adverse effects “have led to growing concerns about the conservation and preservation of natural resources, sustained human well-being, and long-term economic viability thus a need for seeking new forms of tourism planning, management, and development” (Álvarez-García et al., 2018, pp. 1). An alternative tourism development approach, community-based tourism (CBT), can be seen as attempting to counteract negative effects of conventional tourism development, although more critical analysis on CBT may be needed. Community-based tourism has been presented in numerous countries to ameliorate the local living conditions of people “by strengthening democratic processes at the local level and increasing the value of local leadership in developing tourism” (Rindrasih, 2018, pp. 2). Community-based tourism is presented as an alternative to mainstream tourism, and it has such attractiveness that it has rarely been subjected to critical review” (Rindrasih, 2018, pp. 1). Literature on CBT is well established, especially in the last three decades (Álvarez-García et al., 2018, pp. 1). However, until recently it has been noted that CBT is “a complex and emerging field of study, and much remains to be learned” (Naik, 2014, pp. 46). Currently, CBT is proposed as a constantly changing and evolving niche of tourism; therefore, a greater understanding is needed to assist communities to develop CBT in a sustainable way” (Ernawati et al., 2017, pp. 367).

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is a key process in any project or development initiative and each intervention should have its own M&E plan (Frankel & Gage, 2016, pp. III, 7). However, M&E is rarely a priority in development projects serving just to fulfill project requirements rather than a mechanism to achieve the agreed outputs, outcomes and impacts (Biwott et al., 2017, pp. 49). “Despite M&E being recognized as a critical management tool project developers tend to give it modest priority resulting in M&E compliance simply for the sake of fulfilling the requirements of most funding agencies without any intention of using the findings as a mechanism of ensuring the success of the projects” (Govender & Giampiccoli, 2018, pp. 8). Documents related to M&E in tourism are extant (Rio & Nunes, 2012; Steele et al., 2017; Spilanis et al., 2012; Talbot & Gould, 1999). While M&E in CBT project M&E is relevant (The Mountain Institute, 2000), academic literature that specifically consider M&E in CBT projects is very rare. However, various documents related to CBT such as manuals and handbook consider M&E (The Mountain Institute, 2000; Suansri, 2003; Calanog et al., 2012; Asker et al., 2010; Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009) and a dedicated publication titled A toolkit for monitoring and managing community-based tourism exists exists (Twining-Ward et al., 2007).

As a background to this paper, it is also important to note that university community engagement (CE) is seen as fundamental component of graduates teaching and learning (Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco & Swanson, 2012:224). As noted CE “should be recognized as a critical element in higher education institutions in order to stay relevant to the stakeholders it serves” (Herts, 2013; Manowaluilou 2013, 2017). Notwithstanding the above, the literature search has also indicated that university community engagement projects in the tourism sector are extant (Govender & Giampiccoli, 2018: 7). This paper aims to contribute towards the knowledge on M&E of CBT and the possible collaborations of universities in CBT projects/ventures – in this case specifically on issues related to M&E.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community-Based Tourism

Community-based tourism origins can be traced back to the 1970s as an alternative development approach (Giampiccoli, 2015, pp. 78) with an intention to counteract the conventional/mass tourism negative impacts (López-Guzmán et al., 2011:73). CBT has a different concept to mass tourism (Purbasari & Manaf, 2018, pp. 2) and it has been proposed as an agent “for social justice, equity, redistribution of wealth and resources, and empowerment” (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2016, pp. 4). Thus, CBT should promote self-reliance, self-planning and self-management, be transformative, redistributive, empowering, holistic, developmental, enhancing individual and community capacities, participatory, with opportunities for co-production, community decision making, job creation, control and involvement, the attainment of social justice and the remediation of both power and resources (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2016, pp. 4). Three main principles can be recognized in CBT: “local community ownership of the venture; full community involvement in the venture’s operation and management; and the community as the main beneficiary of the initiative” (Ngo et al., 2018, pp. 1326). Community-based tourism “is understood to be managed and owned by the community, for the community. It is a form of 'local' tourism, supporting local service providers and suppliers and focused on interpreting and communicating the local culture and environment” (Purbasari & Manaf, 2018, pp. 2; Mizal et al., 2014, pp. 24). To ascertain the success of CBT initiatives, the above issues should be monitored and evaluated. Due to the many definitions of the term CBT (Álvarez-García et al., 2018, pp. 1) and the various models of CBT present in literature (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016), M & E has become a challenge. This paper also supports - in line with other literature (Giampiccoli & Nauright, 2010, pp. 52; Tasci et al., 2013, pp. 9; George et al., 2007, pp. 1; Amat Ramsa & Mohd, 2004, pp. 587; Leksakundilok & Hirsch, 2008, pp. 218; Sánchez-Cañizares & Castillo-Canalejo, 2014, pp. 221) that CBT should be owned and managed by the local community. In this context CBT

should also be understood as specifically associated with disadvantaged members in society (Tasci et al., 2013, pp. 10) thus CBT works for a more equitable society and for social justice (Jealous, 1998) which should be the purpose of the universities.

While CBT present various characteristics, a key feature is the low local community capacity; therefore, the need for capacity-building is recognized (Aref & Redzuan, 2009; Calanog et al., 2012; Manyara & Jones 2007; Suansri, 2003; Ngo et al., 2018). Capacity building is usually fundamental in a CBT project. More than that in CBT projects capacity building should be considered as an essential pre-condition and serve as a platform to train people beyond mere tourism matters serving to empower community members in various livelihood requirements (Twining-Ward et al., 2007:14; Hamzah and Khalifah, 2009:14). It is also important to note that capacity building in CBT is not easy and various issues such as of politics, equitable division of labour and benefits, cross-cultural interchange and conflict resolution need to be considered (Walter et al., 2018:49). Universities could develop programme offerings to address the above capacity development issues.

Monitor & Evaluation in tourism/CBT

Monitoring and evaluation are essential actions to be undertaken in any project or intervention (Frankel & Gage, 2016, pp. 3). According to the World Bank (Casley & Lury, 1982, pp. 4) while M&E are related, they are not the same. Monitoring is the provision of information, and the use of that information, to enable management to assess progress of implementation and take timely decisions to ensure that progress is maintained according to schedule whereas evaluation assesses both intentional and unintentional outcomes and their impacts. The UNDP (2009, pp. 8) define monitoring as the ongoing process by which stakeholders obtain regular feedback on the progress being made towards achieving their goals and objectives. In development work, monitoring concentrate on the progression of the project/intervention by tracking inputs such as cost and activities, whereas evaluation consider the project impacts and objective – if the objective has been achieved (Peters, 2016:315). The following steps for M&E (Casley & Lury, 1982, pp. 4) have been proposed, namely,

a review of the project objectives and the identification of the users of both the monitoring and evaluation information. Specific technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills are required for effective M&E. Either a central M&E unit could be established within the organisation or a third party may be used. In both instances the university has a critical role to play by providing the necessary training and/or providing the necessary M&E expertise and knowledge. One of the most critical steps in designing an M&E system is selecting appropriate indicators” (Frankel & Gage, 2016, pp. 9). Indicators are very important as they “are clues, signs, or markers that measure one aspect of a program and show how close a program is to its desired path and outcomes...” (Frankel & Gage, 2016, pp. 9).

In tourism, monitoring is critical to ensure the short-term goals are achieved through regular measurements and comparison against the agreed standards or targets and allowing for any corrective changes to be timeously implemented (Lozano-Oyola et al., 2012, pp. 59). In a similar vein, the evaluation of the impact of tourism on the tourism destinations are indispensable to guarantee a long-term sustainability of the destinations (Rio & Nunes, 2012, pp. 69). It is proposed that to guarantee sustainable CBT, monitoring and evaluation should be integrated into the whole planning and application process. All too often, M&E is rarely carried out making it difficult for the organisation to take further actions to improve the quality of the service and product (Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009, pp. 86). Again, the sustainability of a CBT project “can be evaluated effectively through the use of an evaluation framework incorporating specific sustainable tourism performance indicators” (Mearns, 2012, pp. 7859). Various indicators (Mearns, 2012) has been proposed for M&E community-based ecotourism ventures in Southern Africa. Some of the proposed indicators include (Mearns, 2012) community decision-making structures, community benefits from tourism and partnerships and collaborations. Each CBT project has specific requirements however some recurrent themes can be individuated such as gender equity, business sustainability, local capacity development, and poverty reduction (Twining-Ward et al., 2007:9) which could also be used to develop indicators. An ecotourism project M&E study advance that M&E should also involve the tourists indicate that M&E should be very much participatory expressing that “the participatory nature of

the monitoring program is one of its greatest strengths” (Talbot & Gould, 1999, pp. 104). For example, capacity building in the participatory context depend on some form of external assistance thus the fundamental matter “is not capacity-building *per se* but rather the design of these initiatives” thus capacity building should be seen a long-term approach (Manyara & Jones 2007, pp. 408). Community-based tourism remains on the same level as CBT should be considered as a long-term strategy not a ‘quick-fix’ solution (Asker et al., 2010; Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009). However, it is important that external “facilitation process should be structured in such a way to promote community self-reliance in both the intervention and the M&E process” (Govender & Giampiccoli, 2018, pp. 8). Universities should take cognisance of this fact when developing CBT partnerships.

Monitoring and Evaluation in CBT is present and various CBT manuals /handbook dedicate a section or mention M&E (Calanog et al., 2012; Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009; Asker et al., 2010; Häusler & Strasdas, 2009; The Mountain Institute, 2000; Suansri, 2003; Suansri & Yeejaw-haw, 2013; National Department of Tourism, 2016). There are two key reasons for monitoring a CBT project and these reasons should be evident and clarified for stakeholders at the start of any project: “Firstly, to assess project’s business performance relative to specific business objectives. Secondly, to assess the contribution of the project to the community’s development and sustainability objectives” (Twining-Ward et al., 2007:20). The *toolkit for monitoring and managing community-based tourism* (Twining-Ward et al., 2007:7, Box 1) also indicate the specific reason of M&E in CBT.

Box 1

Community-based tourism (CBT) projects, like any other small businesses, need to keep careful tabs on their performance in all aspects of a business – understanding and reacting to meet customer needs and management of their finances, their internal operations, their human resources and their relations with various external suppliers and stakeholders. Where poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability are key concerns, monitoring can help project managers to find out if the project is living up to

expectations, and help them make adjustments to improve performance where necessary.

Monitoring involves carefully selecting and piloting indicators, collecting and evaluating data, and presenting and acting on the results. Developing a monitoring framework can take some time, but is likely to result in a more responsive and successful CBT project. The main benefits of monitoring CBT are as follows:

- To evaluate project performance over time
- To adapt project activities in light of the lessons learned from monitoring
 - To prioritise future projects based on areas of greatest need
 - To improve project planning, development, and management
 - To ensure that all social categories, (including ethnic minorities, youth, and women) can benefit from CBT
 - To improve policymaking
 - To increase donor confidence
 - To improve the focus of intervention
 - To increase understanding of sustainable tourism amongst stakeholders.

Monitor & Evaluation in CBT should be comprehensive – not excluding but going beyond mere economic matters – and consider various social, human, political issues. As indicated it is important that in CBT “monitoring does not only measure the success and gaps in terms of monetary value but also include non-monetary gains such as pride in the local community, sense of ownership, increase self-esteem and etc. In most of the case studies, it is the non-monetary gains that are valued more by the local community than the financial benefits” (Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009, pp. 86). There are various reasons for the need of M&E in community-based ecotourism enterprises (CBEE) and one of the consequences of inadequate M&E is limited knowledge of project implementers, particularly the uninformed local people, having limited knowledge about the project's progress, opportunities and problems. In effect, operations and strategies that are needed to be re-aligned and adjusted within a M&E system. In the absence of an effective M&E system, the CBEE activities cannot be fully aligned to the impacts and changes in the local community and its natural resource base” (Calanog et al., 2012, pp. 341).

Various steps for CBT M&E have been proposed and these can be: evaluate, learn, decide; plan; implement; monitor; reflect, learn, decide, adjust; implement; monitor; reflect, learn, decide, adjust; implement (Calanog et al., 2012, pp. 340). A CBT Handbook (Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009, pp. 89) suggests the following steps in M&E in CBT: 1. Develop Monitoring Objectives; 2. Determine Boundaries of the Area to be Monitored; 3. Identify Community Attributes; 4. Identify Potential Impacts; 5. Prioritize Impacts; 6. Identify Potential Indicators; 7. Collect Data; 8. Evaluate the Monitoring Data. The *toolkit for monitoring and managing community-based tourism* (Twining-Ward et al., 2007, pp. 7, Table 1) proposed the eight steps in the M&E process in CBT.

Table 1. M&E steps and process in CBT.

STEPS	PROCESS
1. Planning to Monitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and plan the idea of monitoring with the community • Set objectives for monitoring • Discuss general practical issues such as who will be involved, the boundaries of the study area, the resources required, and timing for monitoring
2. Scoping Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research key issues facing the CBT business and community • Hold community meeting to review and prioritise issues • Seek input of monitoring working group to finalise list
3. Developing Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review long list of existing indicators to match these with the key issues • Brainstorm in small groups to find new indicators to match issues • Screen potential indicators using simple screening questions • Fine-tune indicators with technical expertise where necessary

<p>4. Collecting Data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify data sources • Design data collection methods such as surveys and questionnaires. • Design a simple database to hold the results.
<p>5. Evaluating Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish year-one benchmarks • Identify appropriate thresholds for management response
<p>6. Planning the Response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify poor performing indicator areas • Research possible causes for poor performance • Decide on a management response • Draw up an action plan
<p>7. Communicating Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design communication methods for different stakeholder groups • Publish results and update regularly
<p>8. Reviewing and Adapting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review objectives and key issues • Review indicators and data collection • Review of management responses

It is also noted that amongst others “Professors or students from a nearby university or college” can be data collectors for M&E in CBT (Twining-Ward et al., 2007: 34). However, in CBT M&E must be participatory, they are the community members that should be protagonist. A number of reason has been forwarded about the importance of participatory M&E in CBT, these are (Mountain Institute, 2000, pp. 71):

- Creates ownership and responsibility in the collection of information and more confidence in the results.
- Provides timely, reliable and valid information that may not be as statistically exact as formal methods, but accuracy can be improved through cross-checking.
- Builds consensus especially when participants work together as a team.

- Builds skills and confidence among participants particularly when their efforts are the basis for greater participation in subsequent decision-making.
- Utilizes local knowledge that may result in greater efficiency and learning by all participating.

University involvement in CBT is present (Giampiccoli et al., 2014:1149) and “various CBT organizations such as Community-based Tourism Institute in Thailand and the Latin America Community-Based Tourism Network all have universities as collaborators” (Govender & Giampiccoli, 2018, pp. 9). Universities have various advantage related to their involvement in CBT project: they possess a wide range of expertise, are – long-term – locally based, and are generally not-profit oriented (Giampiccoli et al., 2014:1149). Models on the possible collaboration between universities and CBT context has been proposed (Giampiccoli et al., 2014). Specific involvement of Universities in CBT M&E has been also proposed in the literature (Govender & Giampiccoli, 2018). It has also been proposed that collaboration of university in CBT “will educate the local community on the appropriate framework to develop community based projects and equip the organisation with the tools and approaches to improve the quality of the tourist experience. Universities will also bring with them research expertise to analyse changing tourist demand and trainers to conduct capacity building programmes ...” (Hamzah & Khalifah 2009, pp. 52). Yet, as CBT the local community must have the ownership of the M&E; external facilitator should just *facilitate* the M&E process not take ownership of it.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: TOWARDS UNIVERSITY INVOLVEMENT IN CBT M&E

The model below presents three main interdependent groups, namely, the M&E process; the stakeholders; and the activities that is critical to achieve the synergies between the university participants and the communities. For sustainability of CBT, a cyclical evaluatory process of reflect, learn, decide, adjust and implementation leads to

real time and relevant capacity building initiatives. A key component of this model is the continuous collaborations with the university and the community to gain consensus on the M&E process, the activities, the learning process and the on-going capacity building needs of all stakeholders.

The M&E process commences discussions with the CBT members as to their expectations, needs and the overall scope of the project to develop relevant objectives that could lead to agreed outcomes and impacts. Key attributes that are critical for successful outcomes and impacts is the communities understanding of research methodology, namely, data collection, use of data to develop knowledge, communication of results and use of the information to improve future performance. Each stage in the process should have its own mini-cycle of reflect, learn, decide, and adjust before implementation of the next stage for the various stakeholders.

Key stakeholders including university staff and students, community members involved in CBT and M&E working group should work collaboratively with the CBT M&E project. The establishment of a CBT M&E team is important for practical management reasons. However, each staff member, student and local community member can also participate individually while other external stakeholders such as NGOs can be involved in *ad hoc* projects.

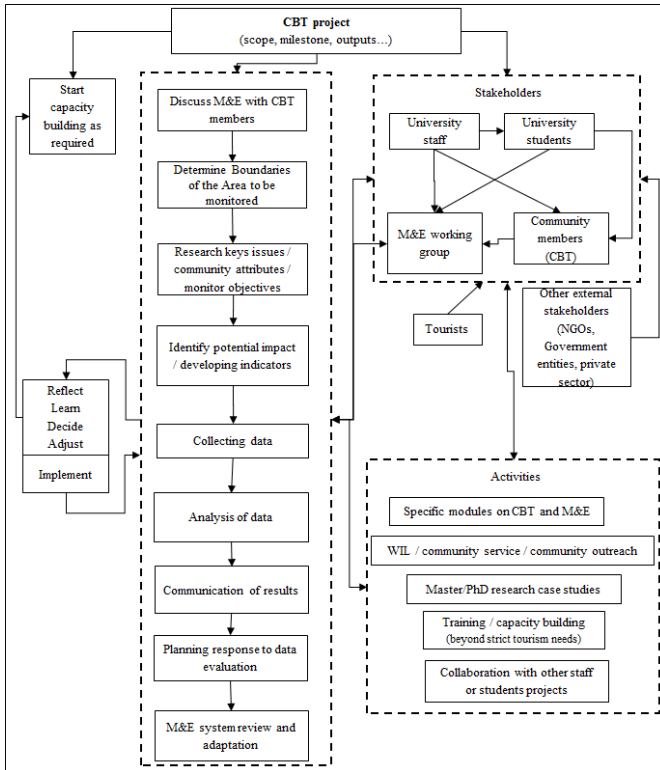


Fig. 1. Participatory CBT-M&E model. Authors' elaboration.

The overall CBT performance could be enhanced by universities through introducing creativity, innovation and flexibility in their curriculum development activities. While the model submits some examples of activities, each communal context could have its unique type of activities based on specific needs and available resources keeping in mind that the final aim should be to empower the community members to independently manage the CBT ventures. Activities will be managed by the 'stakeholders' group and they will reflect the needs of the M&E process and capacity building needs. A possible joint - activity could be to develop a series of modules together with the community about CBT and M&E where students

could engage with communities during their semester to be exposed to the project.

Finally, capacity building for the M&E process and CBT activities is an important requirement and should be considered at the planning and design phase and start at the beginning of the project. To ensure continuous improvement for the entire project, the model includes continuous capacity building and cyclical evaluatory process (through reflect, learn, decide, and adjust before implementation) that will be managed by the university-community partners in the CBT project. The advantage of this model is that it empowers communities and universities through on-going consultations before decisions are made, the decisions made are based on real time data and is evidence driven and sustainability of the CBT project is enhanced. On the other hand, universities become more relevant for the development of the communities they serve by ensuring their programmes address the immediate needs of the communities and the graduates develop the necessary graduate attributes that is required for a developmental state.

CONCLUSIONS

Community-based tourism is proposed as an alternative to conventional mass tourism and it relates to disadvantaged community members' holistic development including issues of empowerment, social justice, equity, and local ownership and management. University can be a valuable partner to assist community members in their effort in CBT development. Monitoring and evaluation is a fundamental component in any project and CBT project make no exception. Based on the above three main issues this paper proposed an interactive model between University and CBT project in relation to M&E. The interaction model suggests three main groups (M&E process; the stakeholders; and the activities) in which the interaction process happen. The papers aim to advance the need for greater awareness on the need for M&E in CBT projects and the valuable assistance university could give to community members participating in CBT.

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