



Role of external parties in Community-Based Tourism development: Towards a new model

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Abstract

Community-based tourism (CBT) is a tourism development strategy used in many countries as a way to promote community development with a special focus on disadvantaged communities. Many definitions and models related to CBT have been propounded. It is not always necessary but often happens in CBT development for the community to require assistance especially from an external party as it pursues a CBT venture. It is the external party, the facilitator that is the focus of this article. After having explored various aspects related to facilitators' involvement in CBT, the article posits a model of external party participation that shows the various possible 'routes' (or roles) which the facilitator can play in CBT in order to enhance CBT success. The article was composed after wide reading and is thus based on secondary data sources. The article thus remains a concept analytical work as no primary data were collected. The model provides trajectories which facilitators can take in driving CBT. The advantage of this model is that it promotes holistic and sustainable community development if it is bottom-up in approach, and it empowers community members for self-reliance and promotes the independence of the communities. It rests upon the shoulders of a facilitator to ensure that they have the necessary skills and capacity to assist the CBT venture with their intervention being merely ephemeral but nonetheless critical.

Keywords: tourism; community-based tourism; tourism model; facilitator; community development.

Introduction

The tourism sector continues to expand in general, and in the last few years the travel and tourism sector has been growing much faster than the financial, health and automotive sectors including the wider economy (Scowsill, 2015). Although tourism can be defined and interpreted in many ways, for Smith tourism is a global phenomenon (Smith, 2004:23). Within tourism, community-based tourism (CBT) is also growing markedly.

The growing importance of CBT led Novelli to remark that it "is a concept that forms the focus of a rich body of literature" (Novelli, 2016:71). CBT is being practised in both developed and developing countries (Nair & Hamzah, 2015:429; Asker, Boronyak, Carrard & Paddon 2010). This is confirmed by other authors who claim that CBT is a tourism development strategy present in developing countries (Giampiccoli, Saayman, & Jugmohan, 2014:1139; Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010:2). Therefore, the CBT strategy in developing



countries should be understood in relation to the manner in which it undergirds community development because it upholds existing traditional and cultural practices and norms of life including the those old traditional practices of environmental preservation with benefits accruing to the community (Pookaiyaudom, 2013:2890). The growth of CBT and CBT markets has been observed in Europe (CBI, 2009:1; see also CBI, 2014 a:10; CBI, 2014 b). Thus, there is evidence of projects of a CBT nature proliferating literature in various countries of variegated levels of socio-economic development (López-Guzmán, Sánchez-Cañizares & Pavón, 2011:72). At the same time, there are also variegated conceptualisations, definitions and models related to CBT found in literature (see for example Giampiccoli, 2015:681; Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2014:2). It can be proposed that despite the variations in application and impacts, CBT is being supported for purposes of environmental conservation, poverty alleviation and community development (Novelli, 2016:72).

Of equal importance and more recently there is a general need to bring on board the community and to promote stakeholder collaboration in tourism (especially sustainable tourism) development (Ruhanen, 2013; Reid, Mair & George, 2004; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999). Many studies have shown that the involvement of the community is a necessary requirement for the sustainability of community based ventures (Idziak, Majewski & Zmyślony, 2015:1341). Specifically, in CBT the primacy of ownership of projects by community members and time-bound collaborative engagements with external parties are also important requirements for sustainability as shown in the following excerpt:

The level and type of collaborative approach between CBT project members and external facilitators is important, as this relationship should always recognize that the owners, managers and beneficiaries of the CBT project are the local members. Therefore, collaboration should lead to long-term sustainability of the projects, also when the facilitators leave the scene of the project (Jugmohan & Steyn, 2015:1077).

It is therefore relevant to understand the level, type and role of external facilitators' involvement in CBT development. Their role should be temporary, time-bound, facilitative and empowering while ownership should rest unequivocally with community members for sustainability. This will ensure the emancipation of communities in circumstances where a colonial layer has to be peeled for CBT sovereignty. CBT sovereignty is achieved when communities are the owners of their own destiny, their enterprises, their environments and their ventures with substantial benefits accruing to them and when they can pursue a productive life trajectory using those ventures without eroding their legacy and threatening the survival of their posterity.

Methodology

The aim of this article is to review issues related to external parties or entities who we term facilitators in CBT development and in doing so propose a possible general facilitators framework or model in CBT development. While this article is based on secondary sources – it is a review article – which posits an original facilitator's model of intervention in CBT development. There was no primary research that was undertaken in putting this article together. As such, all sources used in compiling this article were duly acknowledged. This article includes a literature review section covering various background matters related to CBT which inform the development of a model proposed in this article.

The contribution of this articles relates to opening up a new vista for working towards the development of new CBT development models as they relate to other issues in CBT. In this case, specific attention is paid to external entities/partners/facilitators. Importantly, this article does not argue that CBT cannot or should not be started and implemented by communities

themselves (this, in fact is what ideally should happen), without external facilitators (as examples are presents – see Nair & Hamzah, 2015:432), but it is about examining the various characteristics and ways of involvement of external entities .

Literature review

CBT ventures should be controlled by communities, as Baktygulov and Raeva (2010:2) observes that CBT –is “a type of tourism that is owned and managed by the local community.” Listing the various main characteristics of CBT, Saayman and Giampiccoli (2016:152) mention that CBT should be ‘an indigenous effort’ with usually long but temporary facilitation (not participation) by external parties. For example, a research which was done in Nicaragua shows that over two thirds of CBT ventures were founded by external entities (Zapata, Hall, Lindo & Vanderschaeghe, 2011:727). Along similar lines, it has been argued based on a pre-condition evaluation and management model (PEM) for CBT that “it is fundamental to keep in mind from the outset of applying this proposed model that, while external actors can (and usually) are necessary as facilitators, the community should be the main actors in the PEM [Pre-Condition Evaluation and Management Model]” (Jugmohan & Steyn, 2015:1070).

At an individual level, a facilitator is “a person whose objective is to help individuals or groups in achieving their goals. The role of a facilitator is limited to providing proper methods and tools to the people he/she is facilitating in order to make it is easier for them to reach their goals” (Lecup & Nicholson, 2000:11; on facilitation see also Giampiccoli & Mtapuri, 2012). A facilitator organisation or entity should be understood in the same way as an entity that simply furnishes the instruments, tools, techniques and know-how to the community to achieve its goals. Empowerment is surely a fundamental matter in this process for purposes of properly facilitating community development. To that end, there is a need to produce a “major transformation in thinking [with] the movement from participation to empowerment” (Rocha in Reid, 2003:60). Participation can be token and illusory and principally an artifice. Empowerment is necessary for the success and sustainability of projects.

This article advocates facilitation that is linked to bottom-up approaches in terms of interventions. The PEM model proposes that the ideal facilitation is imbued with a balanced relationship of power and authority without dominance and hegemony operationalized in a bottom-up approach (Jugmohan & Steyn, 2015:1070). This entails that the modalities of the CBT project from the onset should be negotiated and agreed upon by the community and external parties in an atmosphere of transparency and consensus (Jugmohan & Steyn, 2015:1070).

There is a link between participation in the sense of facilitation and empowerment as Simpson, Wood and Daws, (2003: 278) observe that it is pertinent for communities to define the shape of the development they wish to see in their communities; wean themselves from depending on Government for solutions and direction, empower and build their own capacities using their own skills and ensure broad-based participation anchored on the principles of self-sufficiency and voluntarism.

Simpson, Wood & Daws (2003: 284) argue that it is necessary to consult and that communities should participate in order to ensure the success of projects. Two matters need to be mentioned firstly, that some communities have reaped some benefits in circumstances where top-down approaches to CBT development were initiated (Novelli, 2016:73) and secondly, while external assistance is ‘core to CBT implementation’ issues concerning paternalism need to be considered (Novelli, 2016:74).



Various entities can be involved in CBT development and Ruiz-Ballesteros and Brondizio (2013:323) mention a CBT framework in which the participation of Government, NGOs, international organisations and local people was postulated. In Nicaragua, a study noted that external entities assisting CBT projects were varied and included local and international NGOs, co-operative and national governments (Zapata, Hall, Lindo and Vanderschaeghe, 2011:744). At the same time, the size and origin of the external entity did matter and manifested different approaches, thus

Those organisations that were engaged with the development of specific regions or communities, often smaller NGOs, local organisations, and co-operatives, tended to maintain their support for the CBT project over extended time periods. On the other hand, larger international organisations tended to provide more consistent support with less engagement in the maintenance and monitoring of the project, which was usually trusted to other local associations (Zapata, Hall, Lindo and Vanderschaeghe, 2011:734).

Different actors involved in CBT facilitation can play their different roles working alone or in unison, however 'government is a key agent in all aspects of the facilitative process' (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013:5). Governments are expected to nurture and develop CBT enterprises as it is in their interest to do so for the empowerment of communities and for poverty alleviation. In that way, they will not be seen to be abrogating their role which others, especially Non-Governmental Organisations, can play if they are found wanting.

It is recognised that each type of entity has its own strengths and weaknesses and resultant advantages and disadvantages. This article suggests that Governments, NGOs or the private sector can all have their role in CBT development however there should be a stronger 'preference for government entities, [with] envisioning a more complementary role for the private sector and NGOs' (Giampiccoli, Saayman & Jugmohan, 2014:1141). This does not mean that NGOs and the private sector cannot be useful in specific matters related to CBT, but Government entities, have more advantages as compared to the private sector and NGOs. For example, public universities which belong to Government, unlike say NGOs and the private sector, are based in local communities with a long-term presence – whereas for NGOs their stay is tied to the project's duration and the private sector is profit-driven (Giampiccoli, Saayman & Jugmohan, 2014:1150). However, for those NGOs which are locally based and have the expertise can certainly make a difference and be a valuable CBT development facilitator. Therefore, presence and expertise and the desire to facilitate and empower are necessary conditions for community capacitation in CBT development.

Shikida, Yoda, Kino & Morishige (2010: 108) when introducing a tourism relationship model meant for CBT note that a relationship with mutual benefits between communities and external stakeholders is important for sustainable development. The promotion of independence is important and can be based on two fundamental factors, firstly, the partnership should be 'temporary' but long term, but consciously geared towards empowering and building the capacity of communities so that they gain more independence and the necessary bargaining power to engage external partners. Secondly, the venture itself ideally should not be consummated as a partnership (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016:163). This 'long-term' support is often necessary, because many CBT projects have floundered after donor or NGO support has ended (Zapata, Hall, Lindo and Vanderschaeghe, 2011:727).

CBT facilitators can be involved in various aspects of CBT development. While facilitators are welcome to support CBT ventures, it is important that they are also properly equipped, and have enough and appropriate skills for the job to make their interventions both worthwhile and value-adding. In addition, it is imperative that the facilitators themselves have the necessary skills, expertise and knowledge related to various issues in CBT development.

This is not always the case, for example in South Africa, there is a lack of capacity related to CBT within government (see Giampiccoli, Saayman & Jugmohan, 2014:1143). Nonetheless, CBT should not be seen as isolated from other community development matters, thus it is important that facilitation in CBT should be viewed from the perspective that the knowledge and skills acquired in CBT activities can be deployed in other wealth creating and livelihood activities. (Giampiccoli, Saayman & Jugmohan, 2014:1143; see also Hainsworth, 2009).

A case from Tanzania shows the importance of facilitation and empowerment, for example the village of Engare Sero reflects the high level of skilled facilitation it received such that community members were empowered to be able to take advantage, on their own, of opportunities that were emerging (Nelson, 2004:132). It became evident that the skills of the facilitator were important as they assisted the community to master the craft and business beyond CBT matters. Beside the 'normal' facilitation role in CBT development, external parties can also be useful in facilitation process beyond CBT. Thus, for example, it is possible that they can play a mediating role in conflict situations. They can change matters from being destructive to constructive and build bridges between conflicting parties through empowerment of communities and their representatives – which role can be played by Governments, NGOs or hired consultants (Okazaki, 2008:515).

In this context CBT development should be undertaken with a holistic approach that includes aspects of sustainable community development and with specific required features such as empowerment. In addition, Holladay & Powell (2013:1205), include aspects of flexibility, trust, infrastructure development, local ownership and control as imperative for social-ecological resilience and sustainability of CBT ventures in many parts of the world. From a holistic perspective, communities should view tourism as a vehicle for sustainable community development which implies that a detailed analysis of the circumstances within a community need to be undertaken to inform the strategies to be used within that community. This is useful if communities are to maximize their potential for sustainable development (Polnyotee & Thadaniti, 2015:91). It has been indicated that CBT should include various aspects such as cultural, social and political, for example,

Polnyotee & Thadaniti (2015:97) argue that politics do matter if they are used as a tool that ensures participation in local administration. By the same token, CBT should not eliminate other economic sectors but should be complementary to them. CBT should be a means to an end, as properly proposed by a resident in Galápagos Islands tourism is an engine that needs to strengthen fishing, agriculture, craftsmanship. Everything rotates around the motor. But tourism should not change our lives so that we buy everything in Santa Cruz. We need to take into account that not all of us will be in tourism; fishing and agriculture are necessary. We need to strengthen those other sectors besides tourism (in Ruiz-Ballesteros & Brondizio, 2013:330). This view is supported by Nair & Hamzah, (2015:437) who note that a prosperous CBT venture is a means to an end, and a catalyst for rural entrepreneurship in other sectors of the economy.

Importantly CBT should be practiced with a long-term perspective that encompasses growth and sustainability. This is encapsulated in the following excerpt:

Initially, CBT projects are small in scale, low density and operated by the community with assistance from well-meaning outsiders, such as NGOs [...] as the CBT project matures, the challenges for the community also increase. Inevitably, tour operators begin to show interest and extend their corporation to form partnerships with the local community. Without the necessary skills and expertise to cope with the increasing number of tourist arrivals and changing tourist demand, local communities have a tendency to become over reliant on tour operators. At the same time, CBT projects will have to move up the value chain, and their long-term viability will depend on how well the key stakeholders cope with new expectations (Nair & Hamzah, 2015:431).

Thus, CBT ventures inevitably should adopt a business model that ensures viability and profitability which are essential for scaling up the project and sustainability without the support of either governments or donors (Nair & Hamzah, 2015:430). The interrelationship between CBT development, holistic development, 'specific' CBT facilitation and holistic facilitation are important and are put forward as necessary to achieve the goal of long-term, holistic community development. When sustainability is being achieved, the link with external facilitators should eventually not be necessary, as the CBT venture will be able to wean itself off from the control of Government or an NGO as it consistently starts generating income in a self-sustaining manner (Mizal, Fabeil & Pazim, 2014:25).

Towards a model of external partner participation in CBT development

The above discussion indicated the need for specific requirements that characterize the nature of the relationship that should subsist between the external partners and the community, the need to embrace a long-term holistic view of the facilitation process, and the recognition that the end game remains the empowerment and self-reliance of the community within the context of a holistic community development perspective. Table 1 posits the various types of facilitators and the relevant types of involvement in CBT. While this is not exhaustive, Table 1 provides an indication of the variety of possible contexts in which facilitators can be involved in CBT development.

Table 1. Various types of external actor involvement in CBT. Author elaboration.

Type of entity	NGOs, Government, private sectors, other public institution (e.g university), cooperative, and so forth
Approach	Bottom-up
	Top-down
Type of involvement	Facilitation
	Participation
Level of involvement	'Internal' ownership of CBT ventures as in the form of shareholding
	External collaboration
Length of involvement	Short-term (official project duration)
	Long term (beyond the official project duration)
Sector of involvement	Education/skill development, marketing, quality control, funding and so forth
Role beyond CBT development	Conflict resolution, 'training ground' for general community development, networking, information sharing, joint projects, advocacy

Ideally, external parties should follow the following key approaches to enhance the chances of CBT success and development:

- Be facilitative – this can be done by pursuing a coaching or mentorship role through guiding and training.
- Follow a bottom-up approach – this is the preferred approach because it embraces the participation of communities in matters that affect them and acknowledges the importance of their role.
- Remain external to the CBT ventures (do not own full or part of the CBT ventures) – any full or partial ownership can be viewed as control-seeking in the venture.



- Facilitate a long-term but ‘temporary’ relationship with the CBT ventures – this meant to ensure sustainability without tainting the facilitator with imperialist tendencies of subjugation and control.
- Be involved in any sector as required, however, education/skill development, funding and marketing are viewed as key sectors of involvement.

Figure 1 shows more detail – with bold as reflecting the preferred routes – principally the possible strategies of external actors/facilitators along the stages of CBT development. From the outset, it is important to underline that the model should not be considered rigidly but specific flexibilities are accepted based on each specific local context and so are adjustments and blending or synthesis or hybridisation of various matters exposed in the model. It is relevant and pertinent that all processes should be done in a bottom-up and facilitative manner so that with time, the community is able to continue alone – empowerment and self-reliance should be seen as the final goal.

Furthermore, at the initial stages monitoring and evaluation can be facilitated by an external party, the community should progressively learn how to do it alone so that the services of the external party will not be needed anymore because the community will be able to do it themselves. It can be the role of the external party to facilitate this process of building the independent capacity of the community to perform monitoring and evaluation functions. This implies that remaining within a bottom-up and facilitative approach, the ‘training ground’ for general community development can be sustained in a cyclical fashion involving external long-term collaboration in various sectors in order to enhance the chances of long-term holistic community development, not just CBT development. The dotted arrows indicate that while facilitators can be needed from time to time, this should not be forever but should be taken as a long-term but temporary approach.

Thus, reliance on external parties should not be seen as continuous and ongoing, but with intervals and an end until full independence the CBT project is achieved by the community. It can also be noted that while the precondition stages should not be taken as compulsory, they are strongly recommended as they can strongly improve the subsequent stages and enhance the chances of success of the CBT project (on the relevance of CBT precondition see Jugmohan & Steyn, 2015).

The facilitator should be involved in external facilitation and collaboration and not acquire ‘internal’ ownership and management of the CBT venture itself. At the same time, it is important that the facilitator is able and ready to be involved in various aspects and sectors needed in CBT development.

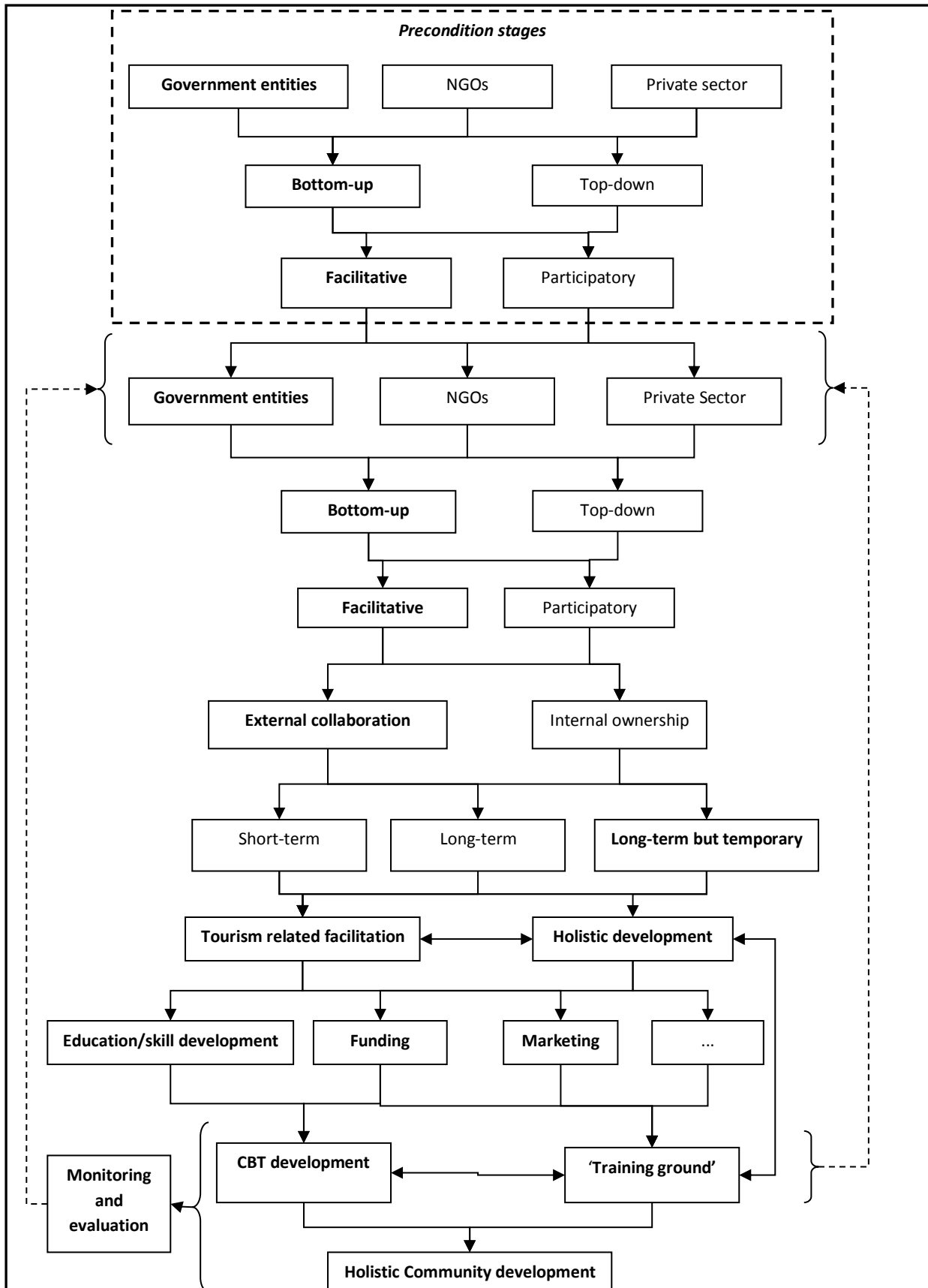


Figure1. Facilitators' routes (in bold proposed preferred routes).
 Source: Authors



It is important that the facilitator possesses adequate expertise and capacity specific to CBT development. Without such specific expertise, all the processes risk being shaky from the outset leading to long term community frustration with the possibility of re-producing under-development instead of the supposed development. Local facilitators are viewed more favourably and in a positive light as they could have more local knowledge and can be involved on a long-term basis. Whereas international facilitators may have more financial resources, their long-term involvement is not guaranteed. Therefore, international parties, while furnishing financial resources or other instruments not available at local level, they should 'decentralise' their intervention and delegate the practical implementation and 'management' of the CBT project to the local facilitator (this it is not unusual). Importantly, that the international facilitators agree to assist the local organisation also in a long-term (but temporary) context so that the local organisation can become independent.

In discussion, it can be emphasised that CBT remains important in circumstances where communities have natural, human and physical endowments which can be utilised as tourist attractions for the benefit of the community. Depending on the quality of the community leadership and strength of community cohesion within the community, and the infrastructure and touristic attractions available in the area, CBT ventures can be initiated for mutual and common benefit. Whether the communities initiate these CBT ventures by themselves or with the support of external parties and or government, external support should be temporary if the ultimate goal is to emancipate and empower communities for self-reliance and independence. This article favours bottom-up approaches as they tend to be participatory and embrace community involvement in decision-making. The role therefore of the external party ideally should be facilitative and offering guidance through mentorship and coaching including funding where necessary and the provision of market intelligence and skills development. These preconditions are necessary for holistic community development which goes beyond CBT.

Conclusion

Community-based tourism is a tourism development strategy that is used around the world especially in relation to disadvantaged communities. Various definitions and models of CBT development have been proposed. A main factor in CBT development which is seen as the usual (although not always) required external assistance, is the need for a facilitator(s). Within this context, this article has explored various aspects related to facilitators' involvement in CBT development. As already mentioned, this article does not propose that CBT cannot be started and implemented by communities themselves (this in fact is what ideally should happen) but it managed to examine the various characteristics of involvement when external entities are present (as often the case).

After the examination of various aspects related to facilitators' involvement in CBT, the article advances a possible model that shows the various stages and possible routes which the facilitators in CBT development can take. Within this model, it is proposed that, at minimum, external parties in CBT development should play a facilitative role in a bottom-up approach, remain external to the CBT ventures (by not owning full or part of the CBT ventures), facilitate a long-term but 'temporary' relationship with the CBT ventures and be involved in any sector as required, related to education/skill development, funding and marketing). While various entities could be involved as facilitators, the role of government is considered to be very essential. At the same time, it is important that the facilitator is properly skilled for the 'job' of CBT facilitation.

While further research is welcome, it can elaborate on the proposed model which this article proposes - a model of external partner participation in CBT development - which is intended to contribute to the literature and knowledge related to CBT development. Thus, the



contribution of this articles is related to the need to expound on the various aspects of facilitator involvement in CBT development.

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