



# Community-based tourism development: a Hiking Trails perspective

Dr. Erasmus Mzobanzi Mnguni \*  
Head of Department, Hospitality and Tourism Department  
Durban University of Technology  
P. O. Box 1334, Durban, 4000, South Africa  
Email: [erasmus@dut.ac.za](mailto:erasmus@dut.ac.za)

Dr. Andrea Giampiccoli  
Department of Hospitality and Tourism  
Durban University of Technology  
PO Box 1334, Durban, 4000, South Africa  
Email: [andrea.giampiccoli@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.giampiccoli@gmail.com)

Corresponding author\*

## Abstract

Community-based tourism (CBT) is an alternative form of tourism development that aims to contribute to holistic development of disadvantaged community members. The relevance of CBT is growing and while CBT development may have many opportunities, it also boast various and relevant challenges. Thus, specific CBT development models are required to enhance CBT chances of success. Hiking trails are seen as a possible option to local development specifically, but not exclusively, to rural areas. In addition heritage tourism is also seen as a relevant tourism sector. In this context, this paper proposes a specific model for CBT link to hiking trails development as trails mostly based on the local cultural and natural assets. The paper that is based on desk research intends to contribute to the tourism literature in relation to community development by specifically proposing a model of CBT hiking trails development. After an introductory section, the paper will explore matters related to CBT and trails development leading to a proposed CBT hiking trail development model. Thereafter, an initial suggestion about a possible CBT hiking trails system in the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa is briefly outlined. A conclusion will terminate the paper.

**Keywords:** tourism; community-based tourism; hiking trails; South Africa

## Introduction

Tourism is recognized as one of the global leading industry in the world (Thomas & Raj, 2014:26). As such, it has also been proposed that, notwithstanding possible uncertainty and misunderstanding, "tourism as a global phenomenon is not debated" (Smith, 2004:23). A variety of developing countries employ tourism as a channel towards community socio-economic development, especially in rural contexts (Abdul Razzaq, Zaid Mustafa, Suradin, Hassan, Hamzah & Khalifah, and 2012:10). At the same time it needs to be noted that the development criteria of a country now includes equality, regional balance, average living standard and 100% access to basic facilities for everybody. Therefore, tourism has been identified as a possible development tool to contribute to achieving these development criteria (Hareesha Reddy, 2014:5). It is within this context that it can be proposed that "Tourism activities, using natural attractions in remote rural areas, can be an important source of economic diversification and livelihood opportunity" (Hasan & Islam, 2015:288).



The community-based tourism (CBT) development approach to tourism development can be seen as a specific strategy to foster more equitable and just (tourism) development, specifically in favor of disadvantaged groups in society (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016). CBT “has been promoted as a means of development whereby the social, environmental and economic needs of local communities are met through the offering of a tourism product” (Naik, 2014:42). At the same time, in many areas around the world “the concept of rural trails or heritage routes has been used, particularly in the context of promoting rural tourism” (Lourens, 2016:14). However, also more urbanized area such as South African Townships can facilitate tourism routes/trails (see an example in Marschall, 2012).

This paper is about CBT hiking trails within a cultural tourism perspective as “The importance of cultural tourism is continuously increasing within the total tourism market” (Nagy, 2012:46). The idea of this article comes from the example given by Hasan and Islam (2015) on CBT hiking Trail development. Hasan & Islam (2015) propose CBT hiking Trails in Bangladesh. Specifically, this article will explore the possible development of CBT hiking trails in the South Coast of the Kwa Zulu - Natal Province, South Africa, which is Ugu District Municipality and its surroundings. Therefore, this article aims to contribute to the literature related to, firstly, CBT and secondly, hiking trails within a tourism perspective. Firstly, a literature review will revise matters related to CBT, and secondly a section will examine hiking trails development process and put forward the article’s own CBT hiking trail development process model. Thereafter, a hiking trail system in the South Coast of KwaZulu – Natal Province, South Africa, will be proposed. A conclusion will then terminate the article.

## Literature review

It is important from the outset to recall and keep in mind that when dealing with the term ‘community’ specific care needs to be considered as “different interpretations and difficulties of the concepts of ‘community’ are acknowledged” (Giampiccoli, Jugmohan & Mtapuri, 2014:658). A conceptualization of community proposes that community “is the scenario of bringing people together for a purpose. It is structuring a collective mind-set, which involves sharing and using resources in an equitable and sustainable way. Community means relationships, at all levels, and how these relationships are harnessed to produce results. Community development therefore, in its ideal form, is people centered and driven; and involves a direct interactivity in any development process” (Naik, 2014:43). It can be added that “Community means individuals with some kind of collective living, responsibility and the ability to make decisions by representative bodies” (Hareesha Reddy, 2014:5). Within this context a link between CBT and community development can be found when suggesting that “CBT and community development are inherently connected, because they share the same natural and cultural resource. Culture and social norms determine not only resource use but also structure and internal and external relationships” (Nataraja & Devidasan, 2014:75).

CBT has been proposed since the 1970s as a way to foster economic empowerment and while “it saw tremendous success in some parts of the world [...] in some other parts of the world it was a complete failure. So in this way the community based tourism (CBT) is partially successful” (Naik, 2014:42). Fundamental is, therefore, how CBT is started, facilitated and implemented- that is “many authors claim that the problems encountered in the community-based tourism approach stem from the methods and techniques employed in its implementation” (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013:882). In this context Saayman and Giampiccoli (2016:179) propose that “the specific procedure of intervention and influence on CBT projects should be seen as a key determinant to verify the proper advancement of CBT development.” The same authors (Saayman & Giampiccoli, 2016:179) continue by observing



that “It is not appropriate to judge the failure of CBT as a concept or practical intervention when in most (that is, almost all) cases, its own development has been incorrectly facilitated and managed.” For example, “A number of authors report community resentment to top-down approaches by external organizations [...], governments, and national elites” (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013:882). Locally originated, with exclusive external facilitative (non-financial) assistance, it can be successful when specific conditions, such as a strong community agency are present (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013; on the facilitative approach see also Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013).

In this context it is relevant to keep in mind that “CBT is far from a perfect, prepackaged solution to the community problems. Nor is it a miracle cure or a knight in shining armor that will come to save the community. In fact, if not carefully applied, CBT can cause problems and bring disaster” (Thomas & Raj, 2014:28; see also Nataraja & Devidasan, 2014: 67). It is fundamental to understand the reasons of failures of CBT as a development tool (Naik, 2014: 43) to be able to find better solutions. For example, to better implement CBT development, it could be necessary “to measure the community involvement, community awareness, community complexities, community benefits from tourism and also understand the community complexes in the destination areas” (Naik, 2014:42). Thus, “Those who intend to put CBT into practice need to fully understand the underlying ideas, principles and components behind CBT” (Nataraja & Devidasan, 2014:67).

Importantly, CBT should be understood not just from a business perspective. “CBT is not simply a tourism business that aims at maximizing profits for investors. Rather, it is more concerned with the impact of tourism on the community and environmental resources” (Thomas & Raj, 2014:28). In CBT the business perspective and the community development perspective need to work together, because they are both needed to enhance the chances of success of CBT development. CBT is community owned, that is “CBT is managed and run by the community itself, management decisions are made by local people and profits go directly to the community” (Nataraja & Devidasan, 2014:68). CBT has been defined and interpreted in many ways, however, “while a single model of CBT development seems unrealistic, the different options should in principle remain within the specific main aim of CBT – to facilitate holistic individual/community development including empowerment, social justice, skills/education and so on” (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016:162).

As much as CBT development should be a fully endogenous process, often external facilitators are needed (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016:156). It follows then that “Community development is a process whereby the efforts of Government, NGOs or any organization are united with those of the people to improve the social, cultural, and economic conditions in communities” (Hareesha Reddy, 2014:5). In advancing CBT development “individuals, organizations, government with pro CBT attitude should come forward to instill confidence among the community to take up CBT ventures. It is the responsibility of the government to support them as and when needed” (Hareesha Reddy, 2014:7). Government is key/fundamental but South Africa lacks skills in CBT at government level, thus university expertise can be useful to complement government personnel towards facilitating CBT development (Giampiccoli, Saayman, & Jugmohan, 2014). This is applicable to South Africa and other contexts where it has been mentioned that “the development of a successful



community-based [tourism] route, and marginal enterprises requires direct funding support from the national government for enhanced tourism development and route promotion” (Rogerson, 2009:36). The need is to find solutions and conditions to facilitate CBT, thus amongst possible solutions to facilitate CBT development, it has been proposed that “Certain portion of funds can be dedicated towards initiating tourism projects for the community. Interest free loans, subsidies etc. can be made applicable to the CBT projects as special cases. The government can keep separate funds and make sure that the funds are properly channelized for the community tourism development projects only. The government can also support the co-operative societies, associations, NGOs to raise the funds for the CBT projects. The communities can also be assisted to enter into private partnerships for the CBT development” (Hareesha Reddy, 2014:7). Partnership can take different forms, for example “The community may choose to partner with a private sector to provide capital, clients, marketing, tourist's accommodation or other expertise. Subject to agreement to the ideals of supporting community development and conservations, and to planning the tourism development in partnership with the community, this partner may not own part of the tourism enterprise” (Thomas & Raj, 2014:27). The long-term success of CBT development “depends on its integration with the mainstream tourism industry, especially through partnerships with the private sector. Such partnerships could move CBT up the value chain (higher-quality products and higher-paying customers), and in the process expand its market” (Hamzah, 2014: 596). Importantly, however, partnership with private sector (or government bodies and NGOs) should have specific characteristics.

Mtapuri and Giampiccoli (2013:12) argue in the conclusion of their article that “whatever type of CBT services or facilities is adopted, the ventures should remain fully owned, managed and controlled by community members (or groups of independent micro and small ventures under the same CBT management organization); external partners should provide facilitative and other supporting services such as marketing and not be partners in the CBT ventures themselves”. Thus, beside the mentioning that partnership can be formal or informal in nature, two main issues are relevant “firstly, the partnership should be ‘temporary’ but long term in cases where it is deliberately directed towards capacitating and empowering the community to gain greater independence and bargaining power in relation to external entities; and secondly, the CBT venture itself should not be part of a partnership” (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016:163).

It is through following this approach that “CBT remains nested within its initial conceptual understanding, which facilitates community empowerment and self-reliance in a holistic community development perspective” (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013:9). Various services, products and activities can be part of, or linked with CBT development. In CBT “activities should value the local handicrafts, celebrations, music, dance, clothing, myths and legends. In addition, the gastronomic services in the communities should prefer the local culinary traditions and the local food products” (Höckert, 2009:21). Thus, CBT includes a variety of products, facilities and services. For example, it may include “home-stay families, community tour guides, craftsmen, performers, community leaders, local restaurants, farmers, and other interesting roles. Guests may stay with a local family in a home-stay, in a community-owned lodge, or even a community campsite. Local transport is used when traveling during the program” (Hasan & Islam, 2015:290). Table 1 also suggests a number of CBT products and services.



**Table 1.** Examples of CBT accommodation, activities and attractions. Source: CBI, 2014:2.

Accommodation	Activities	Attractions
Bed & Breakfast	Boat trips	Cultural centre
Hammock	Cooking workshops	Farms
Lodge	Dancing	Local markets
Open air	Handcraft workshops	Museum
Tree house	Hiking	Plantations
Tent	Volunteering	Wildlife sanctuaries
Local family/homestay		

Other authors (Hasan & Islam, 2015:291; Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013:8; Ndlovu & Rogerson, 2003:127) also emphasize the variety of sectors that can be associated with CBT, even mentioning the fact that in CBT you have direct and indirect beneficiaries. Sectors linked to CBT (or ways that can serve for indirect benefits) can be for example: Arts and crafts; Construction and maintenance; Cultural group; Levy payment for community-wide project; and Catering service (See Hasan & Islam, 2015:291; Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013:8; Ndlovu & Rogerson, 2003:127). In South African context, for example, local food has been studied and proposed as having potential within the CBT development milieu (see Mnguni & Giampiccoli, 2015; Giampiccoli & Haywards Kalis, 2012; Boonzaaier & Philip, 2007; Boonzaaier, 2009). A trail system in Uganda shows the direct and indirect benefits of the trail and in relation to ownership and management it is mentioned that “The local community members formed these community groups that manage these heritage sites, and they ensure that the tourism activities contribute to Buganda culture preservation and conservation, and also generates income for the people who are directly and indirectly involved in the project” (UCOTA, online).

While from a community perspective “Community-based development empowers people to be more aware of the value of their community assets - their culture, heritage, cuisine and lifestyle” (Naik, 2014:43) from a visitor perspective CBT allows visitors to experience and learn about specific local cultures and traditions (Thomas & Raj, 2014:27). Visitors need to be attracted to each specific trail, thus marketing is key in CBT hiking trail development. However, it seems a positive time for CBT, as it is relevant that “*Demand for CBT is growing* because of increasing interest in holidays that include new experiences and an authentic cultural experience” (CBI, 2014:10, emphasis in original).

This last matter should recall the argument that CBT should be considered as any other business in many of its features and “like any other business, has to be economically viable, with proper accountability, a management system, appropriate decision making processes, networking and so on” (Giampiccoli, Jugmohan, & Mtapuri, 2015:1211). Thus, the development of CBT hiking trails can be valuable if properly managed. However, in this context it has to be kept in mind that marketing and market access remain challenges in CBT. As mentioned: “Marketing and market access are fundamental conditions for the success of CBT ventures. However, these are often the most difficult conditions for a community to attain and accomplish on its own, due primarily to a lack of knowledge and resources and difficulties in attracting Tourists” (see Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013:10). It is also relevant to note that general public awareness on CBT should be advanced so that “CBT marketing should also promote public awareness of the differences between CBT and mass tourism, educating people to realize the importance of CBT as a community tool for resource conservation and cultural preservation. This will attract appropriate tourists for CBT” (Nataraja & Devidasan, 2014:70).





Another specific challenge in CBT is capacity building. “Longer-term success, however, requires a transition from a “local champion” to a more diversified management model” (Hamzah, 2014:591). It is necessary to know that “Nurturing local communities to become self-reliant is the most difficult challenge during the early inception stages of a CBT project, during which “hand holding” and allowing for local champions to assume leadership roles are important for success. Given that CBT is a dynamic process, focusing on capacity building that appropriately addresses different stages of development, is essential” (Hamzah, 2014, 596). For example “Before developing CBT [...] it is necessary to prepare and build the capacity of the host community to manage tourism” (Nataraja & Devidasan, 2014:70). On the same token self-reliance should be a fundamental final goal in CBT, however a “major challenge facing CBT projects is a dependency on donors due to the local community’s lack of financial and organizational capacity” (Hamzah, 2014:593).

### **Towards a CBT hiking trail development process**

Literature on CBT hiking trails is present (see Hasan & Islam, 2015; Höckert, 2009; Hugo, 1999) and tourism routes or trails are not new. The *Camino de Santiago* has a long history of pilgrimages along its routes (see Murray & Graham, 1997). It is interesting that the *Camino de Santiago* can also demonstrate that the length (see map Murray & Graham, 1997:515) of the routes or trails, while relevant, is not fundamental and tourists are willing to walk also long distances in many days to achieve their specific objective. Thus, a trail can be seen possible from just a few hours walk within the same day to a multi-days endeavor.

A document related to CBT and routes proposes that “routes are developed across the globe on various scales such as across countries as in the examples of the Silk Routes in Eastern Europe and the Camino de Santiago in Western Europe. Terminology used to describe the concept also varies greatly such as “themed routes”, “trails” and “tourism byways”. Trails usually refer to the concept on a smaller geographical scale, which indicates the ability of visitors to engage in the attraction on foot, bicycle, or horseback” (Lourens, 2007:80). While conceptual framework of various types (length) of routes/trails can be useful (as it is used here) to develop a specific CBT hiking trail development framework, this paper specifically remains interested in short distance (from a day walk to no more than about a week walking) CBT hiking trails. However, within the context of CBT development framework (the trails and route are within – or need to be contextualized within – a CBT approach) most of the development models is seen with commonality in both long and short distances routes and trails.

A village trail can be defined as “a hub along a long-distance trail where tourists can rest, enjoy scenery, services, and culture of the community with its own character and charm. These ‘Trail Villages’ can be developed as tourist-service-points providing home stay facilities or camp ground, food and beverage etc.” (Hasan & Islam, 2015:287). A Trail Village may also arrange cultural shows for tourists which tourists have to pay for and also arrange for a visit to a local handicraft shop. Thus, “Planned tourism development in trekking trails and the provision for home stay in adjacent villages can change the economic condition of poor tribal people living in remote areas” (Hasan & Islam, 2015:287).

This article explores and proposes CBT development in the form of hiking trails for cultural tourism. Cultural tourism “involves visits to cultural attractions and events” (Nagy, 2012:46). Heritage tourism remains within cultural tourism, thus “heritage is an important part of cultural Tourism” and “Heritage elements can be divided into two main groups: cultural and natural heritage; and cultural heritage can be divided into two sub-groups of tangible and intangible elements” (Nagy, 2012:47). A proposed definition is:



Cultural and Heritage Tourism is a tool of economic development that achieves economic growth through attracting visitors from outside a host community, who are motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution. Such travel is focused upon experiencing cultural environments, including landscapes, the visual and performing arts and special lifestyles, values, traditions, and events (Silberberg in Nagy, 2012:47).

In this context this paper hereby proposes a CBT cultural hiking trail as a hiking trail based on local cultural and natural heritage, owned and managed by disadvantaged community members as a tool to contribute to holistic community development.

As written above, fostering successful CBT needs proper facilitation and implementation strategy. Therefore, it is necessary to advance a possible CBT hiking trail development process as a possible guideline to facilitate and implement a CBT hiking trail. This can be done by combining CBT development and Hiking trails development models. The models associated to CBT are numerous (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016:155) and their full survey goes beyond the scope of this paper. Tuffin (2005:180; also re-proposed by George, Nedelea and & Antony, 2007:5) proposed 6 main steps for CBT development, whereas the *Handbook on community based tourism: How to develop and sustain CBT* (Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009) proposed 9 steps and Pinel (1999) in his community-based tourism planning (CBTP) model proposes 4 main phases each with its own specific details (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Three models of steps to follow in CBT development

Steps	Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009	Tuffin, 2005	Pinel, 1999
1	Assess Community Needs and Readiness for Tourism	Choose a destination	Community assessment & organization development phase
2	Educate and Prepare the Community for Tourism	Complete a feasibility study with the community	Planning & preparation phase
3	Identify and Establish Leadership / Local Champion	Create an action plan	Delivery phase
4	Prepare and Develop Community Organisation	Set up an administrative system	Monitoring & evaluation phase
5	Develop Partnerships	Prepare for operation	
6	Adopt an Intergrated Approach	Monitor and evaluate	
7	Plan and Design Quality Product		
8	Identify Market Demand and Develop Marketing Strategy		
9	Implement and Monitor Performance		

Sources: Tuffin, 2005:180; George, Nedelea and & Antony, 2007:5; Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009:5; Pinel, 1999:279.

In addition it can be added that CBTP is related to: 1) introducing more “strategic” and “future” thinking or visioning to tourism development; 2) relying on residents and community



leaders as their own “experts” about community needs and desirable tourism influences; and 3) providing opportunities to clarify community strengths, challenges, obstacles, and opportunities for social, economic, and ecological well-being” (Pinel, 1999:280).

In an attempt to produce comprehensive models of CBT development it has been indicated that “the origins of a CBT venture can either be local (emanating from within or outside the community) or external to the community” where a variety of entities (such as government bodies, private sectors and NGOs) can be involved in the process which can be top-down or bottom-up (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016:160). Furthermore, specific types of partnership can be formed, such that “partnerships could be formal or informal and the partnership could be internal or external” and the CBT venture itself can also be present in different types, formal, informal, different scale and so on (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016:160).

As a first pre-condition stage, it also needs to be considered that CBT needs pre-conditions that need to be evaluated and managed to enhance its potential success (see Jugmohan & Steyn, 2015). Specifically the recognized themes related to pre-conditions are: Infrastructure; Physical/natural and cultural tourism assets; Market access and marketing; Product development; Profitability individual/ communal; Decision-making structures; Community capabilities; Financial resources; Community leader/initiator; Community interest in tourism; Local leadership/ government; threats to physical environment and culture (Jugmohan & Steyn, 2015:1069). Moreover, while all pre-conditions are relevant, it has been suggested that “All pre-conditions are not equally important, therefore the pre-conditions identified as critically important, for example, infrastructure, markets for the product, need for a skilled project manager, government support, capacity, and financial resources, needs to be a high priority” (Jugmohan & Steyn, 2015:1075).

Route and trails are present around the world and can have potential, especially for less developed areas. As explained “In several parts of the world, the concept of rural trails or heritage routes has been used, particularly in the context of promoting rural tourism [...] routes seem to be a particularly good opportunity for the development of less mature areas with high cultural resources that appeal to special interest tourists, who often, not only stay longer, but also spend more to pursue their particular interest...” (Lourens, 2007:1). Some authors also mention that “Route development has been viewed as the world’s best hope to secure sustainability in travel and tourism” (Rogerson, 2007:49). To note, for example, that a case from a Trail in Portugal has mentioned that “Over the past two years, following the development of the Rota Vicentina hiking trail, the number of tourists along the southwest beaches of Portugal has doubled” (Project Wealth, 2014). In relation to routes and trails development, various development steps have been proposed (Lourens, 2007, 2016; Irish Sport Council, 2012:28; Nagy, 2012:52). Thus, the following main phases have been indicated in relation to routes and trails development (see Table 3).

From an ecotourism products perspective, a trail development has been seen as having the following main stages: assessment; planning; evaluation; implementation; and monitoring/auditing (Hugo, 1999: 142). In this same context, within the implementation stage, community participation becomes relevant, thus “Trails can be a job creating tourism activity and much attention should be given to incorporate as much local expertise as possible during the implementation phase” (Hugo, 1999:148). Four specific issues are seen as relevant: 1. Building the trail itself; 2. Enhancing the enlightening aspect through interpretative and educational guides and maps, and information brochures are specialized services to be rendered by knowledgeable persons; 3.possible entrepreneurial opportunities in trails booking as trail owners will probably not do it; 4. “Looking after the trail provides job opportunities for a few people. Cleaning the huts and monitoring the trail surface and





facilities can occupy a number of people” (Hugo, 1999:148). This last point should be seen to be very relevant in the context of CBT were disadvantaged community members can enter the tourism sector in various position as CBT involve a number of products and services.

**Table 3. Route and trails development process.**

Steps	Lourens, 2007	Irish Sport Council, 2012	Nagy, 2012
1	The route must be conceptualized based on solid market research which identifies key target markets and their requirements;	Start Gathering Information & Write the Basic Trail Proposal	Selection of site or theme
2	An audit of tourism products within the designated area must be conducted;	Carry Out Initial Consultation with Landowners and Others	Search for information
3	To scrutinize the tourism assets and identify the unique selling features or experiences of the area and its products;	Establish A Trail Planning & Development Group	Creation of partner network and database
4	Developing a strategic plan combining market and offerings	Complete the Initial Trail Planning Questionnaire	Prototype elaboration
5	Determine the potential size of the possible membership base, investigate legal structure suitable for management operation of the route	Schedule / Complete - A Site Assessment Survey (NTO)	Economic evaluation
6	Develop a clear branding identity for the area	Develop / Agree - The Trail Development Plan	Finalization, entering the market
7	Develop an operation plan to take care of the day-to-day functions	Secure Trail Project Funding	
8	Plan the finance of the management organization	Plan & Complete Trail Development Work	
9	Think long term identity and draw upon resourceful people in the area to assist with this strategy.	Schedule a Final Inspection Survey (NTO)	
10		List Trail on National Trails Register (NTO)	

Sources: Lourens, 2007:93; Irish Sport Council, 2012:28; Nagy, 2012:52.

Specifically for a trail to be sustainable, a series of conditions should be present: “Firstly, the trail must be attractive to hikers — that is, it must possess features that make a large clientele of hikers interested in coming to visit. Secondly, the trail must be well-known — information on the trail should be easily available so that hikers around the world know about it, and so that they can plan trips along it. Thirdly, hiking infrastructure must exist along the trail — signs or markings that enable hikers to find their way, and lodging and resupply points that meet their day-to-day needs. Fourthly, the trail must be easily accessible by visitors — arranging hikes should not be so complicated or expensive that it turns away prospective hikers” (Rabineau & Pöytäniemi, 2015:2).

Moreover, hiking trail monitoring and maintenance is crucial for its long term sustainability. For example, amongst other matters “A trail will require ongoing maintenance to ensure it remains safe, continues to meet user expectations...” (Irish Sport Council, 2012:43). Diversification is an important feature in trail development as it is important that “destination managers should encourage product diversification in the area by putting systems in place to incentivise the correct product mix for the area” (Lourens, 2007:94). In this context the development (and maintenance and monitoring) of products, services and facilities for visitors associated with the trail can differ based on trails objectives, site and theme (see



examples in Irish Sport Council, 2012; Hasan & Islam, 2015; Hugo, 1999). Various trails show “the experiences visitors can expect when hiking, the degree to which local communities are connected to the trails’ tourism economies, and so on. What all trail-based hiking tourism projects share in common, though, is a certain supply chain: a list of hikers’ needs and expectations that must be met in order for any trail to be sustainable” (Rabineau & Pöytäniemi, 2015:1). For example, in relation to accommodation a case study proposed that amongst other issues “Accommodation facility for the trekkers should be improved and formalized so that the local people can earn more” (Hasan & Islam, 2015:297). As such, for example, community-based new business could be involved in the construction and maintenance of the trails facilities and infrastructures. A CBT hiking trail needs its ownership and management structure. It is important that the structure and management system of the CBT venture evolves from, and is linked to, the local cultural context, local resources and skills, not ‘imposed’ from the possible external facilitator and capacity building should be done accordingly to it (see Giampiccoli, Jugmohan & Mtapuri, 2014).

Based on the above a CBT hiking trail development process (Figure 1) is hereby proposed. It is fundamentally important that this process be carried out from its first initial stage by the community members themselves although external facilitators will often be required to facilitate the process. The facilitators should remain within the facilitative parameters, therefore, not becoming the owners of the process but just to facilitate and assist the community members in the process (the process should remain owned by the community members). Government bodies, beside to contribute as a possible facilitators, could assist in funding and specific legal requirement that could assist the establishment and growth and sustainability of the trail.

The trails development plan should include all the practical matters such as, for example, possible refurbishment/construction of facilities, amenities, the printing (or making the website) or marketing material, and the checking of possible needs of the structure along the trails (such as a bridge to across a river). However, each trail will cater for specific target of tourist, thus for more adventure tourism market a bridge to across a river may not be necessary as the river will be crossed in other possible ways. Structures of the trail can entail the decision to what type of accommodation structure (in multiday trail) have along the trail, such as single community lodge(s) or multiple micro/small accommodation ventures under a single umbrella organisation (see Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2013:8).

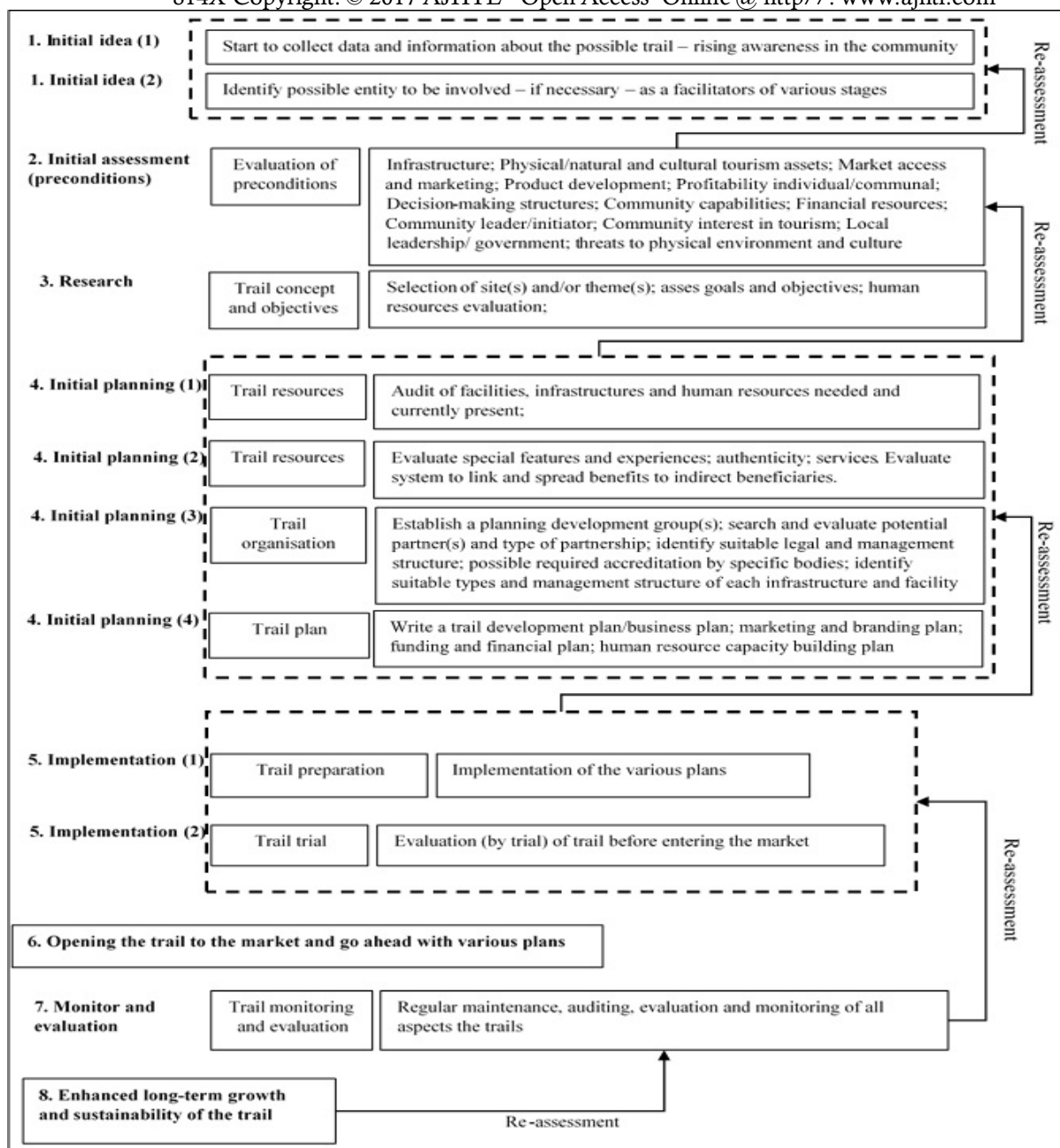


Figure 1. CBT hiking trails development process. (Source: own elaboration based on various authors)

Possible environmental issues such as land degradation due to possible overuse of the trail, consideration of natural sensitive areas and so on should also be considered along the stages of development (see for example Hugo, 1999) to be sure the environmental resources – that also represents parts of the tourism resource base – are properly exploited and managed in long term sustainable manner.

### A South African community-based tourism hiking trails proposal

Hiking trails in South Africa exist. They include, for example, hiking trails in the Namakwa District Municipality (see Discover South Africa, no date) and in Eastern Cape (see Eastern Cape Parks & Tourism Agency, no date). Still lately, it has been indicated that “Three new community-owned hiking trails have been developed by a group of young people involved in a project that aims to develop social entrepreneurship skills for youth and rural enterprises”



(Allison, 2015:10). The Namakwa Trail is specifically within a CBT approach, as described: “Embark on the Namakwa Community-based Tourism Trail where you can experience Nama culture at its best, stay in a coastal countryside township, fill up your tank with bio-fuel at a former Rhenish mission station, take a ride on a donkey cart and book a tour through the Richtersveld with a former Welcome Awards winner. Enjoy the Hantam cuisine and the hospitality of the 2013 ETYA provincial finalist. Participate in this unique community-based experience while travelling through the Namakwa region” (Discover South Africa, no date: 11).

In KwaZulu-Natal a number of tourism routes are present (see Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, online) and a simple search in the internet shows a variety of hiking trails such as the Umhlanga Lagoon hiking trail of just 2 km and Emoyeni Trail of 63 km over five days (SA-Venues.com, no date). Specifically the Ugu District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal South Coast seems not to have yet exploited and enhanced the potential of hiking trails in its inland areas (whereas the coastal areas are much more developed for tourism). Nevertheless, Ugu District Municipality indicates that there is a plan in the Ezingoleni Local Municipality for a project which includes the “development of an eco-tourism trail” (Ugu District Municipality, online). It is within this context that a tender for a *proposal for a multi activity trails network for the greater south coast* can be positioned (see Ugu South Coast Tourism, 2014). The Ugu South Coast Tourism (2013) Tourism strategy 2013-2017 document indicates in various parts the intention to develop trails, thus one objective mentions to “Develop an all-encompassing Eco - Cultural/Activity Trails Network (hinterland and coastal) for the District” (Ugu South Coast Tourism, 2014:45).

It is through following this context that this paper, after having advanced a CBT hiking trail development process above, goes ahead by proposing specific Hiking trails in the Ugu District Municipality and possible adjacent areas about 100 km South of Durban. Specifically, the Trails will be developed at first within the Umzumbe local municipality. This municipality falls under the Ugu District Municipality. The population in the Municipality is relatively young (children and youth making up 40% of population) and the more than 90% belong to black population group (Ugu District Municipality IDP, 2016:12). Importantly the Municipality “The rural-urban divide is a glaring feature in terms of development challenges as 80% of the land is rural and only 20% of the land is urban” (Ugu District Municipality IDP, 2016:11). The review document related to Ugu District Municipality Integrated Development Plan 2012/13 - 2016/17 (see Ugu District Municipality IDP, 2016) proposes various challenges in the Municipality. For example, “a situational analysis undertaken of the district in 2011/12 has painted a picture of a district that is underperforming and following a trajectory that is leading to growing unemployment and deepening poverty. Spatially, the district is divided into an urbanised coastal zone with a relatively resilient and diversified formal economy and a largely impoverished rural interior with some large commercial farms and many struggling subsistence farmers” (Ugu District Municipality IDP, 2016:121). Many people live on social grants (Ugu District Municipality IDP, 2016:13). A CBT hiking trails mostly based in rural areas could assist in rural development as the improvement of rural areas is seen as a priority. With the intensification of the promotion of tourism through tourism awareness campaigns in the area, local residents could increasingly becoming aware of the value and the contribution of tourism to job creation.

To establish the Trail system a specific partnership between a local non-profit organisation (Isivivane Heritage and Community Development Organisation) is foreseen as necessary so to advance both the local organisation and the local community in a unison effort and benefit gain. While future development cannot preclude further development beyond the initial planned geographical area initially, due to the size of the area, we are looking at focusing on



the Umzumbe local municipality, thus the proposed project will be done in the rural area of the south Coast of Kwa Zulu Natal which is called Umthwalume. The initial localisation of the project it is also important because “Umzumbe is the worst municipality within Ugu district that is affected by extreme poverty” (Umzumbe local municipality IDP, n.d.:21). The Ugu District Municipality IDP (2016:15) also recognize the possible contribution of tourism by indicating that while recognizing various challenges “the district boasts a considerable number of economic and development opportunities; which if explored successfully will be able to address the critical issues of unemployment and poverty. Thus amongst other items:

- In addition to the existing Tourist attractions along the coast (beach tourism, Golfing etc.) The rural hinterland holds a wealth of tourism potential, it remains largely underdeveloped as an adventure, eco and cultural tourism destination
- The district has been identified as a focus area for tourism development under the auspices of Provincial Growth and Development Plan (Inkululeko Projects) (Ugu District Municipality IDP, 2016:15).

The municipality does not present hiking trails that can link the various cultural and natural heritages assets and be used by tourists to explore the local fauna and flora and understand local cultural traditions. In this context it is relevant to note that specifically in the Umzumbe local municipality “There are no tourism infrastructure and services beyond the coastal corridor despite a diverse range of attractions within the rural hinterland” (Umzumbe local municipality IDP, n.d.:104) and one of the objective of the Umzumbe local municipality it is to encourage tourism linked to local heritage (see Umzumbe local municipality IDP, n.d). Thus, the CBT hiking trails proposed in this paper will start from Hibberdene, which is the local town, and stretch all the way to a heritage site known as Isivivane sika Shaka. The area boasts museums, heritage sites, traditional religious sites, cultural celebration events, mountains etc. Examples are the Ntelezi Msani memorial heritage site and Shembe religion place of worship.

The trail aims to form a CBT trails system that includes trails of various length from one day to multiday (the number of day should be evaluated and decided during the practical development of the project), thus various villages or location will be visited along the trail. In addition different trails options will be proposed so to cater for various tourist needs and requirements. As the trails will also consist of multiday options specific accommodation facilities will be organised together with food and other cultural and natural attractions and tourism services such as guiding, dancing, art and craft, local natural areas and so on. As such one trail may concentrate its attention on the natural heritage of the area linking various natural valuable places, while a second trail (much more longer) may connect various villages where tourist interested in cultural heritage can learn Zulu traditions and history, thanks to the local guides and their trail visit as the accommodation will be provided by local households.

It is envisaged that the community should advance itself the idea of the trails so as to become the owner and manager and thus reap the benefit thereof together with the partner (the local non-profit organisation) that will facilitate and participate in its share of responsibilities and possible benefits as specifically postulated by the agreement between the two parties (keeping in mind that poor local community members should be/become the real owner/manager and beneficiaries of the trails).





## Conclusion

Tourism is a leading global sector and CBT has been indicated as a development strategy that can contribute to community development. At the same time, tourism routes and hiking trails developments are being proposed in many parts of the worlds as tools to tourism, economic and community development. Keeping this as a background, this paper, after examining various CBT and hiking trails development process, has advanced its own model of CBT hiking trail development process including both CBT and hiking trail issues. A CBT hiking trail development process consisting of 8 main stages as has been proposed.

Thus, the mentioning of the idea of CBT hiking trail system in the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa has been advanced as a possible development option to contribute to local community development. The proposed trail will start from Hibberdene and run through the Umzumbe Municipality area known as Umthwalume. While specific 'practical' plans and implementation process could be evaluated and elaborated more in details this paper proposes the establishment of CBT hiking trail as a possible contributor to community development. In the above context the article's intention is to contribute to the tourism literature with specific reference to CBT and hiking trails.

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