

Monitoring and Evaluation in Community-Based Tourism: An Analysis and Model

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Abstract : A developmental state should use community engagement to facilitate socio-economic development for disadvantaged groups and individual members of society through empowerment, social justice, sustainability, and self-reliance. In this regard, community-based tourism (CBT) as a growing market should be an indigenous effort aided by external facilitation. Since this form of tourism presents its own preconditions, characteristics, and challenges, it could be guided by higher education institutions engagement. In particular, the facilitation should not only serve to assist the community members to reach their own goals; but rather also focus on learning through knowledge creation and sharing with the engagement of higher education institutions. While the increased relevance of CBT has produced various CBT manuals (or handbooks/guidelines) documents aimed to 'teach' and assist various entities in CBT development, this research aims to analyse the current monitoring & evaluation (M&E) manuals and thereafter, propose an M&E model for CBT. It is important to mention that all too often effective monitoring is seldom carried out thus risking the long-term sustainability and improvement of the CBT ventures. Therefore, the proposed model will also consider some inputs external to the tourism field, but in relation to local economic development (LED) matters from the previously proposed development monitoring and evaluation system framework. M&E should be seen as fundamental components of any CBT initiative, and the whole CBT intervention should be evaluated. In this context, M&E in CBT should go beyond strict 'numerical' economic matters and should be understood in a holistic development. In addition, M&E in CBT should not consider issues in various 'compartments' such as tourists, tourism attractions, CBT owners/participants, and stakeholder engagement but as interdependent components of a macro-ecosystem. Finally, the external facilitation process should be structured in a way to promote community self-reliance in both the intervention and the M&E process. The research will attempt to propose an M&E model for CBT so as to enhance the CBT possibilities of long-term growth and success through effective collaborations with key stakeholders.

Keywords : community-based tourism, community-engagement, monitoring and evaluation, stakeholders

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