

# A model of CBT networks and organizations: an African perspective and beyond

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## Abstract

Community-based tourism networks (CBT-N) are important both locally and globally. However, few studies are dedicated to CBT-N. This paper fills this gap and includes an examination of two CBT networks/associations (CBT-N) to validate their role and service in CBT. The two African CBT-Ns examined in this paper show the real need for partnerships and collaborations with various entities and the multiple services that the CBT-N offers for training, funding, marketing, capacity building and empowerment. This paper reviews related literature and the African CBT-N as a case study and proposes a CBT-N model. The model, while not claiming to be all-inclusive, attempts to illustrate the variety of possible collaborators within CBT-N and the wide range of services and activities that the various entities, in primis the CBT-N itself, can propose, harness and manage.

**Keywords:** *tourism; community-based tourism; community-based tourism network; community-based tourism organisation; community-based tourism association*

## Rezumat. Un model de rețele și organizații de turism bazat pe comunitate (CBT): o perspectivă africană și nu numai

Rețelele de turism bazate pe comunitate (CBT-N) sunt importante atât la nivel local, cât și la nivel global. Cu toate acestea, puține studii sunt dedicate CBT-N. Această lucrare aduce o contribuție la această lipsă de cercetări și include un studiu asupra a două rețele/ asociații CBT-N pentru a valida rolul și serviciul lor în CBT. Cele două CBT-N-uri africane analizate în această lucrare arată necesitatea reală de parteneriate și colaborări cu diverse entități și serviciile multiple pe care CBT-N-ul le oferă pentru formare, finanțare, marketing, consolidarea capacităților și împuternicirile. Acest articol analizează literatura de specialitate și CBT-N-ul african ca studiu de caz și propune un model CBT-N. Modelul, deși nu se dorește a fi atotcuprinzător, încearcă să ilustreze varietatea posibilelor colaborări din cadrul CBT-N și gama largă de servicii și activități pe care diferitele entități, în primul rând CBT-N-ul în sine, le pot propune, valorifica și administra.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *turism; turismul bazat pe comunitate; rețea turistică bazată pe comunitate; organizație turistică bazată pe comunitate; asociație turistică bazată pe comunitate*

## Introduction

Tourism has assumed profound global relevance and pre-eminence for development in various settings (Tolkach et al., 2012:3). The tourism sector is currently a well-acknowledged economic sector that is supporting the economic growth and development around the world (Stankova and Kaleichev, 2013:50). Simultaneously, community-based tourism (CBT) has been identified as an appropriate development model that is able to enhance the socio-economic benefits derived from tourism (Tolkach and King, 2015:386). Networks in CBT are also an important matter such that in various "parts of the world, community tourism networks or knowledge hubs play a key role in supporting CBT, sustainable tourism, rural and eco-tourism" (Asker et al., 2010:85). Moreover, it has been argued that "a networked, collaborative

approach to CBT offers better prospects for delivering effective and sustainable tourism development" (Tolkach and King, 2015: 386).

Despite the recognition and relevance of the CBT network (CBT-N) model, little research is available on the matter of networks in CBT (Tolkach et al., 2011:3). This paper contributes to filling this research gap by enhancing research and knowledge on CBT-N using cases from Africa. The paper aims to examine two CBT networks/associations (CBT-N) to verify their role and service in CBT.

## Methodology

The paper is based on a desk research. Therefore, besides literature and documents, the case study is based on the services offered and presented on the two CBT-N websites. These include capacity building/training, marketing and booking (and, if

offered, how to book and pay), partnership, standardization and accreditation. The case studies are about the Kenya Community-Based Tourism Network (KECOBAT) and Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA). Content analysis was performed to tease out these matters in a systematic manner. The next section presents the literature review.

## Literature Review

The literature review is a general summary of issues in CBT, such as capacity building and training, marketing, partnership and standardization and accreditation. Thereafter, a section is dedicated to CBT-N. A CBT-N model is subsequently suggested to better visualise possible contexts and roles of CBT-N.

## Community-based tourism

This paper does not present specific aspects related to ownership, control and management of CBT venture/projects. These are important and lie at the heart of CBT. Indeed, it is important to mention that a genuine CBT venture should be owned, managed and controlled by disadvantaged community members. Ideally, CBT should be linked to local control of the tourism sector (Giampiccoli and Saayman, 2016). Thus, "CBT highlights the importance of community empowerment and 'ownership' in tourism development as a means to sustain the community growth" (Abdul Razzaq et al., 2012:10). In contrast, the KwaZulu-Natal Province (South Africa) has a Community Tourism Organisation (CTO) strategy that "does not appear to be specifically dedicated to comprehensively facilitating CBT in disadvantaged communities but leans more towards the typical private sector" (Giampiccoli, Saayman and Jugmohan, 2014:1146). The Kenya Community Based Tourism Network (KECOBAT), on the contrary, emphasises the need for community control and benefits by disadvantaged community members to the exclusion of private companies (see Box 1).

Thus, this paper focuses on specific features, services, facilities and supporting actions that the CBT-N can offer and will engage the debate concerning ownership and management characteristics of the CBT ventures/projects. Networks can be established at various geographical levels (from local to global level), in both public and private domains and include various types of entities such as communities, NGOs, government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions and private firms (Trejos et al., 2008:17). "A 'network' describes a formal relationship that has been consciously and purposefully established to connect multiple actors" and differentiated by the level of integration,

centralization and interdependence (Tolkach and King, 2015: 389).

### Box 1. Eligibility of membership

For the purpose of determining whether an enterprise is a CBTE, the following criteria will be considered:

- Should be owned and operated by a community, community – organisation or by a resident individual who is a member of the local community and shall not include enterprises controlled by private companies;
- The tourism enterprise should be significantly benefiting the disadvantaged communities;
- There should be clear evidence of a community-benefit fund or other form of community benefit coming from the CBTE; and
- Whether in the opinion of KECOBAT, the proposed CBTE can be viable (reasons must be given).

Source: KECOBAT, (online, b)

Community-based tourism has been implemented in some developing countries with some success as well as with some challenges in some circumstances (Lenao, 2015:580). Even if the debate is raging about the success of CBT, unsuccessful stories have also been recorded (Kontogeorgopoulos et al., 2014). For example, a case in Botswana presented challenges including "poor accessibility during the rainy season, poor or inadequate marketing of the project, lack of capacity especially within the Trust Board, low income generation and the resultant heavy dependence on external funding" (Lenao, 2015:585). This indicates that issues such as marketing, funding and training can be challenges in CBT development. Mentoring and extension support as is done in agriculture can be considered to be necessary in tourism. Skilling and capacity development are crucial in the formative stages of the venture. By virtue of the fact that these ventures are usually initiated in rural areas where the people are usually less skilled and poorly resourced, support is needed in terms of training in packaging their final offerings (home stays, dances, food and ceremonies) and products (crafts and artefacts), costing for their services and products, marketing (to the domestic and international clientele) and so on.

Capacity building can be viewed as a basic requirement to be emphasized in CBT. Capacity building should be seen as an essential pre-condition in the implementation of CBT projects (Suansri, 2003:12; Giampiccoli et al., 2014a:659) and the need to skill and develop capacity in CBT was emphasised in a case in Uganda (Victurine, 2000). Moreover, capacity building in CBT takes some uniqueness

because it should serve as an empowerment and self-confidence building tool, to learn business and tourism management and so on (Twining-Ward, 2007:14). Community-based tourism capacity building should be understood and implemented as a tool to impart new community capacities to be utilized beyond the sole tourism milieu (Hamzah and Khalifah, 2009:14; Giampiccoli et al., 2014a:659). Capacity building is important to increase community participation and to deepen the community's understanding of the tourism sector. While training and capacity building can take time and need to be context specific, they "are key components of capacity building and courses including hospitality and tourism management at the community level, as well as general business skills such as marketing, communication, finance, and governance are imperative for success" (Dodds et al., 2018:1550). Training is necessary to allow the people involved to manage their enterprises and in various guiding, English language and the production of crafts are necessary (Dodds et al., 2018:1550). Education, capacity building and training can "give the communities a foothold in facing the open, competitive market and empowers people to begin to transform from beneficiaries to business managers" (Dodds et al., 2018:1550). We also add that training in the basics of foreign languages for communication is important in the same way as the tourists may want to casually learn local languages and some cultural habits and behaviour as part of the tourism experience.

CBT standards (CBTS) have been recognised as valuable and at the same time challenging for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). For example, as a consequence of the expansion and spread of CBT in the region, tourism ministries of these countries made a call for standardisation of CBT during planning and development in pursuit of sustainable development (Novelli et al., 2017:261). As indicated in the ASEAN CBT Standard Scope, the standards provide common performance indicators for managing tourism offerings available in communities under the auspices of a CBT Committee (ASEAN, 2016:3). It is to be noted that the aim is not to exclude communities but to provide communities with minimum standards of the quality of services expected and as a way to assure tourists of uniform service across countries that are in the ASEAN (ASEAN, 2016:3).

In that Asian context, the increase in the tourism sector and its linked factors such as competitiveness and product quality have stimulated "the demand for CBTS", so that in 2013 the Thai Community-Based Tourism Institute (CBT-I) introduced standards mostly in relation to community rights (Novelli et al., 2017:266). In addition, CBTS which would bestow pride to the community, increase stakeholder

confidence and improve access to markets as the standards 'remain a self-assessing, benchmarking and guiding tool rather than a certification' (Novelli et al., 2017:266). The CBTS derived from STS [sustainable tourism standards] to improve the CBT sub-sector but their relevance, practicality and effectiveness is not clear (Novelli et al., 2017:263). It could be said that work in CBTS still remains to be done. Standards have their pros and cons. The pros include consistency and compatibility in service provision, they provide an idea of what to expect and pitching value. The cons include the fact that standards may stifle innovation and while things change, standards tend to keep things static/constant because the ambition is to achieve consistency. Additionally, those who cannot meet the standards will lose out thus making standards exclusionary in disadvantaged communities where inclusion is necessary for justice and fairness.

A collaborative effort is fundamental in establishing and implementing CBTS. From the ASEAN case, members considered that a multi-stakeholder approach should be used to speedily harmonize national standards followed by the adoption of ASEAN-CBTS in the region for good practice in CBT (Novelli et al., 2017:276). This implies the need for collaboration undergirded by a proper national CBT network that coordinates and guides the task related to the establishment, promotion and implementation of CBTS. By implication, should standards be found to be desirable, CBT-N could be the appropriate platform to spearhead standardization given its wide communication capabilities and capacities to reach many players.

Marketing has been another key challenge in CBT. Communities often lack the capacity to launch effective marketing campaigns, let alone to produce their own marketing material for use both domestically and globally (Ashley and Garland, 1994:37). The marketing factor is essential for the success of their ventures upon which depends the number of tourists they will be able to attract (Dodds et al., 2018:1552). Communities need to be taught how to market their product (marketing skills) to expose their CBT enterprises to potential tourists using promotional activities such as posters, radio stations, signs and billboards and television shows (Vallabh et al., 2017:7). It is then imperative to evaluate the partnerships and it invokes the need for networks in CBT. This implies that communities will need the skills and technological know-how to market themselves both locally and globally, otherwise no one will know about their existence and the attractions they have to offer.

It is fundamental to consider the way CBT is implemented as various researchers "claim that the problems encountered in the community-based tourism approach stem from the methods and

techniques employed in its implementation" (Sakata and Prideaux, 2013:882). Within the global context of value chain and local impacts on livelihoods, a case study on CBT observes that CBT seems to contribute to empowering communities and improving livelihoods as opposed to traditional tourism in which the tour operator appropriated to himself the lion's share of the tourism earnings (Lapeyre, 2010:769).

The establishment of specific CBT-N at global levels is proposed when advocating "in favour of the establishment of an international body specifically related to all aspects of CBT" (Giampiccoli and Saayman, 2016:8). A CBT-N that upholds equality and equity would be the ideal model to promote these virtues. In this context, collaboration and partnerships are crucial but they also need specific characteristics that favour CBT. For example, in marketing and CBTS, cooperation "lowers the risk of failure for CBT and it is rare to find CBT initiated and controlled entirely by the community. External advice and links are a necessity to ensure success" (Dodds et al., 2018:1551). Models of partnership and collaboration in CBT can include joint ventures and various private-public partnerships which are debatable because some people think that external parties should be excluded. Various entities can be involved in CBT collaborative effort and include the private sector, the government and non-governmental sector for purposes of training, marketing, technical resources and funding (Dodds et al., 2018:1556). These efforts have been undertaken by international development agencies (IDAs) including NGOs which promote CBT by selling the concept in communities and unpacking its benefits as well as potential challenges during implementation (Novelli et al., 2017:260).

While partnership and collaboration are important in CBT projects involving various entities, it is equally important to remember that the type and purpose of the partnership is key in deciding the success or failure of a CBT venture. It is also important to establish the modalities upfront of how to break the dependency of the CBT project itself from external entities. In Kenya, the current model of CBT enterprises is based on the neo-colonial model which favours foreign investors and reinforces dependency while not working towards community empowerment, emancipation, independence and benefit (Manyara and Jones, 2007). The structuring of the ownership and management landscape of the venture should favour the local community if any significant benefits are to accrue to them in earnest. Window dressing will not help communities achieve their socio-economic emancipation and empowerment. Many authors have criticized external funding from foreign donors because this has created dependency and a lack of financial sustainability of many CBT projects (Kontogeorgopoulos et al., 2014:115).

A possible direction to take in partnerships is to ensure that it is temporary but only 'long-term' for capacity building and empowerment but the CBT venture itself should not be part of the partnership (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2016:163). Collaboration amongst CBT ventures should be embraced for the greater empowerment of the communities in the CBT sector. Limitations and difficulties in CBT can be mitigated through a collaborative network approach (Tolkach and King, 2015: 389). This is in line with the creation of the CBT-N.

### Community-based tourism networks / association

CBT-N are fundamental in assisting CBT development, because they can provide the moral support, impetus, resilience and reach in the long-haul which an individual entity may not be able to maintain (Asker, et al., 2010:77).

Partnerships and other forms of networks can provide critical support for CBT initiatives. A CBT venture that is well networked will be more successful and resilient than one that is internally focused and solely reliant upon CBT managers to build and sustain the CBT venture. Relationships between community tourism managers and external organizations/individuals can be invaluable for many aspects of tourism management from product development through to marketing, resourcing and the development of knowledge and capacity to ensure delivery of a quality CBT experience to visitors. Support can come in many forms, including financial assistance, training in tourism service delivery, networking community managers with other local providers and assistance with marketing (Asker, et al., 2010:78).

A CBT manual (Asker, et al., 2010:77; bold in original) proposes the following fundamental issues in relation to CBT-N:

- **Building positive relationships** between CBT management teams and other tourism stakeholders to **build a strong foundation for CBT**. Identifying, developing and managing positive relationships provides a strong foundation for effective and sustainable CBT;

- CBT, in many contexts, requires engagement with the private sector. Appropriate **relationships between communities and the private sector** can benefit community-managed initiatives;

- **Collaboration between communities and tourism authorities** (including peak industry bodies) can provide benefits around branding and positioning the CBT operation within the wider tourism marketplace; and

- **Regional community tourism hubs** can be a great source of support to CBT managers. These knowledge and networking centers can assist by

providing information, facilitating learning and connecting communities with private operators and government agencies, and aid agencies.

Community-based tourism networks "have potential to assist the socioeconomic development of less developed countries, especially in the case of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), where tourism is often associated with colonial and neo-colonial activities that contributed inadequately to local livelihoods [...] CBT networks may also provide an opportunity for rural development by strengthening fragile individual business operations" (Tolkach and King, 2015: 386). Community-based tourism networks have been proposed and can be useful in various contexts, as the few examples below illustrate. Thus, in relation to CBT and rural tourism, it is indicated that, in the competitive context of rural tourism locally and internationally, rural destinations "must also create networks among small enterprises in order to get noticed, and build capacity in terms of business skills, marketing, advertising and promotions, etc., and create partnerships with the private sector (e.g. tour operators and other accommodations) as well as alliances with national CBT associations where available" (Dodds et al., 2018:1562). A research on exploring models of CBT Network [CBT-N] in Timor-Leste conclude that the growth "of a CBT network should help build a strong national CBT tourism product in Timor-Leste that offers benefits to the wider population. It should also advance existing knowledge about the benefits of networking and of coordinating community-based tourism initiatives" (Tolkach et al., 2011:4). A case from Sarawak (Eastern Malaysia) proposes the possible role of CBT-N in training and marketing when mentioning generating "support networks with other CBT ventures in the region increases potential exchanges including 'look and learn' visits, which may serve to increase staff confidence and motivation. Such networks can also provide collaborative

marketing opportunities and other benefits from collaboration (e.g. setting standards and making a particular CBT product stand out in a specific region)" (Asker, et al., 2010:58). In the context of Thailand, "regional or national network can assist not only with marketing efforts, but also funding capabilities and knowledge-exchange between parishes and/or individual communities would be strengthened" (Dodds et al., 2018:1552). A case study about community-based tourism network in Jordan concludes that producing "NGOs will allow communities to work together transcending tribal differences and allowing people to become integrated into the socio-economic development process in Badia" (Al-Oun and Al-Homoud, 2008:50).

Given their possible potential, CBT-N are present around the world. Costa Rica presents two main CBT-N: the Costa Rican Association of Community-Based Rural Tourism (Asociación Costarricense de Turismo Rural Comunitario, ACTUAR) and the Cooperative Consortium - National Ecotourism Network (Consortio Cooperativo Red Ecoturística Nacional, COOPRENA). ACTUAR and COOPRENA have 23 and respectively 13 members (Trejos et al., 2008:17). The study from Costa Rica concludes that the "research has shown the importance of support networks in the development of CBRT in Costa Rica" (Trejos et al., 2008:23). Table 1 presents an example of some CBT-Ns around the world, demonstrating how the global growth and 'networking' of CBT entities is much a reality in spite of the challenges. However, much remains to be done to mainstream and internationalise CBT concepts and practices for tourism to become just, equitable and sustainable (Giampiccoli and Saayman, 2016:8).

Thus, the need remains to work towards "internationalise/mainstream CBT concepts and practice [...] together with possible options on how to establish a CBT international body with decentralised 'branches'" (Giampiccoli and Saayman, 2016:8).

**Table 1: Examples of CBT-N around the world**

<b>Network/Organisation/ Association</b>	<b>Geographical area</b>	<b>Website</b>
Kyrgyz Community Based Tourism Association "Hospitality Kyrgyzstan" (KCBTA)	Kyrgyzstan	<a href="http://cbtkyrgyzstan.kg/">http://cbtkyrgyzstan.kg/</a>
Thailand Community Based Tourism Network Coordination Center (CBT-N-CC)	Thailand	<a href="http://cbtnetwork.org/">http://cbtnetwork.org/</a>
Bali Community-Based Tourism Association (Bali CoBTA)	Bali	<a href="http://balicbt.org/">http://balicbt.org/</a>
REDTURS: Latin America Community-based Tourism Network.	Latin America (various countries)	<a href="http://www.redturs.org/nuevaen/index.php">http://www.redturs.org/nuevaen/index.php</a>
Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA)	Uganda	<a href="http://ucota.or.ug/">http://ucota.or.ug/</a>
Tajik Community Based Tourism Association (TCBTA)	Tajikistan	<a href="http://cbttajikistan.tj/en/">http://cbttajikistan.tj/en/</a>

CBT Vietnam	Vietnam	<a href="http://www.cbtvietnam.com/">http://www.cbtvietnam.com/</a>
The Kenya Community Based Tourism Network (KECOBAT)	Kenya	<a href="http://kecobat.org/">http://kecobat.org/</a>
Cambodia Community-Based Ecotourism Network (CCBEN)	Cambodia	<a href="http://crdtours.com/cambodia-community-based-ecotourism-network/">http://crdtours.com/cambodia-community-based-ecotourism-network/</a>
Costa Rican Association of Rural Community Tourism and network (ACTUAR)	Costa Rica	<a href="http://actuarcostarica.com/?lang=en">http://actuarcostarica.com/?lang=en</a>

It is also relevant to note from a different approach of networks at a more global level and wider/mainstream tourism sector that CBT-N and CBT itself need to be contextualised in the global framework and mainstream tourism. In this context, the possible "inability of small CBTEs [community-based tourism enterprises] to be included in mainstream distribution networks limits their potential to attract significant tourist numbers and generate revenues" (Lapeyre, 2010:767). Recent researches have moved from the micro-level approach to the more global milieu, therefore "tourism activities, including CBTEs, are now rightfully regarded as being part of a network of local, regional, national and international actors, and as a result tourism impacts are increasingly analyzed through the lens of the global commodity chain (GCC) theoretical framework" (Lapeyre, 2010:759). Networks allow the sharing of experiences, ideas, know-how; the expansion of the product offerings and value chains (from a micro to a global level) as well as providing a platform for learning and co-learning. By cooperating together through these networks, communities adopt and adapt new things from elsewhere while opportunities to innovate based on what has been learnt widen. These networks can help ventures to improve their bottom-line – profits in win-win circumstances.

### CBT-N in Africa

This section proposes the case study of KECOBAT (KECOBAT, online, a) and UCOTA (UCOTA, online, a), two CBT-N currently present in Africa. The aim is to examine what roles, features and services the two CBT-N have in order to assist CBT ventures in their development efforts. In Uganda, the origin of UCOTA is the result of an international (USA) programme and local support. UCOTA was established and officially launched in 1999 (Victurine, 2000). Specifically, a programme workshop promoted "the decision to create UCOTA in 1998" (Victurine, 2000:226). The establishment of UCOTA was a collaborative effort, as participants of the workshop "established a committee charged with creating and legalizing the association. They also acquired a commitment of technical support for the process from the North Carolina Zoo and from the Namibian Community-Based Tourist Association, whose representative

attended the training to assist in forging the new organization" (Victurine, 2000:226). Finally, UCOTA's ambition is to "represent the interests of various individuals and community-based tourism initiatives, hotels, and craft makers to ensure application of standards and quality control to enhance visitors' tourist experience and ensure that members benefit economically from Uganda's ecotourism" (Victurine, 2000:226). The UCOTA's own website presents the organization as "the official umbrella body that brings together and advocates for the interests of community tourism groups in Uganda to ensure that the local tourist host communities benefit from tourism" (UCOTA, online b). In addition, "UCOTA describes the emphasis on crafts as a useful strategy for keeping interest alive (through exports) until tourism recovers" (Ashley and Roe, 2002: 77). It is important to note that, in Uganda, there is another CBT organization (Community Based Tourism Initiative – COBATI), curiously and practically of the same age (1998) of UCOTA and working in favour of CBT ventures and products. COBATI seems focused on CBT training and projects implementation, such as the Bombo Community Tourism Initiative that is also financially supported by external private donors (COBATI, online b).

In Kenya, the CBT-N is more recent, in fact "KECOBAT was launched in August 2003 as a membership umbrella organization representing the interest of Community Based Tourism (CBT) organizations in Kenya" (KECOBAT, 2017). It is mentioned that "KECOBAT Network can be regarded as a "trade association" representing the poorest sections of tourism. Most of the members are based in communal land areas where a majority of them are poor and depend on subsistence livelihoods. By being the central point of contact, KECOBAT Network links these, often-inaccessible communities with the government, the private sector, NGO's, donors, and training institutions thereby making it easier and less time consuming to work with" (KECOBAT, 2017). Thus, the role of KECOBAT is proposed to "create a forum that afford communities grappling with tourism challenges work with one voice and purpose through empowering communities to mobilize their own capacities, learn from each other, effectively manage their resources and thereby make informed decisions to control activities that affect their lives and their

environment. This will make them actors rather than passive subjects in the tourism industry" (KECOBAT, 2017; KECOBAT, online g). Moreover, the KECOBAT plan is to "actively create appropriate mechanisms and incentives to open-up opportunities for rural communities to enhance their participation in the tourism industry especially in planning and running of enterprises on their land" (KECOBAT, online g).

The Kenyan KECOBAT has a collaborative approach stating that it "aims at meeting its goals by working with regional associations, group, CBOS [community-based organisations] and other like-minded bodies that work to the benefit of communities through tourism" (KECOBAT, online c) and its partners include National partners, national Associations, national NGOs, and Governments such as (see KECOBAT, online c):

- Ministry of Tourism;
- Tourism Regulatory Authority;
- Western Circuit Tourism Association;
- Uganda Community Tourism Association (UCOTA);
- Tanzania Association of Cultural Tourism Organizers (TACTO);
- Fredskorpset;
- East Africa Wildlife Society;
- Kenya Utalii College;
- Lake Victoria Tourism Association (LVTA);
- Mount Kenya Tourism Circuit Association; and
- Mombasa and Coast Tourism Association (MCTA).

The KECOBAT website (KECOBAT, online c) also shows possible links with more international entities presenting logos such as the European Union (European Union flag) and the SNV Netherlands Development Organisation. In the context of programmes, services or activities offered, KECOBAT includes (KECOBAT, online d): policy advocacy, marketing, homestays development, CBTE's training, capacity building and economic empowerment, accreditation and standardization, market access for CBTE's, central reservations for CBTE's, Fredkopset Norway (fk), research and consultancy, and certification. On the other hand, the Ugandan UCOTA offers capacity building, marketing, advocacy, networking, conservation, resource mobilization and consultancy (UCOTA, online b).

In terms of training, both CBT-N offered various training opportunities. Training is specifically seen as a core activity in UCOTA and the organization offers training in (see UCOTA, online b):

- Community enterprise concept development;
- Community business plan development;
- Community operations planning;
- Community interpretive guiding and tour planning;
- Community product sales and marketing;
- First Aid;

- Ecology;
- People of Uganda/ ethnicity; and
- Product development (Tourism and handcraft).

UCOTA boasts that in "Capacity building: UCOTA trains her members in various fields of tourism development such as business skills, interpretive guiding, bird watching, hospitality, handcrafts, group dynamics, site management, conservation of natural and cultural resources" (UCOTA, online b, bold in original).

The Kenyan side is also active in training and it is noted that "KECOBAT provides training opportunities to communities, local people and the informal sector who are interested in understanding the basics of community tourism and how to fully exploit the employment and business opportunities presented by tourism to their communal area [...] KECOBAT conducts training at both local and regional levels to help the local communities develop sustainable community tourism enterprises" (KECOBAT, online f). In Uganda, the above-mentioned CBT-N (COBATI) also focuses highly on training. Thus, COBATI training offers include topics such as (see COBATI, online b):

- Community Tourism as a tool for income generation and poverty alleviation in rural areas;
- Agritourism – Linking tourism to agriculture;
- Cultural Heritage – Linking tourism to local people and their cultures;
- Heritage Trails – Developing scenic and historical trails;
- Handicrafts and Tourism – Promoting ethnic designed crafts and tapping indigenous knowledge;
- Homestead Tourism – Linking tourism to rural hospitality, local lifestyles, and village environment as attractions;
- Support small and emerging local tourism businesses in rural Uganda; and
- Conservation of unique rural features and historic sites as community tourism attractions.

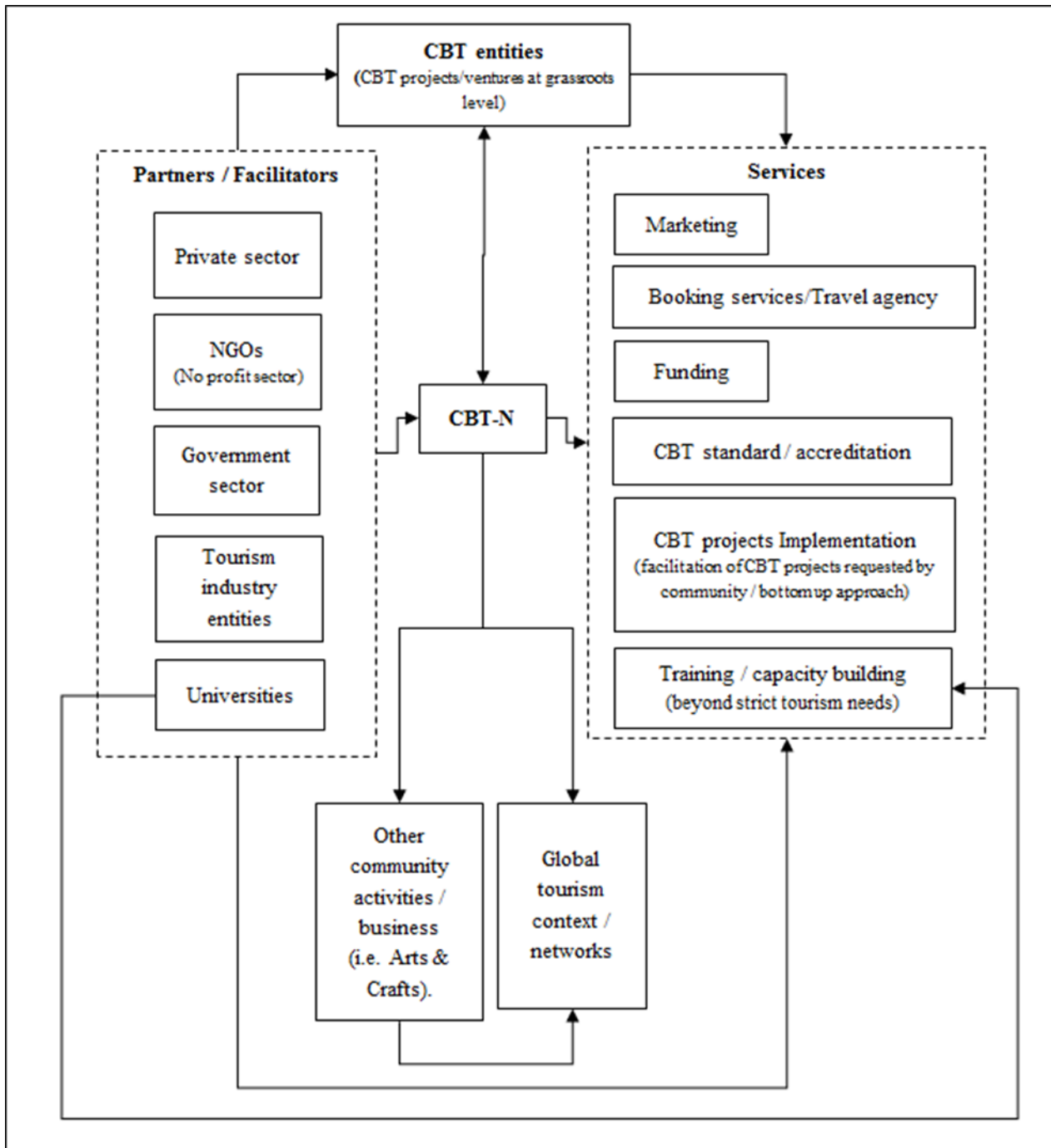
This variety of training possibilities lean towards what is proposed in CBT that training should be as much as comprehensive to give possibility to be applied beyond strict tourism needs. There is a need to attempt to consolidate all these features, service and products of CBT-N towards a model to establish a possible starting framework within which a CBT-N should be established and work.

### Towards a CBT-N model

Without claiming to be fully comprehensive, the present section illustrates a CBT-N model that assembles various aspects related to CBT-N. This model can be viewed as a starting point upon which specific CBT-N could take inspiration. Specific local contexts, resources, capacities and capabilities will also influence the final CBT-N model to be established in each case. As a background, it can be noted that,

as proposed in a Timor-Leste case study, success of the CBT-N will depend on strength of the steering and management committees, funding sources and

whether or not CBT practitioners are keenly involved in the network (Tolkach and King, 2015: 396).



**Fig. 1: CBT-N model (source: Authors)**

Collaboration and partnership are fundamental and present in current CBT-N. However, while partnerships with various entities can be beneficial, it is important to recall that partnership between CBT venture and the external entities, should be temporary but 'long-term', as proposed; "partnerships, whether informal or formal, should have two specific characteristics: firstly, the

partnership should be 'temporary' but in 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 and Giampiccoli, 2016:163). For example, a case study on CBT in a Bedouin's context proposed



that "Bedouins sharing their heritage with outsiders is encouraged, as long as they remain in control of their culture and are socially and economically empowered by working in tourism in partnership with government agencies and NGOs" (Al-Oun and Al-Homoud, 2008:51). This issue is fundamental. The need of independence and control is well recognized. For example, "KECOBAT is in the process of developing a community tourism Central Reservation system that will afford community members in Kenya low cost yet powerful and effective way to market their products and services locally and internationally" (KECOBAT, online e). While eventual technicality and methodologies related on how the reservation system work could be debated, it is fundamental to underline the need to have a centralised booking reservation system for CBT ventures. In this sense, KECOBAT seems to be following the right direction. In this context, the leading independency (break of dependency) in Uganda, UCOTA, aims "to become a self-financing membership association as well as an organization that will raise funds to continue with the capacity building initiated by the GMU [Grants Management Unit]" (Victurine, 2000:226). Thus, the model (Figure 1) presents an array of possible entities that could partner and facilitate/assist the CBT-N. The facilitators could work directly with the CBT-N entity, but also be involved with the specific CBT ventures or provide themselves some of the services. Whatever involvement is present, the aim should always be to work towards community empowerment, independence and greater community control and benefits from the tourism/CBT sector.

Universities, with their wide range of expertise, their local long-term presence and their variety of way of possible engagements, could be seen in a positive light, especially, for training purposes (Giampiccoli, Saayman and Jugmohan, 2014). Moreover, while many types of entities can be involved, preference leans towards "government entities, envisioning a more complementary role for the private sector and NGOs" (Giampiccoli et al., 2014a:1141). Figure 1 shows that the CBT-N should be the central coordination entity and the main unit involved in the various services. While the list of services offered could be seen as endless, based on the possible needs of specific circumstances, the model proposed a list of services seen as usually required and valuable. This list includes: marketing, booking service/travel agency, funding, CBTS and accreditation functions, implementation of CBT projects, training and capacity building in various aspects of CBT and beyond them. The booking system, while not presently common in many CBT-N, is, instead, considered as very relevant to work towards the CBT-N (and its members) independence. Within this aim towards increased empowerment, independence, long-term sustainability, the CBT-N

should facilitate the link – but not the assimilation – with the global tourism context in order to increase their weight and relevance locally and internationally and maintain their value and benefits for the members involved. At the same time, the CBT-N should also favour the link with (and when possible, the facilitation and establishment of) other businesses, such as art and craft that can be connected to the main CBT ventures. All the above should move towards greater empowerment and independence of the CBT ventures and CBT-N. Looking at CBT enterprises in a Kenyan study, there was mentioned that: "The paper concludes that CBEs reinforce a neo-colonial model, with foreign control of tourism resources and heavy reliance on donor funding reinforcing dependency, and it advocates an urgent review of the support framework for community tourism development in Kenya in order to integrate the principles of sustainable development" (Manyara and Jones, 2007:630). Community-based tourism networks (associations or organizations) could greatly contribute towards the emancipation, independence, empowerment and growth of the CBT sector.

## Conclusion

The relevance of CBT within the tourism sector is growing. Community-based tourism is aimed at disadvantaged community members and remain within the general context of alternative development proposing issues such as empowerment and self-reliance. Community-based tourism networks are currently present globally and their importance has been recognised. However, few studies are dedicated to CBT-N. Two CBT networks/associations (CBT-N) that were used in this paper show their role and mandate and the power of working together in partnerships for the common good.

Based on the literature review and the case study, this paper proposes a CBT-N model. The model, shows the possible collaborators in a CBT-N to reflect what the CBT-N can offer. Specific local contexts, resources, capacity and so on will also influence the final CBT-N model to be established in each case. The final aim should be to consistently work for the enlargement enhance the relevance of CBT, locally and internationally – while also boosting and supporting more multinational and global CBT-Ns – to contribute towards a fair tourism sector, thus, supporting "the need for the establishment of a CBT body present at various geographical levels and rooted in the values, concepts and practices of CBT's original meaning and understanding and opposing neoliberal tourism for social justice and sustainability" (Giampiccoli and Saayman, 2016:8); therefore, CBT-Ns have value.

## Author contribution

The authors have developed an equal contribution in this research and in the article production.

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