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## CO-DESIGNING ECO-COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM

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### Abstract

**Background:** In the development of community based tourism (CBT) the importance of community participation cannot be over emphasized. It is considered an essential factor if sustainable tourism development is to succeed. Hence there is a need to interrogate the nature and how to nurture community participation for sustainable CBTEs. **The problem:** The uptake for community participation has been relatively slow and levels of participation are considered low. **Objectives:** the objective of the study is to explore the application of co-design methods for effective participation in the planning and development of sustainable CBTEs and to propose a framework for effective community participation in the planning and development of sustainable CBTEs.

**Design:** The study adopted an exploratory design that allowed qualitative methods of data collection while applying a multiple case study method. **Setting:** the study was based in Homa Bay County in Kenya and specifically looked into RAMA Cultural Centre and Ndhiwa Kodumba Tse Tse group CBTEs. **Subjects:** Members of RAMA Cultural Centre and Ndhiwa Kodumba Tse Tse group, key informants from the Ministry of Tourism, county government of Homabay, Kenya Wildlife Services, Nature Kenya and design experts from the School of the Arts and Design, University of Nairobi. **Results:** The findings show an evidence of both spontaneous and coercive types of participation in the two case studies. Apathy, low levels of

awareness, low literacy levels, lack of expertise, age and gender were the major constraints to participation.

**Conclusion:** The study concludes that though community participation is advocated as an integral part of sustainable CBTE development, policy documents provide a robust legal framework for participation. A major weakness was found to be the lack of clear mechanisms for community participation.

**Keywords:** *Co-design, Community-Based Tourism, Sustainability, Culture.*

## **Introduction**

Kenya has experienced one of the fastest population growths, from 7 million to an estimated 52.2 million with global rankings soaring from 57th in 1955 to 27th in 2019, respectively. In their seminal treatise on ecotourism, Juma & Khademi-Vidra (2019) advance that at present, over 80% of the population depends on agriculture with about 73.4% of this population being in rural areas and a further 40% being employed in agriculture, an economic activity that greatly depends on land and associated resources. As the population grows, natural resources become scarce and increasingly subject to a lot of pressure as communities and their governments strive to achieve local and national socio-economic development goals. Certainly, a fast-changing human and socio-economic environment regularly presents many challenges to the country's sustainable development. In this regard, futuristic development planning and governance are envisaged to guarantee the sustainability of scarce resources and at the same time securing sustainable livelihoods for the present local populace. Indeed, without sustainable livelihoods, the future of scarce resources is also put at risk (Juma & Khademi-Vidra, 2019)

**Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has been pushed as one of the strategies for poverty alleviation and it might enhance the sustainability of marginalized regions and communities. However, tourism has also been argued to carry seeds for its own destruction and therefore presents a great dilemma and developmental paradox. The rich natural and cultural resources found in Kenya are the country's strength for attracting tourists. Wildlife in its natural habitat has made Kenya synonymous with the word 'Safari' (Gona, Ondiek, & Muhando, 2017).**

## **Background**

**The advocacy for community participation has its roots in the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development that began in 1972 during the United Nations Conference on Human Environment. A major outcome of the conference was a call for more participation by local communities in development projects to enable integrated resource management (Stone & Stone, 2011). In 1987, there was further emphasis on community participation, by the World Commission on Environment and Development Brundtland's report. The 1992 Rio Earth Summit introduced Local Agenda 21 (LA21), which was a blueprint for action by host communities participation in local resource management. LA21 was signed by 178 countries, Kenya being one of them. Consequently, the Kenya 2010 constitution anchored this agenda on community participation and provision under Articles 1(2), 10(2) a,b,c, 27, 33, 61, 69(1) and 174(d). While operationalising these, the same constitution cascaded it to the County Government Act while also providing for community participation as outlined in sections 91, 94, 95, 96, 100 and 101.**

LA21 action plans have also been cascaded to different sectors, and in the tourism sector, the recommendation is for establishment of CBTEs, that is perceived as a viable approach to sustainable tourism and community development. This is supported by several researchers who affirm that community participation is indeed an integral part of sustainable CBTEs (Murphy, 1983, 1985; Asker, Boronyak, Carrard, & Padd, 2010; Bello, Lovelock, & Carr, 2017; Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018) because community participation increases the effectiveness and efficiency of tourism development plans (Joppe, 1996; Inskeep, 1994; Tosun & Jenkins, 1996) and it leads to the implementation of principles of sustainable tourism development by creating better opportunities for local communities to gain from tourism development through capacity building, empowerment and social justice (Tosun, 1999). Community participation is not just about the benefits accrued from tourism, but also in tourism product identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Simmons, 1994; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007; Songorwa, 1999). However, how to implement effective community participation for sustainable CBTEs remains unclear.

## **Theory**

Application of co-design can be found in the competitive environments of software design, telecommunications industries and high-technology, due to the nature of 'new features' in new products in this fields (Sanders & Stappers, 2014; Kimbell, 2015). In the health sector, co-design is now the preferred approach in determining how best to improve healthcare (Hendriks, Slegers, & Duysburgh, 2015; Wilson, et al., 2015; Gustavsson & Andersson, 2017). It is also widely used in determining effective ways for

community resource management (Ssozi-Mugarura, Blake, & Rivett, 2017; Smith, 2008). Though co-design has gradually developed to become a rigorous and widely used approach across a range of contexts, empirical research shows its limited use in the tourism sector and within CBTE planning and development, it is relatively new and yet to be adopted. This thesis evaluates the extent to which co-design tools and techniques could contribute to effective community participation in the planning of CBTEs and proposes a framework for the planning of sustainable CBTEs at whose core is effective community participation.

The heart of co-design is participation. Its origin is associated with the well-documented works of American and Scandinavian researchers engaged with systems design and automation in the 1980s and 1990s (Greenbaum & Kyng, 1991). However, less frequently acknowledged is that the issue of design and participation had already been broadly discussed in the design communities in the 1960s and 1970s. For instance, at the second conference of the Design Research Society in 1971, the overall theme was '*design and Participation*' (Cross, 1971).

A field survey of six CBTEs by Manyara and Jones (2007) revealed that effective community participation in tourism development and conservation is not yet realized in Kenya. The survey was conducted on CBTEs located in the three main tourism regions of Kenya namely; Northern (Laikipia), Southern (Maasai Mara) and Coastal (Wasini Island, Kwale and Taita Taveta). The study sample included II Ngwesi, Mwaluganje Elephant Sanctuary, Tasia, Koiyaki Lemek, Lumo and Wasini Women group. Their findings revealed that CBTE planning was through external intervention and the role of the community was primarily secondary. This resulted on dependence on

external support and in case of withdrawal of such support, most of the CBTEs also collapsed. A similar survey by Meguro & Inoue, (2011) on Kimana Sanctuary, the first community owned and managed wildlife sanctuary in the South West of Kenya, regrettably confirmed little involvement of the community in planning. From the above examples, one can conclude that the level of community participation, when measured against Arnstein's ladder of participation (1971) is relatively low.

Based on the above discourse, it is not well known how effective community participation can be enhanced in the planning of CBTEs. Though co-design has gradually developed to become a rigorous and widely used approach across a range of contexts, its effectiveness in the planning of sustainable CBTEs is rather unknown. This is in part due to the fact that co-design tools and techniques have not yet been appropriated in the context of CBTE planning and the adaptability of these tools and techniques to different contexts of CBTE planning is yet determined. This study therefore proposes an application of co-design tools and techniques in the planning of CBTEs in Homabay County.

## **Community participation**

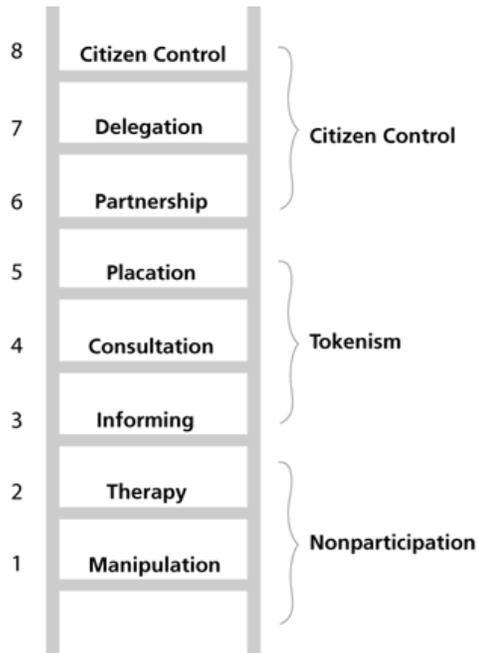
In 1981, the UN provided the definition of community participation as *'the creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community and the larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development'* (Midgley et al., 1987). On the other hand, Official Development Assistance (ODA) has defined community participation as *'a process whereby stakeholders, those with rights and therefore responsibilities and/or interests play an active role in*

*decision making and in consequent activities which affect them'*. Havel (1996) defined community participation *'as a process through which stakeholders, among them, the local communities, influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them'*. In this study, community participation is defined as involvement of local communities in projects that help to solve local their problems.

### **Typology of participation**

Participation is often thought of a continuum rather than as discreet types with defined boundaries of description. Community participation has often been evaluated in two main categories. The first category considers the quality of the participatory process and is often measured by (i) members being representative of the broader community (ii) membership being balanced (iii) participation starting early at the decision-making process (iv) evidence of face to face discussion between the community and agency representatives and lastly (v) determination of whether the agency is committed to the participatory process and responsive to public input (Beierle & Konisky, 2000; Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). The second category is interest oriented. These evaluate the extent to which each of the stakeholders has achieved their goals in the participatory process. The question then becomes what is in this for me and will I achieve the same by participating?

Several authors have analyzed typologies of community participation. Sherry Arnstein, writing in 1969 about citizen involvement in planning processes in the United States, described what she called a 'ladder of citizen participation' (Figure 1), that showed participation ranging from high to low.

**Figure 1: Degrees of Citizen Participation**

*Source: Arnstein (1969)*

## Participatory approaches

In order to more effectively incorporate the perspectives and priorities of local people in decision-making, policy development and project implementation, the 1970s and early 1980s saw an emergence of a number of 'participatory approaches' to development (Duraiappah, Roddy, & Parry, 2005). The re-orientation towards greater participation by local communities was motivated by a desire to move away from an emphasis on top-down, technocratic and economic interventions towards a greater attention to bottom-up, community led interventions (Kanji & Greenwood, 2001). The 1980s and early 1990s saw the evolution of participatory approaches with introduction of methods such as Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The aim of each of these methods was to try to seek and understand indigenous knowledge

as a way to balance the dominance of western scientific knowledge (Kanji & Greenwood, 2001).

The success of any participatory approach rests in part on the manner in which it is undertaken. For effective participation to be achieved, the following must be considered. (i) the mode of participation, (ii) the participants to be involved and the manner in which they are to be involved and lastly (iii) the cultural structure within which these people operate. Identified are seven key principles on which effective participation is anchored. These are:

- a) Inclusion – all people or representatives of groups of people that will be affected by the development*
- b) Equal partnership – appreciating that everybody has a skill, ability and initiative and therefore equal right to participate regardless of their status in the community*
- c) Transparency – all participants must aspire to create a conducive environment for communication and dialogue building*
- d) Power sharing – authority and power must be evenly shared amongst all stakeholders to avoid dominance by a party or sets of parties*
- e) Sharing responsibility – all stakeholders have equal responsibility to decisions*
- f) Empowerment – Encourage all to be involved to promote mutual learning*
- g) Cooperation – sharing each others strength and weaknesses*

## Typology of participation in CBTE

CBTEs are normally a multi-sector and this means that participation will happen at different levels. Some of these are outlined below and summarized with examples in Table 5:

- a) Participation is sharing economic benefits – The community may not have a say in the type of CBTE activity but because it is within their land, then any more it generates is shared in certain proportions to the community.***
- b) Participation in planning – Community plays an important role in the generation of information and analysis.***
- c) Participation in implementation and operations – Community plays a big role in implementing activities, setting up institutional arrangements and in enterprise operations.***
- d) Participation in decision-making and management – Community plays key roles in the choice, design and management of CBTEs including conservation activities and monitoring and evaluation.***

## Constraints to participation in CBTE planning

Though community participation is advocated as an integral part of sustainable CBTE planning not just because of the economic benefits accrued from tourism to the community but also for capacity building, empowerment and social justice, the uptake has been relatively slow and levels of participation when related to Arnstein's ladder of participation (1971) is relatively low (Moscardo, 2008). Aref & Redzun, (2008) observed that in developing countries, some factors form obstacles to actual community participation in the CBTE development processes. Tosun (2000) went further to examine

these factors and came up with three main categories of limitations namely; operational limitations, structural limitations and cultural limitations.

Limitations at the operational level include the centralisation of public management of tourism development by national governments. All decisions regarding planning, implementation and monitoring of tourism development are made at a national level with minimal or no input from the local community. Consequently, only a few areas where decision makers at the national level have interest on experience tourism development while the other regions are neglected.

Lack of co-ordination amongst stakeholders (government agencies, hoteliers, tour operators, local community and NGOs) involved in tourism development limits community participation. Each stakeholder is driven by the desire to achieve his/her objectives with little regard to the objectives of the others. Kibicho (2008) noted that funding institutions were more concerned with project effectiveness/success than the fundamental and less concrete aspects of community-based tourism like stakeholders collaboration, while the government agency laid emphasis on conservation. He further, observed a level of distrust between the local host community in Kimana Wildlife Sanctuary and the Kenya Wildlife Service (National conservation organisation), and noted that where trust is weak participants do not achieve the desired outputs associated with effective partnership.

Lack of information made available by the other stakeholders to the host community of a tourism site in regard to for instance, insufficient tourism development data and poor distribution of

information (Scheyvens, 2002) makes the community more vulnerable to manipulation. Under such circumstances, low public participation in the tourism development process is apparent, as the community is not sufficiently informed.

Structural limitations at CBTI level include lack of appropriate legal system especially on matters regarding land ownership (Manyara & Jones, 2007), initiatives are registered as CBOs, associations, trusts or limited companies with various landownership tenures and without a definite land use policy.

High cost implication associated with community participation and inadequate financial resources (Tosun, 2000; Scheyvens, 2002; Manyara *et al*, 2007) are other structural limitations hindering community participation in tourism. Communities frequently lack resources and power (Scheyvens, 2002; Akama, Maingi, & Camarco, 2011), therefore unable to establish amenities and infrastructure required for tourism development. This makes it difficult for the community to improve on the quality of the tourism product in their locality and to access the desired markets. The local community is consequently reliant on other stakeholders, and hence vulnerable.

Lastly cultural limitations include limited capacity of poor populations, apathy and low level of awareness in the local community. Kibicho ( 2008) in his study at Kimana Wildlife Sanctuary noted lack of local community involvement in the Sanctuary's decision making processes due to lack of a defined leadership structure. He observed that a segment of the community whom he referred to as *the operatives* had low interest in participating in the formulation of aims and objectives of the project, which he attributed to lack of self-confidence due to the

community's low levels of education and lack of capability to effectively participate.

According to Blackstock (2005) the heterogeneity of communities is a constraint to their participation in tourism development. A community comprises of several different kinds of people, often with uneven positions and different ambitions. Kibicho (2008) identified three segments in the Kimana Wildlife Sanctuary community namely; *"operatives, opinion leaders and official leaders"* whom he found were expected to influence the community's support for a tourism project. Such segmentations lead to uneven opportunity for local community participation in tourism activities.

### **CBT on a theoretical perspective**

There is little to find from literature on a universally valid theory of community participation in development programs. What exist are sets of propositions stating the conditions under which people do or do not participate in collective action. Since all development programs in general and most CBTEs in particular entail some collective action on the part of the members, one could argue that factors affecting collective action might also influence people's participation in CBTEs. This study presents the salient features of the theoretical approaches to community participation developed by Olson (1971).

### **Olson's Theory**

(Olson, 1971) challenged the generally held belief that groups of individuals having common interests will usually work together to achieve them. In his argument, he states that *"...unless the number of individuals in a group is quite small, or unless there is coercion or*

***some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests" (Olson, 1971). It is often not possible to have people volunteer themselves for projects but are often coerced through incentives so as to participate. According to Olson (1971), the bigger the community, the less noticeable the actions of individuals and the higher the chances of free riders, who though do not contribute in community welfare, still enjoy the benefits accrued. Olson has shown that "certain small groups can participate towards community good without relying on coercion or any positive inducements apart from the collective good itself. This is because in some small groups each of the members, or at least some of them, will find that his personal contribution is satisfactory".***

**Olson however does not specify the number of individuals that would make the small group but he asserts that the group should be small enough so that "the individual actions of any one or more members are noticeable to any other individual in the group". The implication of Olson's theory for managing participation in communities is that when there exists a very large and heterogeneous community, it should be divided into a number of small homogenous subgroups for effective participation. Besides these, Olson also discusses the possible role of a political entrepreneur in promoting collective action. A political entrepreneur is an individual with a combination of such traits as leadership, the trust of the community or fear, the ability to discern the motivations of others and the desire to organize groups for collective action. The political entrepreneur's success is based on his related ability to utilize selective incentives to motivate participation. Another**

important role of the political entrepreneur is also to provide the much needed assurance to the resource users that the expected benefits from participation would, in fact, accrue to them and that the benefits would be equitably distributed among them.

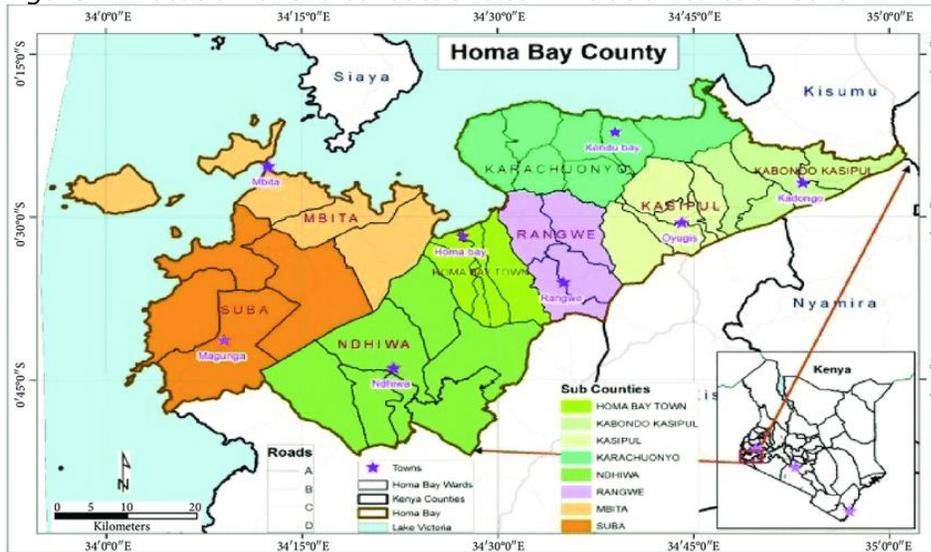
## **Methods**

Exploratory research design was used to achieve the objectives of the study. An exploratory design was selected because this problem had few or in some instances no earlier studies to refer to or rely upon to predict an outcome. Relying on insights by Kombo and Tramp (2006), the focus was on gaining insights and familiarity. Therefore the exploratory approach was flexible and aptly addressed research questions of what, why and how. In our case, exploratory research provided a well-grounded picture of the situation being developed (Creswell, 2014). Since the research intended to analyze the viability of co-design in the planning and development of sustainable CBTEs, exploratory design was considered ideal.

## **Study Area**

The study was conducted in Homabay County), located in the western Kenya. It was chosen because it sits in a prominent position to be a lead destination in the Western Kenya Tourism Circuit due to its rich historical, geographical and cultural heritage (GOK, 2004). Kenya's tourism development has also focussed primarily on 'safari' or game tourism and the coastal beaches; meaning tourism activities are limited to just a few geographic locations (Ndivo, Waudo, & Waswa, 2013). Homabay County was therefore considered instrumental in catalyzing sustainable CBTE development in Kenya.

Figure 2: Location of the constituencies in relation to each other



Source: GOK (2004)

## Findings

Homabay County is divided into eight political constituencies namely; Rangwe, Homa Bay Town, Ndhwa, Suba, Mbita, Karachuonyo, Kasipul and Kabondo/Kasipul 107 constituencies. Of these eight, CBTE activities were evident in only four of the constituencies namely; Ndhwa, Suba, Mbita and Karachuonyo. The location of these constituencies in relation to the others is shown in *Figure 2* above. From observation, most of the CBTEs were located in close proximity to tourist sites and that is why only the four constituencies exhibited a form of CBTE. The tourist sites found in these constituencies is shown in *Table 1* below:

Table 1: Potential CBTE sites in Homabay County

CATEGORY	ATTRACTION	STATE OF USE
Nature & Wildlife (Game, Landscapes and birds)	Ruma National Park	Moderately utilized
	Simbi Nyaima Bird Sanctuary	Minimally utilized

	<b>Mbusi-Rakuena Bird Sanctuary</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>Mbasa Island Bird Sanctuary</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>Otok Bird Sanctuary</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>Remba Island Bird Sanctuary</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
<b>Culture and Heritage</b>	<b>Abasuba Community Peace Museum</b>	<b>Moderately utilized</b>
	<b>Tom Mboya Mausoleum</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>Gor Mahia Shrine</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>RAMA cultural centre</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
<b>Adventure</b>	<b>Lake Victoria</b>	<b>Moderately utilized</b>
	<b>Lake Simbi Nyaima</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>Homa Hills</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>Ruri and Gembe Hills</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>Bala Hot Springs</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
<b>Water sports and Health and wellness</b>	<b>Boat racing sites</b>	<b>Moderately utilized</b>
	<b>Bala hot springs</b>	<b>Minimally utilized</b>
	<b>Lake Victoria</b>	<b>Moderately utilized</b>

*Source: Authors (2019)*

Most of the community members involved in some form of CBTE activity were not in formal groups and had no structures of operation. There were those involved in sale of crafts. The crafts ranged from baskets, mats, hats, carved spoons and even pots. There were also tourism enterprises that engage the local

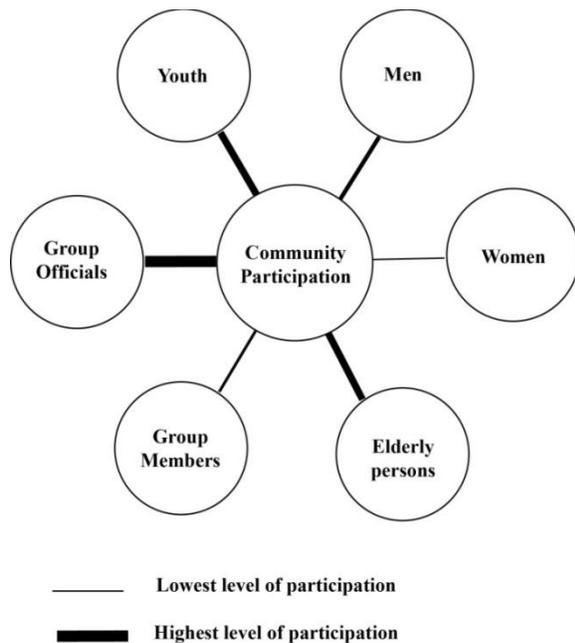
community. Most of these are hotels found in the three main islands of Rusinga, Takawiri and Mfangano.

The findings of (Mowforth & Munt, 1998) while examining community participation in the developing countries of Central America mainly Brazil also reflected on the findings of this study. Though the two case studies involved in this study have no foreign investors yet, the aspect of local elites is evident. In RAMA Cultural Centre, the founder of the centre, is the authority and directs how community participation happens. For instance, the day to day running of the centre is done by the founder and the local community only gets involved when need be like when there are visitors and there is need for entertainment, he then engages the local community. The Ndhiwa Kodumba Tse Tse group is managed by an elite group of officials who determine the group's activities. The type of community participation in these two groups can be summarized in *Table 2* below and *Figure 3* below:

**Table 2: Forms of participation**

Form of Participation	Characteristic Features
Nominal Participation	Membership in the group
Passive Participation	Being informed of decisions or attending meetings and listening in without making any contributions
Consultative Participation	Being asked an opinion in specific matters without guarantee of influencing decisions
Activity- specific participation	Participating when requested to in tasks or simply volunteering for the same.
Active participation	Taking initiatives by expressing opinions and undertaking tasks whether asked to or not
Interactive (empowering) participation	Having voice and influence in decisions

**Source: Authors (2019)**

**Figure 3: Levels of participation**

**Source: Author (2019)**

The typology of participation in *Table 2* above indicates that the level of participation ranges from nominal participation to interactive (empowering) participation. The participation of the women was towards nominal participation whereas that of the men was considered consultative participation. Both the youth and elderly persons form of participation was activity-specific participation. Cumulatively, the group members presented passive participation. The highest form of participation was by group officials who have a voice and influence decisions in the CBTEs.

### **Specific determinants of community participation in CBTEs**

Based on this study, the following were found to be some of the basic determinants for enhanced or reduced participation in CBTEs (Figure 4).

### ***a) Background***

Participation is dependent on personal interest on certain issues. Some people may be interested in one issue and not the other.

### ***b) Point of entry of the community into the CBTE***

It was noted that those who got involved in the CBTEs at the early stages of planning were more likely to participate in its activities.

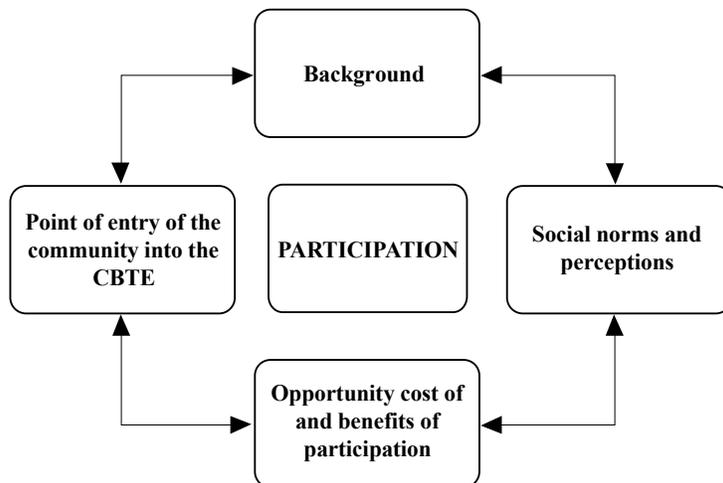
### ***c) Opportunity cost of and benefits of participation***

The community generally assess whether by participation, there is value or benefit.

### ***d) Social norms and perceptions***

Social norms, which are normally unwritten, may vary from one community to another but they influence the level of participation. These social norms are social constructs that expectations for the different genders and age groups.

***Figure 4: Determinants of participation***



***Source: Author (2019)***

## **Discussion**

**Homabay county is rich in tourism resources such as geographic features, historical sites and mythical sites. Besides these, the region boasts a rich flora, fauna and birdlife. Regrettably, most of these resources are minimally utilized and there is a need to develop them to their full potential. There is also little evidence of the local community engagement in tourism due to various constraints. All three categories (operational, structural and cultural) constraints to community participation were identified in the two case studies and Homabay County as a whole. At the operational level was lack of coordination amongst various stakeholders. The County and National Governments not having adequately played their roles as facilitators of community involvement in tourism evidenced this. The conservation agency, KWS was also seen not to have created a conducive environment to enable the community fully participate in tourism development. Lack of financial resources (due to minimal external support), lack of skills and expertise on the management of CBTEs were some of the structural constraints hindering participation. Apathy, low levels of awareness and gender social constructs were the cultural constraints found hindering participation in CBTEs. These constraints led to low levels of community participation in tourism planning and development and few if any, established CBTEs.**

**As discussed by Manyara and Jones (2007), most CBTEs in Kenya are located in close proximity to Natural Resources, National parks and Game Reserves. The use of Co-design tools and techniques proved effective in enhancing community participation in the planning of sustainable CBTEs. Co-design methods of telling, making and enacting were employed to mitigate against the constraints to**

**community participation specifically cultural constraints of apathy, low levels of awareness, low literacy levels and gender disparities.**

**The study revealed that the main determinants of effective community participation in the planning and development of sustainable CBTEs was in having a shared vision, inclusion, increased levels of awareness and relevant stakeholders performing their roles. A participatory approach to CBTE planning and development should aim to attain the same by employing the appropriate tools and methods.**

## **Conclusion**

**Homabay County is rich in tourism products, which can be harnessed for the establishment of sustainable CBTEs. As elsewhere, the dynamics of community participation in developing countries has been narrowly looked at in literature especially in developing countries. However, it is established that, constraints to effective participation were as a result of several factors. Among them are social constructs that define gender roles led to constraints to participation. Men took most of the leading roles in leadership and decision making, while the role of women was more supportive. Economic constraints and participation in CBTEs being considered a luxury and low levels of awareness as to the operations and benefits of CBTEs and poor dissemination of information on the same from the National and County governments has led to apathy in participation in the CBTEs.**

**Co-design is promoted as an approach that can lead to effective community participation in the affairs that concerns them, in this study, the planning and development of sustainable CBTEs by putting into consideration factors that contribute to constraints in**

**community participation such as socio-cultural, economic, apathy and low levels of awareness, lack of expertise and administrative constraints.**

**An appropriate framework for effective community participation in the planning of sustainable CBTEs need to take into cognizance the roles of the two levels of government; National and County, and the departments operating within them, stakeholders such as tour operators, investors, NGOs, Aid agencies and lastly, the local communities.. Each of these should articulate their roles within a predefined shared vision governed by policy with a focus on inclusion. Public participation should be reviewed in such a way as to incorporate a method that is inclusive and engaging as co-design.**

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