

# Capacity development for destination communities: A review

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**Abstract** | This paper presents a review of capacity development (CD) concepts and approaches and its linkage to sustainable tourism and destination communities. The review elucidates various concepts from several studies and how these have progressed through the years, highlighting the significance of learning and integrating key approaches and practices to CD enhancement in destination communities. Broadly, it reveals several factors that affect or complement an effective CD. The review recognized collaboration as beneficial in all CD practices. The paper presents a practical CD framework, its relevance and current contributions in developing comprehensive tourism strategies and investment plans according to global agenda - economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability.

**Keywords** | Capacity development, destination communities, sustainable tourism, development concepts, review

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## 1. Introduction

Capacity development (CD) plays an essential role in improving people's lives and local communities. Establishing a context that allows better understanding on the relationship of CD to destination development is vital since our ultimate goal is to achieve sustainability as enshrined in the United Nations 2030 Agenda. Destination's success depends on several factors that include capabilities and skills of destination managers and stakeholders. Current trends and issues such as technology, migration, political conflicts, natural disasters and receding resources in many developing countries affect people in terms of their education, know-how and entrepreneurial abilities. In addition, trends in demographics, lifestyles, consumption patterns, purchasing power and information access among others, brought new trends for tourism management and development (Buhalis & Costa, 2006; Costa & Buhalis, 2006). The scarcity or lack of resources impedes a destination's growth and development and alters its life span.

Effective destination management built by principles based on traditional and complex community structure is vital, where stakeholders' participation and support are imbued. Hence, tourism plays a potent role to alleviate poverty, generate income and create jobs since poverty and low economic development remain as major challenges in several countries (United Nations, 2015). Investments in human capital is not only a priority in developing nations but also with major economies such as the European Union, a large territory comprising countries and regions with different levels of development (Costa, 2021). Given the strategies aimed for investments, CD in tourism would maximize growth and development in communities. Through the years, CD, also known as 'institution building' or 'capacity building,' has evolved as a combination of many other development approaches (Lusthaus, Adrien & Perstinger, 1999); and considered the 'means' in transforming destina-

ons.

## 2. Development Perspectives

Development has always been a hot topic in various studies, especially in the field of business and economics. According to Oxford Dictionary of Current English (2019) 'development' refers to 'a specified state of growth or advancement,' or 'an event constituting a new stage in a changing situation,' that is widely applicable to various norms or aspects e. g. people, resources, city or community. It can also be interpreted as a 'process of change' (Bellù, 2011); and a common area or section in many firms or organizations that focuses on creation, innovation and even product evolution. Development, which is also synonymous to planning serves as the focal point of every town, city or destination (Gunn, 1993; Hall, 1982; Potter, 1985; Pugh & Potter, 2005). Although development had been approached towards economic efficiency rather than to specific territorial needs based on Western views, the concept has begun to change in the 1970s. Many, including sociologists, do not agree anymore with this concept. Today, development is interpreted in various ways such as, in defining 'rural-based strategies' (Friedmann & Weaver, 1979 cited in Potter et al., 2008) and entailing "complex social, cultural and environmental changes" (Donnellan, 2005). It is not solely about wealth but relative to standard of living and quality of life (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008; Tosun, 2001).

Some key development concepts that are widely adopted in tourism literature include Rostow's model, Brandt's line theory, Miossec's tourism space dynamics and Myint's development approaches. For many poor and developing countries, an interpretation that has become a common model is the Rostow's (1960) theory about Social Darwinism. This theory explains develop-

ment as a process of evolutionary succession that comes in stages, where human societies follow a pattern until they arrive at a Western industrialized civilization consumption model, considered by many as a universal concept. This theory suggests developed countries pass through five stages to reach their current degree of economic development. Rostow's theory emphasizes linear and sequential steps of economic growth and development (Mallick, 2005), which also becomes evident to the study of tourism. Similarly, Miossec's (1976) 'diffusionist' approach is contextualized based on phases of development, through time and space elements, as exemplified with the growth of resorts, transport network expansion, tourists' behavior and attitudes of decision-makers & host community. These concepts are geared towards geographical interpretations.

On the other hand, development based on economic prosperity was emphasized by Brandt line concept. Brandt Line (developed by Willy Brandt in 1980) states primarily the difference in standard of living that exists along the North-South divide and suggests the need for a large transfer of resources from developed to developing countries. The countries' 'North of the divide' are extremely wealthy due to their successful trade in manufactured goods, whereas 'South of the divide' countries suffer poverty due to their trade in intermediate goods, where export incomes are low. These inequalities still exist and can be attributed to the availability of natural resources, education system, presence of economic and industrial sectors, international market policies, government system and bilateral agreements, among others.

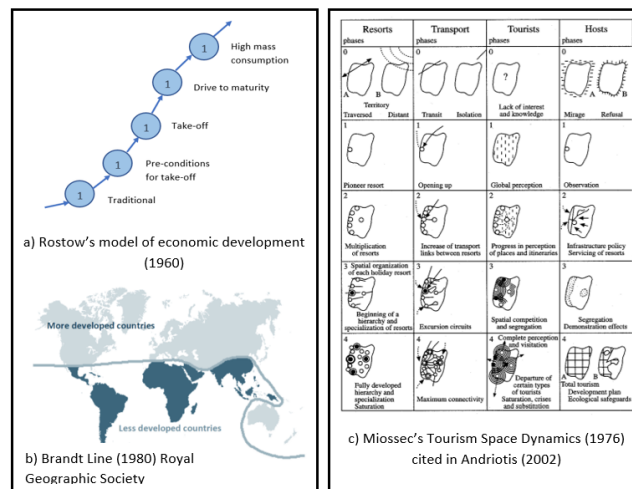


Figure 1a-c | Development concepts

In contrast, Myint's (1980) concept highlights two development approaches. The primary approach is 'fighting against poverty', finding solutions or improvements to poverty or hunger in the developing states at least in the short-term. This approach is closely linked with development policies and strategies at international, regional and local levels that can be explained based on policies and

instruments through a technocratic interpretation while for some, it is rather a radical-political interpretation that demands dramatic changes in the existing order of things (Brandt, 1980; Brundtland, 1987). The secondary approach is the *analysis of long – term economic and social development* that compare developments in various locations and understand the factors that have long-term effects

on the dynamics of socio-economic development. This is more detached with great differences and in modern form, emphasizes the relationship of economic growth with economic development of Western societies (Landes, 1998; Maddison, 2001). Having a vision of economic development ensures a society (especially those that started its development late) to reach those that are at advanced development stage (Rist, 2001). Therefore, development is implicitly taken as something positive or desirable.

Development can be categorically interpreted in different perspectives or themes. *Geographical/Spatial Views*: Rostow (1960); Miossec (1976); Pearce (1979); Mabogunje (1980); Gunn (1993), Hall (1982), Potter (1985); Escobar (1995), Preston (1996), Sachs (1992), Power (2003), Pugh & Potter (2005) and Simon (2007), emphasized physical development and spatial planning. *Economic Views*: Schumpeter (1984, 1985, 1989); Tordoff (1992); and Myers (1999) defined development based on industrialization, economic growth and living standards. *Human Development Views*: Gran (1983); Korten (1990); Burkey (1993); UNDP (2000); Wetmore & Theron (1997); Coetzee (2001); and Todaro & Smith (2006) described the human centrality in terms of community capacity and empowerment; and *Multidimensional views*: Sunkel (2001); Sachs (2004); Ribeiro (2005); Veiga (2005); and Bellù (2011) stressed development based on people, society and environmental dimensions.

While development occurs due to a range of factors (Tordoff, 1992) or actions (Bellù, 2011) e.g. policies or investments, there is a notion that when an economy grows, it provides people's access to resources, especially the poor. Western sociologists often refer 'development' to industrialization, economic growth and living standards that are linked with prosperity, such as increased life expectancy, health care and free education. Others considered liberation from oppression as more important to progress than industrialization. When

countries have not achieved this set of objectives, they are said to be 'undeveloped' or often referred as 'less-developed countries' (LDCs). In a multi-dimensional context, improvement occurs in complex systems, or through socio-economic processes and forces (Bellù, 2011). These have proven the multiple interpretations of development and how it has evolved to our current global thrust towards sustainable development.

But among the various perspectives, the interpretation by Swanepoel and De Beer (2006) about people, sets a great emphasis on human development since it focuses 'with' and 'within' individuals. There is a collective consensus that human development is key in reflecting human outcomes based on capabilities and functions (Gran, 1983; Korten, 1990; Burkey, 1993; UNDP, 2000; Wetmore & Theron, 1997; Coetzee, 2001; Todaro & Smith, 2006). It is highly valued by people participation, empowerment and community belongingness. Since CD reflects a 'people-centred development' where individuals and structures make efforts in improving their own quality of life according to their aspirations and through equitable distribution of benefits (Korten, 1990), people's abilities must be enabled and empowered in their own environment. Whenever there are available opportunities, people have more choices. Emphasis must be in the principle of 'development from the people, for the people and by the people' (UNDP, 2000).

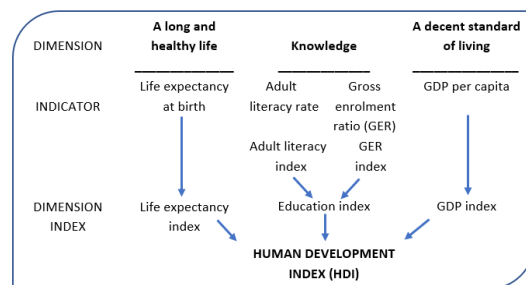


Figure 2 | Human Development Index  
Source: Potter et al. (2008)

Table 1 | Some definitions of development

	Author	Definitions
Geographical/ Spatial views	Rostow (1960)	... a process of evolutionary succession in stages, where human societies leave a rudimentary model until they arrive at a western industrialized civilization consumption model, which is considered unique and universal known as Social Darwinism
	Mabogunje (1980) cited in Steele (1984)	... the spatial effects of development by concentrating on the countries' spatial economy. Development is related to geographical space and structural arrangement and organization of that space in each country, basically by an urban-rural division.
Development Perspectives	Gunn (1993), Hall (1982), Potter (1985) and Pugh & Potter (2005)	... has become synonymous with planning when it comes to locations or destinations.
	Escobar (1995), Preston (1996), Sachs (1992), and Power (2003)	...West bringing development in underdeveloped areas (Third World) as conceptualized by President Truman in 1949.
	Author	Definitions
	Schumpeter (1934, 1982, 1989)	... about evolution, revelation and innovation.
Economic views	Tordoff (1992)	... when referring to a society, destination or economic system, this means "improvement" and occurs due to various factors.
	Myers (1999)	... used (often by Western sociologists), in sociological terms, to mean industrialization, economic growth and the living standards associated with prosperity, such as increased life expectancy, healthcare, free education, etc. Those countries that have not yet achieved these objectives are said to be 'undeveloped' and are often termed 'less-developed countries' (LDCs).
	Author	Definitions
Human development views	Gran (1983)	... a social and practical process that aims at the liberation of human potentials so that people acquire the maximum socially feasible and practical control overall the available resources needed for the realization of basic human needs and security.
	Korten (1990)	... increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations.
	Burkey (1993)	... working with others, acquiring new knowledge, active participation in the economic, social and political development of their communities.
	UNDP (2000)	... allows development to become more democratic and participative in terms of access to income, participation in decisions and enjoyment of human, economic and political liberties.
Development Perspectives	Wetmore & Theron (1997)	... community capacity and empowerment, helping people to gain self-reliance and acquire the ability to articulate their needs and to control resources required for better living conditions.
	Coetzee (2001)	... concerned with human well-being that focuses on livelihood, security and sustainability.
	Todaro & Smith (2006)	... ensures growth in wealth, acquisition and mental enrichment and betterment of living conditions, where a society uses a combination of social, economic and institutional processes as the means to acquire better living conditions.
	Author	Definitions
Multi-dimensional views	Sachs (2004)	... must have principles of: satisfying basic needs; solidarity with future generations; participation by the population involved; preservation of natural resources and the environment in general; preparation of a social system that guarantees employment, social security and respect for other cultures; and education programmes.
	Ribeiro (2005)	... a state, process, well-being, progress, economic and human growth or ecological balance.
	Sunkel (2001) and Veiga (2005)	... the evolution and transformation of society and the economy in the development process alter the natural world in various ways. This reciprocal relationship is materialized, articulated and expressed through concrete forms of territorial ordering.
	(Bellù, 2011)	... improvement in complex systems, as in actual socio-economic systems are, can occur in different parts or ways, at different speeds and driven by different forces

### 3. Capacity Development Concepts, Challenges and Solutions

In places where resources are scarce and institutions are weak, developing capacity is the best solution for community development and people empowerment. Strengthening people and institutions is essential for destination communities especially at the local level. CD is “a process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to

set and achieve their own development objectives over time” (UNDP, 2009). CD initiatives and programmes strengthen people and the community at various levels: individual, organizational and institutional (UNDP, 2009) (see Figure 3). It is about empowering individuals, leaders, organizations and societies, that leads to a positive change. Several countries in Asia and Africa have witnessed global changes in economic and geopolitical aspects such as rapid urbanization, demographic changes and trade boom that have resulted to unprecedented

opportunities and challenges however, some countries were unable to implement programmes with meaningful impact due to systemic weaknesses at

various levels. Previous CD efforts and approaches have not delivered the desired results impacting the achievement of long-term goals (UNECA, 2010).

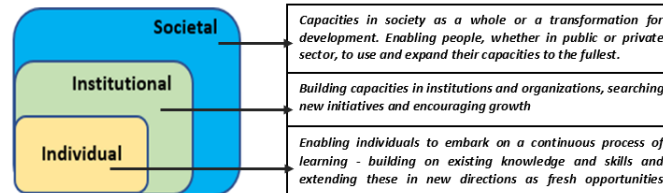


Figure 3 | Levels of Capacity Development  
Source: UNDP (2009)

CD is 'a driven process of learning' among leaders and stakeholders that bring changes to socio-political and organizational factors that enhance effectiveness and local ownership (Otoo, Natalia, & Behrens, 2009). It reinforces local community benefits and initiatives (Lima, Eusebio & Partidário, 2014) and improves the 'individuals' and 'organizations' capacity to develop and sustain conditions that support all aspects of community life (Blackwell & Colmenar, 2000). CD is also a collaborative, ongoing, influential process based on relationships among people (Aref & Redzuan, 2009), that develops communities and enhances organizations (Butler, 2016). Industrialized nations, in spite of complex social structures and diversity, have extensive range of knowledge and abundance of specialized skills that most people have acquired over the years. By contrast, less developed nations have high availability of developed skills amidst complex networks of social and cultural relationships, which are quite often difficult to understand by outsiders, but manageable for locals to survive in harsh or difficult conditions (UNDP, 2009).

CD, as an innovative tool, is a top priority for international cooperation to make better decisions and achieve effective regional development (Partidário & Wilson, 2011). Destination communities must remain "community-driven" in managing issues and challenges. When a community is 'ca-

pable' and 'innovative,' new ideas and methods improve residents' abilities (Velasquez, Yashiro, Yoshimura & Ono, 2005). Development then occurs that drives socio-economic growth and creates innovative solutions and opportunities, such as engagement in entrepreneurial and business activities (OECD, 2011). Accordingly, destinations develop new strategies to become more marketable and competitive (Carvalho & Costa, 2011; Santos & Ramos, 2008).

However, a wide range of problems and challenges affect CD such as limited access to decision-making among community members, limited knowledge & skills and lack of sense of ownership (Aref, 2011). In addition, weak tourism organizations, lack of tourism leadership and poor foundations for tourism industry were identified (Aref & Redzuan, 2009; Smith, et al., 2003). Others emphasized the lack of attention, absence of relevant institutions and governance (Babu & Sengupta, 2005; Koutra & Edwards 2012); lack of resources, limited community participation in development policy and power imbalances between governments and local communities (Cronin, 2003; Hunt, 2005, McGinty, 2003; Steven & Jennifer, 2002; Taylor, 2003); lack of proper needs assessment and better tools (Otoo, Natalia & Behrens, 2009); poorly grounded theory or inconsistent conceptual framework (Taylor & Clarke 2008); and insufficient technology, poor strategies, weak arti-

**Table 2 | Conceptual predecessors to Capacity Development**

Term	Period	Emphasis/ Approaches
<i>Institution building</i>	1950s and 1960s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide public sector institutions</li> <li>• Focus on and design individual functioning organizations</li> <li>• Models transplanted from the North Training in Northern universities</li> </ul>
<i>Institutional strengthening and development</i>	1960s and 1970s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shift to strengthening rather than establishing</li> <li>• Provide tools to improve performance</li> <li>• Focus still on individual organizations &amp; training in the North</li> </ul>
<i>Development management and administration</i>	1970s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach target groups previously neglected</li> <li>• Focus on improving delivery systems and public programmes to reach target groups</li> </ul>
<i>Human resource development</i>	1970s and 1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development is about people; emergence of people-centred development</li> <li>• Key sectors to target are: education, health and population</li> </ul>
<i>New institutionalism</i>	1980s and 1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building broadened to sector level (government, NGO and private)</li> <li>• Focus on networks and external environment</li> <li>• Attention to shaping national economic behavior</li> <li>• Emergence of issues of sustainability and move away from focus on projects</li> </ul>
<i>Capacity development</i>	Late 1980s and 1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reassessment of the notion of technical cooperation (TC)</li> <li>• Stressed importance of local ownership and process</li> <li>• Participatory approaches as the key Seen as 'the way to do development'</li> </ul>
<i>Capacity development and knowledge networks</i>	2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased participation in capacity building</li> <li>• Emphasis on continuous learning and adaptation</li> <li>• Balancing results-based management and long-term sustainability</li> <li>• Systems approach and emerging talk of complex systems</li> <li>• Emphasis on needs assessment/analysis</li> <li>• Spread of ICT-based knowledge networks</li> <li>• Increased donor coordination</li> </ul>

Sources: Adapted from Blagescu & Young, 2006; Lusthaus et al., 1999; and Whyte, 2004

culcation between CD goals and outcomes (World Bank, 2005a; 2006b). On the other hand, communities themselves either have lack of awareness or limited understanding about tourism industry (World Bank, 2006b) and if CD has been implemented, gaps existed due to erosion of capacity over time among concerned institutions (Babu &

Sengupta, 2005; CIDA 2001), and lack of strategic institutional capacity policy (Swaminathan, 2003). An inadequate CD in tourism shows a limiting factor in several development programmes and initiatives (Eicher, 2004) hence, institutions must prioritize tourism just like any other sector.

**Table 3 | CD problems and challenges**

Author	Problem/challenge
Smith, et al. (2001); Aref & Redzuan (2009)	Weak tourism organizations, lack of tourism leadership and poor foundations for tourism industry
Cronin (2003); Hunt (2005); McGinty (2003); Steven & Jennifer (2002); Taylor (2003)	Lack of resources, community participation in development policy and power imbalances between governments and local communities
World Bank (2003)	Communities either have lack of awareness or limited understanding about tourism industry
Swaminathan (2003)	Lack of strategic institutional capacity policy
Babu & Sengupta (2005); CIDA (2001)	Gaps can exist either due to the erosion of capacity over time in concerned institutions or organizations
Babu & Sengupta (2005); Koutra & Edwards (2012)	Absence of relevant institutions and governance
World Bank (2005a, 2006b)	Lack of technology, volume of available resources, weak strategies, weak articulation between CD goals and outcomes
Taylor & Clarke (2008)	Poorly grounded theory or inconsistent conceptual framework
Caffyn & Jobbins (2009)	Socio-political constraints
Otoo, S., Natalia, A. & Behrens (2009)	Lack of proper needs assessment and better tools
Aref (2011)	Limited access to decision-making, lack of resources and lack a sense of ownership

It is imperative for any community to take charge, solve problems and make decisions by themselves. Building community capacity especially in deprived cities and marginalized regions and sustain such activity in difficult economic times are priorities at all spatial levels. Jobs, entrepreneurship and business performance are key tangible areas to which community capacity building can contribute, accompanied by more intangible factors that include increased social capital and social cohesion (OECD, 2018). Many of these problems or issues can be addressed by the community through formal or informal means, spontaneously or through planned actions (Chaskin, 2001), while programme monitoring is necessary to verify if the

intended outcomes are achieved (OECD, 2011). The adoption of consensus-based decision-making and local development control is another recommendation beneficial to stakeholders since community empowerment is essential in creating community harmony and cohesion, for them to own, manage and control their local tourism initiatives (Giampiccoli, Jugmohan & Mtapuri, 2014; Pearce, Moscardo & Ross, 1996). Relatively, a bottom-up decision-making approach e. g. participation of indigenous people is fundamental (Koutra & Edwards, 2012), as part of a multidirectional dialogue, that is key in building capacity (Romanow & Bruce, 2006).

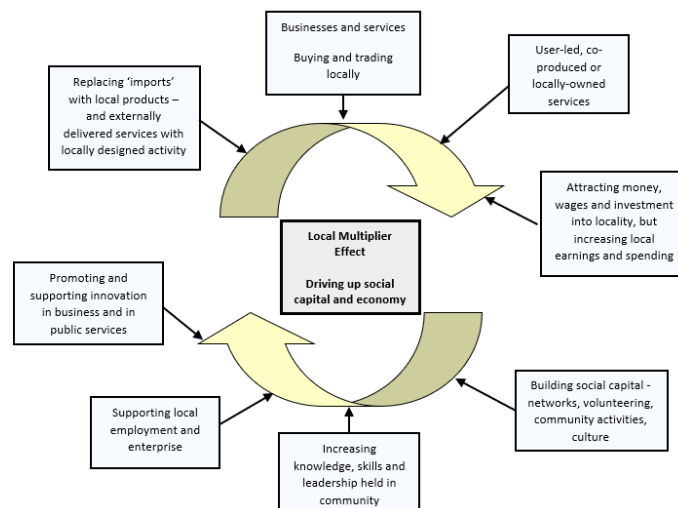


Figure 4 | Community Capacity Building - Local Multiplier Effect  
Source: Adapted from Westall, Ramsden and Foley (2000)

Community participation has been proven powerful and beneficial (Teare, Bandara & Jayawardena, 2013), however, empowerment and decision-making must depend on trust among partners, the community leaders' responsible behaviour and the degree of willingness and openness of private operators (Lapeyre, 2011). While these are indispensable, factors such as external and internal resources, the system (Aref, 2011; Horton, 2003) or socio-environmental and political factors

e. g. culture and politics, influence capacity programmes. Community participation is also one of the critical success factors to achieve effective development (Lima, Eusebio & Partidário, 2014). In addition, stakeholders' engagement generates strategic competitive advantage that is essential for community capacity building (Romeiro & Costa, 2010). Collaboration among various stakeholders serves as a leading factor to CD implementation in any community (Carlisle, Kunc, Jones & Tif-



fin, 2013; Hummel & van der Duim, 2016; Jiricka, Salak, Arnberger, Eder, & Pröbstl-Haider, 2014; Reggers, Grabowski, Wearing, Chatterton & Schweinsberg, 2016; Stone, 2015). Collaboration is fundamental in: collective learning and innovation (Martinez-Fernandez & Toner, 2003); resolving enterprise/resource problems (Denicolai, Cioccarelli & Zucchella, 2010); regenerating social capital between rural and external territories (Quaranta, Citro & Salvia, 2016); performing an essential role in tourism planning and sustainable development (Fernandes, Brandão & Costa, 2017); and developing social transformations in various spectrums of local communities (Gilang, Maryuni & Lindawati, 2021). Undeniably, collaborative management and stakeholders' participation must be encouraged, which are key to sustainable development of communities.

#### **4. Towards Sustainable Destination Communities**

Tourism is seen as one of the main drivers of social and cultural innovation of destinations (Salvo, et. al, 2014) and one of the best approaches to achieve local development (Fernandes, Edwards & Vaughan, 2010). It has a direct bearing on building capacity and encouraging community empowerment. CD plays an important role in educating and assisting the local people towards tourism development (Djatmiko, Syariffudin, Raharja & Fitriani, 2021). Tourism development, which is vital to several economies must be pro-poor, transformative and proactive. Local communities are advised to practice responsible management to have positive societal impact however, they require more support and assistance from various stakeholders. Sustainability must be carefully delivered, both for immediate and long-term benefits to people, environment and the economy (World Bank, 2017). Sustainable development (SD) embeds so-

cial inclusion, economic growth and environmental stewardship, the three pillars.

Relatively, sustainable tourism (ST) as defined by UNWTO (2018) is "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities." This fundamental principle is geared towards the enhancement and sustainability of the economy, society and environment, as similarly interpreted on several studies (Butler, 2016; Cronin, 2003; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2009; Swarbrooke, 1999). ST equates to quality growth in a manner that does not deplete the natural and built environment while preserving local community's culture, history and heritage (Edgell, 2006). It also encourages initiatives that promote destination valorization and responsible resource management (Salvo, Calzati, Campon-Cerro, Di-Clemente & Hernandez-Mogollon, 2014). Real development cannot be realized if people are unskilled or improperly trained. People have the capacity to work and define activities that create 'differentiation' about their destinations. Ritchie and Crouch's (2003) model of destination competitiveness and sustainability represents a destination management approach that emphasizes human resource development as its core. Destination management organizations (DMOs) and destination stakeholders need to emphasize leadership and coordination in various aspects, such as planning and infrastructure, product development, technology and systems development, financing and most importantly, human resources. Human capital is crucial in the development of knowledge society that drives long-term impacts at all levels (Macbeth, Carson & Northcote, 2004; Maria Lut & Vlad, 2012).

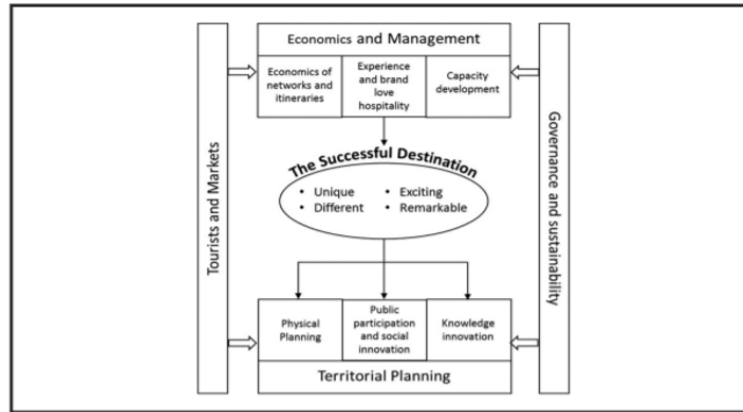


Figure 5 | The successful destination: Bridging territorial planning with economics and management  
Source: Costa (2020)

Another significant aspect of becoming a successful sustainable destination is by considering four attributes: territorial planning, economics and management, tourists & markets; and governance & sustainability (Costa, 2020). For successful and competitive destinations, this concept explains the inseparable interrelationship of territorial planning with governance and sustainability while tourists co-create and shape their experiences. Developing an economy based on tourism brings multiple benefits to a community however, any development will have associated costs and liabilities. A community must define the suitable type of tourism development based on a careful study of local people's interest and specific community needs. Even if the community is not a primary destination, it may still have a tourism potential. It can become a preferred route for travelers and provide some basic services such as food, lodging, souvenirs and other products to visitors. Alternatively, the area might not be an important travel destination but has a potential in developing products that support a tourism destination. Whatever the case maybe, no tourism product must be developed or marketed without local residents' involvement and support. A good inventory of potential tourism resources is critical to a destination's success. Destinations aim for more sustainable resources where tourism as a sector is a highly viable option. The product

opportunities are increasingly viewed as strategies especially for keeping rural or marginalized communities economically viable, as additional or alternative sources of livelihood.

ST can fulfill economic, environmental and social goals while maintaining cultural integrity and ecological balance if carefully planned. It is highly recommended to develop ST based on bottom-up approach and increase residents' participation (Fernandes, Edwards & Vaughan, 2010). However, it also involves making hard political choices based on complex social, economic and environmental factors. If a destination effectively managed CD within a given natural, built or cultural environment, ultimately, ST shall add value and boost quality of life among residents, visitors and tourism employees.

## 5. Relevance and Current Contributions

The United Nations has set the agenda for 2030 to achieve targets by all member nations and one of its aims is to "enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries" (UN Knowledge Platform, 2021). On the other hand, UNWTO emphasizes its support for tourism, in building ca-

capacity and policies worldwide to promote economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability (UNWTO, 2020). These are linked with key UN SDGs 8, 12 and 14 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production, and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources as well as to SDGs 16 and 17, on the establishment of peaceful & inclusive societies, and strengthening local & global partnerships. CD plays a significant role in supporting national and global plans to implement all SDGs, through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

Destination communities must remain competitive in attracting visitors and providing memorable experiences while enhancing the well-being of people and the communities - economically, socio-

culturally and environmentally. Training and development programmes, accountability, policies and legislation are critical CD elements required at various levels to achieve the desired outputs and outcomes. Policies and legislation are fundamental not only to destination's sustainability but to communities' well-being as well as to the enhancement of territorial identity (Salvo, et.al, 2014). Furthermore, collaboration and partnerships among stakeholders are considered an inclusive strategy, a consensus building practice (Presenza & Cipollina, 2010), and essential for developing ST policies (Fernandes, Brandão & Costa, 2017). A CD framework that emphasizes collaborative management and stakeholders' participation is necessary to have inclusive and long-term strategies supporting the achievement of key SDGs.

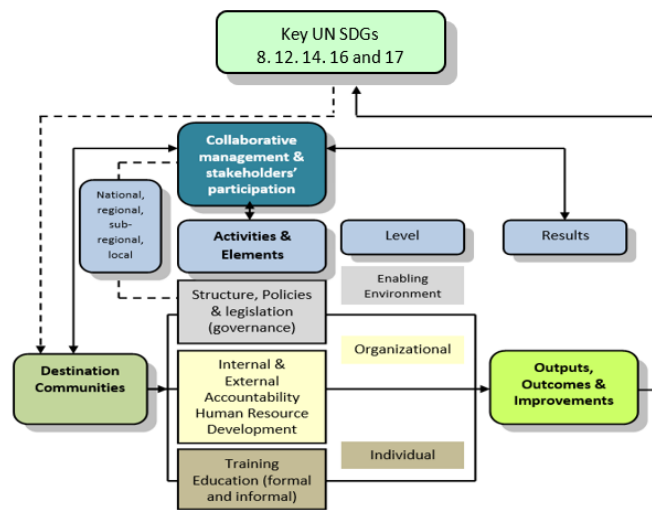


Figure 6 | Capacity Development Framework

Source: Adapted from: Bolger, 2000; Costa, Panyik & Buhalis, 2013; Hofwegen, 2008; Jamal & Jamroz, 2006; UNDP, 2015

In Europe, the world's leading tourist destination, tourism plays a key role in the development of many regions especially the less developed areas. The sector has shown resilience and persistent growth amidst various crises (European Commission, 2020). The European Union has also committed to a smarter and sustainable Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformations; greener Europe through investment

and circular economy; a more social Europe with access to inclusive and quality services in education and training; and integration of marginalized communities. Specifically, the European Commission is geared towards strengthening the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and innovation (Costa, 2021). Moreover, the EU has established an agenda for the coming years that aims to make Europe better pre-

pared in handling crisis, such as the case of the Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19, considered as the worst crisis, has impacted our global industries especially the European tourism sector. The European Union has mobilized several programmes and initiatives to minimize the negative impacts of the

pandemic. Now, more than ever, the coming years are crucial and through the help of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) of the European Commission, tourism has become a top priority.

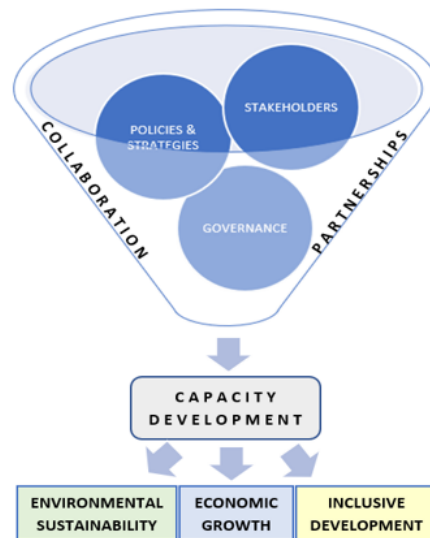


Figure 7 | CD towards Global and European Agenda

The European Commission has addressed the needs to further develop the natural, historical and cultural assets including the attractiveness of cities and regions, stressing development, innovation and diversification of products and services. Several institutions underlined the importance of engagement and in finding balance between man and the environment. These can only be achieved through effective human capital development programmes where CD serves as the base for all other initiatives through comprehensive strategies and investments in tourism innovation (European Commission, 2020); the creation of innovative potentials for tourism organizations and regions (Brandão, Costa & Buhalis, 2017); and engagement of local people to proper activities that support cultural preservation and tourism development (Adom, Nyadu-Addo & Kquofi, 2021). Places which are heavily reliant on tourism and culture must design

and implement new CD policies to boost local economies and drive horizontal spillovers and multiplier effects (Costa, 2021). Destination communities must align or complement future research studies that include networking or collaboration due to its relevance at various levels, and inspire capacity builders, researchers and practitioners in enriching CD literature vis-à-vis tourism.

## 6. Conclusion

This review paper has revealed the significance of key development concepts as well as CD approaches and practices. It has also stressed the relationship of these concepts and approaches to the attainment of effective CD management in destination communities. In the past, most destina-

ons have viewed CD based on a separated, normalistic point of view but it is proposed that it must be taken as a holistic, integrated approach in our current times. The review has presented CD as a 'means' in transforming destinations. It has also enumerated a variety of socio-environmental factors that impact CD. Remarkably, studies presented evidence that there is no single approach which can be applied to multiple destinations, regardless of its management structure, due to the complex nature and varied situations influencing these destinations. However, this review reveals collaboration and partnerships as a common attribute and integral element of an effective CD programme in destinations, of any structural type or form. Collaboration and partnerships are a decisive CD factor in achieving sustainability. Cooperation among different sectors helps strengthen the actors and support new entrepreneurial activities. CD must stimulate and re-establish tourism activities through new business models, adaptation to new consumer trends, support for social enterprises and innovation and even now, with digitalization. CD practices must be holistically examined to provide practical solutions in current problems facing our destination communities.

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