

Community-Based Tourism in Zimbabwe: The Case of Chesvingo Cultural Village in Masvingo

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Abstract

Community-based tourism (CBT) is considered a vehicle for the poverty alleviation of communities. Chesvingo Cultural Village in Masvingo is one of the community-based tourism enterprises (CBTEs) in Zimbabwe which was revived in 2014 to ensure that communities benefit from tourism resources within their areas. The study aimed to assess the benefits which Chesvingo Cultural Village has brought to the community since its revival in 2014 including the challenges faced. The study adopted a qualitative research design approach. A focus group discussion with the Chesvingo Cultural Village's seven members of the management committee was the data collection method. The major finding was that, though the community-based tourism enterprises concept was considered a good idea, the benefits to the community especially the economic benefits were below expectations. Hyperinflation, liquidity crunch, fuel shortages, and internal CBTE challenges such as poor management and marketing skills were the major obstacles to a full realization of benefits by the community. The study recommends both the government and the private sector to fully support CBTEs through continuous monitoring, regular training workshops on marketing and management of their enterprises. The government should revive the economy for the sustainable growth and development of CBTEs including Chesvingo Cultural Village in Masvingo.

Keywords: *Community-based tourism, Community-based tourism enterprises, Masvingo, tourism benefits.*

1. Introduction

The tourism industry is the largest globally (Tamir, 2015). The tourism industry is considered a veritable vehicle for rural and community development given its income redistributive functions between the rich and the poor (Mensah, 2017). Worldwide, countries have adopted tourism as a priority sector. The Government of Zimbabwe has identified tourism as one of the key pillars anchoring economic growth together with the agriculture, mining, and manufacturing sectors (Zimbabwe National Tourism Policy (ZNTP), 2014). As tourists from America, Europe, and other well-to-do parts of the world, visit tourist attractions in Zimbabwe's communities, they bring income which they spend in those communities for the benefit of the visited communities (Mudzengi, Chapungu, & Chiutsi, 2018). Tourism brings monetary and non-monetary benefits to the host community (Muzapu & Sibanda, 2016). As such most developing countries including Zimbabwe have demonstrated their commitment to adopt tourism as an instrumental tool for employment creation, wealth creation, and poverty reduction as well as improving the livelihoods of disadvantaged communities (Nyaruwata, 2011).

However, the key issue is ensuring that the tourism industry rightly benefits the host community (Ahmad, Mohd, & Tan, 2015). Chiutsi and Mudzengi (2012) bemoaned tourism proceeds being only enjoyed by the elites at the expense of local communities who are the rightful beneficiaries of tourism activities in their localities. Furthermore, there has been repatriation of revenue and profits from developing countries to developed countries by multinational companies thus making the host communities poorer (Runyowa, 2017). The need to empower communities through tourism has led governments and other development agencies to adopt a bottom-up approach (Karacaoglu & Birdir, 2017) and consider a paradigm shift in tourism development from mass tourism to community-based tourism (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018). This paradigm shift to community-based tourism strategy sought to place local communities at the epicenter of tourism development and management thus ensuring that the local community directly benefit from tourism activities within their communities through income and other non-monetary benefits such as infrastructure (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018). Community-based Tourism (CBT) is "tourism that is conceived, managed and supplied by the local communities of a given territory" (Terencia, 2018:26). Under Community-based Tourism, the local community has greater control over the development and management of the tourism resources and enterprises with a large percentage of the accrued benefits remaining within the host community (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018; Tamir, 2015). CBT gives local communities access and control over tourism resources within their areas (Scheyvens, 2008). This study, therefore, contributes knowledge to the discourse of CBT benefits and the challenges faced by CBTEs in Zimbabwe with a particular focus on Chesvingo Cultural Village in Masvingo.

2. Background of the study

2.1 The origins of CBT

Community-based tourism (CBT) is a concept that grew out of the need to alleviate poverty and spread benefits to the most socially, environmentally, and economically marginalized communities using tourism as a tool (ZNTMP, 2017). CBT is a rejection of the traditional mass tourism that impoverished communities due to repatriation of profits and revenues by multinational companies in the tourism industry (Runyowa 2017). Globally, the CBT concept came about in the 1980s as a result of the World Conservation Strategy to link protected area management with important community activities for the achievement of sustainability goals, socially, economically, and environmentally (Sebele, 2010). Thus, the development of Community Based Tourism Enterprises (CBTEs) is consistent with alternative development and sustainable livelihood approaches, which focus on grassroots development, embrace participation, equity, and empowerment ideas (Scheyvens, 2007). Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, (2016) acknowledged that CBT is now promoted as a strategy to foster community development in developing countries and it fosters positive environmental and social impacts. CBT emerged as an instrumental tool that integrates natural resource conservation, local income generation, cultural conservation, and local empowerment, particularly in developing countries (Nyaruwata, 2011). Thus, central to the idea of CBT is the view that local communities must benefit from any developmental initiative in their localities.

2.2 Overview of CBTEs in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, CBTEs are divided into two distinct groups; some CBTEs focus on consumptive tourism, that is, sport hunting, and those that focus on non-consumptive tourism such as photographic safaris, special interests activities, and cultural heritage (Zimbabwe National

Tourism Master Plan (ZNTMP), 2017). The number of CBTEs varies throughout the country's ten provinces with the density of the enterprises being influenced by the resource base and the presence of entrepreneurial champions of the concept in the area. The business models used in running the CBTEs include wholly owned and managed community enterprises, the private sector managed and owned enterprises, community/private sector partnerships ventures, community/ local authority partnership enterprises, community/ non-governmental organisations (NGO) managed enterprises, and community/ cooperative association managed enterprises (ZNMTP, 2017). Since their inception in the 1990s, CBTEs have encountered a diversity of challenges in their operations. One of the key challenges had been the lack of knowledge of responsible tourism such that several projects suffered sustainability challenges to the extent of closing down (Nyaruwata, 2011). However, a lot of potential exists for CBTEs to flourish if proper management and institutional issues are put in place and well-implemented (ZNTMP, 2017).

The government of Zimbabwe adopted a CBTE concept to improve rural livelihoods. Soon after independence in the 1980 and 1990s, the government introduced CBT projects through the Communal Areas Management program for indigenous resources (CAMPFIRE) (Marunda, 2014). The CAMPFIRE projects were successful when the Zimbabwean economy was doing well, that is from 1980 to about 1999 (Abel, Nyamadzawo, Nyaruwata, & Moyo, 2013). However, with the downturn in economic performance of Zimbabwe since the year 2000, several CBTEs have faced viability challenges, with most of them closing down (ZNTMP, 2014). With the creation of a standalone Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry in 2009, the government has embarked on the program of resuscitating the CBTEs throughout the country for purposes of driving rural communities' development through tourism (ZNTMP 2014). Furthermore, the government of Zimbabwe has taken a positive step towards promoting CBTEs by launching a Community Based Tourism in Zimbabwe Guidelines for Development and a Manual for CBTEs development in May 2018 (Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry, report, 2018) to support the development of CBTEs in Zimbabwe.

One of the CBTE projects in Zimbabwe is Chesvingo Cultural Village in Masvingo district, Masvingo province. Chesvingo Cultural Village in Masvingo was established during the early 1990s to empower communities by making sure that communities benefit from tourism resources within their areas. However, studies on CBTEs impact and benefits on community and national development in Zimbabwe are very limited. Goodwin & Santili (2009) agree that CBTE benefits to local communities remain largely unquantified and pointedly posit that CBTE studies have reported contradictory findings with researchers reporting both positive and negative outcomes. For those studies that have focused on CBTEs, the main concentration had been in other countries such as Latin America, Japan, Fiji, Thailand, Chile among others. Moreover the studies were done in other countries and Southern Africa have produced mixed results (Mbaiwa & Kolawole, 2013). It is against this background that this study sought to identify, assess and evaluate the benefits and challenges of Chesvingo Cultural Village in Masvingo to the local community.

3. Problem statement

The CBT concept has been the vehicle for the promotion and development of community tourism in developing and developed countries since the 1990s. The adoption of the CBTE strategy by Zimbabwe as an alternative form of tourism development led to the rise of CBTEs throughout the country, with Chesvingo Cultural Village, in Masvingo, being one of the enterprises. However,

the evaluation and assessment of the benefits of CBTEs in Zimbabwe to gauge the impact of these projects is required. There is limited literature regarding the impact of CBTEs in Zimbabwe. Particularly, the impact of Chesvingo Cultural Village on the community is largely not known hence this study is an attempt to address that gap. Thus the study sought to assess the benefits and identify the challenges of Chesvingo Cultural village since its revival in 2014 up to December 2019.

4. Literature review

4.1 Theoretical literature review

4.1.1 Community-based tourism

CBT emerged as a direct response to the criticisms of the mass tourism concept that had dominated the world for a long time before 1980. One of the major criticisms of mass tourism was the impoverishment of local communities (Tamir, 2015). CBT is a more sustainable form of tourism than traditional mass tourism as it allows the host community to have control over their tourism resources with benefits accruing to the host community (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). CBT as a concept is broadly complex and lacks a universal definition (Nyaruwata, 2011; Runyowa, 2017). World Wildlife Fund (2001) defines CBT initiatives where the local community has substantial control over, and involvement in its development and management, and a major part of the benefits remain within the community. The Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA) as cited by Community Based Tourism in Zimbabwe Guidelines for Development (CBTIZ) (2017) defines community-based tourism as tourism that is characterized by; tourism development that directly benefits the respective host communities, the host community is empowered with decision making regarding the running and management of the CBT enterprise and the culture, heritage and local resources are respected, conserved and utilized sustainably for the overall benefit of the community.

The Zimbabwe National Tourism Policy (ZNTP) (2014:10) defines Community-based tourism as "relates to tourism projects initiated and managed by the local communities for their economic benefit. Such projects must be located within the community" The Community Based Tourism in Zimbabwe Guidelines for Development (CBTIZ) (2017:5) prepared by the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry (MOTHI) defined CBT as "projects that offer services to tourists which are owned and/or managed by communities and generate wider community benefit". Luchetti (2013) posited that a CBT involves community participation and generates benefits for the host community by allowing tourists to visit the community and learn about the cultural heritage and the local environment. CBT is managed and owned by the community for the community enabling visitors to increase their awareness and learn about the community and its culture. Moreso, CBT activities value the local handicrafts, festivals, celebrations, music, dance, food, clothing and dress code, myths, and legends (Nyaruwata, 2011).

A closer look at the foregoing perspectives on CBT reveals a golden thread of community ownership, involvement, and participation of tourism projects within communities linking all these definitions. Hence a CBT can best be described as a tourism project or enterprise planned, developed, owned, and managed by the community for the community, guided by collective decision making, responsibility, access, ownership, and benefits, and is done with societal, economic, and environmental sustainability in mind (Responsible Ecological Social Tour (REST), 2003). Thus, CBT ensures that community members actively participate in the tourism

development projects within their area, the tourism development project is run by the community members and that community members are actively involved in planning, implementation, operation, and decision making. It results in a win-win scenario between the host community and the tourists. Tourists gain ultimate enjoyment and satisfaction by immersing themselves within the community culture and heritage including the aesthetic natural beauty of the environment. On the other hand, the host community derives economic and social benefits from their culture and heritage as well as from the natural environment. Ultimately benefits or a part of benefits from the CBT project are shared with wider community members (CBTIZ, 2017). A CBT project is a tourism development project by the community for the community.

CBT is guided by certain principles. REST (2010) developed CBT principles which host communities can use as a benchmark for community development. Thus, CBT should aim to: recognise, support, and promote community ownership of tourism; involve community members from the start in all aspects; promote community pride; improve the quality of life; ensure environmental sustainability; preserve the unique character and culture of the local area; foster cross-cultural learning; respect cultural differences and human dignity; distribute benefits fairly among community members and contribute a fixed percentage of income to community projects. Moreso, CBT seeks to promote local participation, development, and operation of tourism activities and enterprises by local community members, and local empowerment and retention of benefits within the local community (Tamir, 2015). The other important goal of CBT is cultural conservation through respect for local culture, heritage, and traditions including the natural environment (Tamir, 2015). In this sense, CBT helps to achieve devolution in the management of tourism resources to achieve sustainable development of communities

4.2 Benefits of CBT

The CBT concept uses tourism as a tool for empowering communities and making them eke a living from the tourism resources within their localities. CBT integrates conservation and development of communities helping to achieve sustainability (Tamir, 2015). CBT brings several benefits to communities which among them include; income generation for community members through wages and entrepreneurial activities; employment creation for the locals as they work as tour guides, drivers, cleaners, security guards, cooks, waiters among other jobs; wealth creation as local communities invest their income for posterity; poverty alleviation as livelihoods and living standards improve for the local community; environmental and biodiversity conservation; promotion and preservation of cultural values and heritage; promotion of the culture creation industry in the community; knowledge and skills transfer through training and community participation; creation and strengthening of community relations and togetherness; infrastructure and superstructure development for the community's benefit since roads, water, electricity, schools, clinics are built, sustainable tourism resources management for the community; diversification of livelihood sources since the community no longer depends on one source such as agriculture; and CBT leads to empowered and self-sufficient communities and it catalyses the whole local economy through the multiplier effect (ZNMTP, 2017, Runyowa, 2017, CBTIZ, 2017, Nyaruwata, 2011).

4.3 Challenges faced by CBTEs in Zimbabwe

CBT is a wonderful concept in theory but has challenges in practice (Tamir, 2015). The CBT concept grew out of the need to empower communities and alleviate poverty using tourism as a

development tool and spread benefits to the marginalized communities (Zimbabwe National Tourism Policy 2014). However several challenges have plagued and militated against the success of CBTEs in Zimbabwe. Nyaruwata (2011) bemoans that fifteen or more years after their establishment, CBTEs in Zimbabwe have been vandalized due to power politics within communities. Some CBTEs have been abandoned due to dependency on donor funding and a lack of community ownership. The key external challenge that contributed to the poor performance of CBTEs had been the economic and political problems faced by Zimbabwe since the year 2000. The fast-track land reform program that commenced in 2000 caused a lot of damage to the tourism industry including CBTEs (Chibaya & Matura, 2018). Additionally, CBTEs faced the following challenges; lack of effective marketing strategies, unfavorable national policies, poor quality products, poor human resource skills, lack of marketing linkages and networks, lack of funding, high dependence on donors, limited knowledge on responsible tourism, inaccessible location, limited product diversification, capacity challenges, lack of community entrepreneurship, poaching plus community's bad attitude towards wildlife conservation (ZNTMP, 2017; Runyowa, 2017; Nyaruwata, 2011). Furthermore, the CBT concept has been associated with certain drawbacks which are; low economic impact with regards to low incomes, limited and menial jobs, abuse of resources by leaders of CBTEs, the low life expectancy of several CBTEs, benefits monopolization by the community elites, the politicization of certain projects leading to the deliberate exclusion of community members based on political party affiliation, inequitable income distribution (Sebele, 2010; Runyowa, 2017; Nyaruwata, 2011).

4.4 Empirical literature

CBTEs provide, expands, increases, and improves sources of livelihood and opportunities to earn income for the community, income which is used for building schools, clinics, roads, healthcare facilities (Sebele, 2010; Mbaiwa, 2011; Nyaruwata, 2011; Runyowa, 2017). CBTEs help in reducing social vices such as theft, robbery, prostitution as community members spend their time engaged in more useful activities that benefit them (Runyowa, 2017). CBTEs result in increased income, revenues, wealth, and employment for the local community which in the long run will lead to poverty alleviation in the community (Nyaruwata, 2011). CBTEs promote community economic recovery, improved infrastructure, and also harmony with other existing sustainable economic activities. CBTEs have the added advantage of creating beneficial linkages and networks with other economic sectors and also lead to the creation of markets for other community products and services which hitherto establishment of the CBTE had no market.

Runyowa (2017) in his study of Ko Mpise Cultural Village in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe praised the CBTE for making the following contributions to the community; it offers a rich experience to tourists on the daily life of villagers in Zimbabwe. Tourists are exposed to dancing, culinary, and curio-making experiences at the village. Some painting is done by a disabled resident painter thus instilling a sense of pride in the community as well as providing an authentic experience for the tourists. Ko Mpise Cultural village has brought the following wider community benefits; the drilling of a borehole has provided freshwater access to the surrounding community of more than ten households. Domestic animals also have benefited from the borehole. Community members have also managed to earn extra income through selling different wares to tourists who visit the village. Local dance groups also provide entertainment to tourists, an activity that earns them money from tourists who pay tokens of appreciation thus supplementing their incomes (Runyowa,

2017). However, Runyowa (2017) bemoans the lack of proper record keeping as well as the lack of proper management systems and structures at the village, a situation that may hinder its success.

Oladeji (2015)'s study in Liberia found out that CBTEs in Kpatawee played a key role in providing economic diversity thus eliminating a dependency syndrome on limited economic sectors, improving geographic distribution of employment and income generation opportunities. CBTEs draw development opportunities and resources towards the community. Furthermore, CBTEs have brought soft and intangible benefits to communities which among them include; enhancement of unity and social cohesion, women empowerment through their participation in decision making, acquisition of new skills that are transferrable to other life issues by community members, confidence-building, and strengthening, acquisition of the business and entrepreneurial skills by the locals, enhanced capability to deal with outsiders as well as benefits related to culture and environmental preservation (Sebele, 2010).

Mutandwa and Gadzirayi, (2007) studied the impact of community-based approaches to wildlife management: Case of CAMPFIRE program in Zimbabwe and found out that the Gonono community benefited from the CAMPFIRE program. The benefits were in form of employment opportunities through brick molding contracts, some community members were employed at a local ranch as cooks, game guards, skimmers as well as the development of schools and clinics plus income. CBTEs brought about the following benefits generally; reduction in wildlife poaching improved local community attitudes towards wildlife and natural resources; increased wildlife; community development especially in rural areas; contribution to improved community livelihoods; and increased conservation of natural resources.

However, on the other side, the empirical literature is also replete with negative impacts of CBTEs on the local community. CBTEs have been criticized with regards to having an underwhelming impact on the economic lives of local people in terms of income and jobs. The jobs have been described as too menial and incomes generated as too meagre to sustain rural and community livelihoods (Mitchell & Ashley, 2007). CBTEs tend to be small-scale in terms of their intervention and coverage, they have low life expectancy chiefly due to donor funding dependency (when the funding is withdrawn the CBTE suffers). Sebele (2010) bemoans that the local community people gain very little from CBTEs projects. Sebele (2010)'s study in Botswana found out that community involvement was only done at the commencement of the project simply to gain acceptance by the community but were marginalized in the running of the project at Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust (a CBTE). The study noted several challenges which among them included; lack of community involvement, imbalance in board representation, dependency on donors, and lack of communication which have resulted in very few positive impacts on the lives of the local community members.

Conflicts, tensions, and power dynamics, and politics have also been the order of the day in some CBTEs in Africa and Zimbabwe and these have resulted in communities failing to realize meaningful benefits. The distribution of income and other benefits within communities have been reported in the literature to be unequal with the management committees and elites only benefiting (Goodwin & Santili, 2009). Abuse of resources from donors and other support agencies as well as the creation of a high dependency syndrome have been reported to be some of the negative impacts of CBTEs (Mitchel & Muckosy, 2008). The other failings of CBTEs are the mismatch between what is on paper and that on the ground. On paper CBTEs claim to involve the communities yet in

reality the community is relegated to the periphery of decision making and is only used to rubber-stamp the decisions of the management community or entrepreneurship champion within the community (Mitchel & Muckosy, 2008). Furthermore, Goodwin et al., (2014) regretted some of the negative impacts of CBTEs that included; disrespect by tourists of the privacy of the local community; reduced quality of life for the community due to high tourist traffic; and inadequate or limited overall economic benefits for the local community; unfair distribution of benefits among the locals; growing drinking problems among the locals especially the youth; economic dependence on external funds; worsened intergroup conflicts; economic leakages through the outsourcing of goods and services; negative impacts on nature from tourist traffic; disruption of local practices and access to communal land by locals among others. This study sought to assess the benefits to the community of Chesvingo Cultural Village in Masvingo district, in Masvingo province, Zimbabwe.

5. Methodology

5.1 Area of study

Chesvingo Cultural Village is located in Masvingo District in Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe. Chesvingo Cultural Village was initially established in 1992. It is approximately 40km from Masvingo town. Chesvingo Cultural Village was initially established in 1992 with support from the CAMPFIRE program to improve the livelihood of the surrounding communities. The committee members split into two groups due to differences and the CBT project was forced to discontinue over 20 years. After long years of abeyance, community members decided to reconstruct the project and discussed it with the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry (MoTHI) and Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) in August 2014. The project was rebuilt from scratch in October 2014 and is currently operational. Chesvingo Cultural Village is run by a CBT management committee of seven members and 65 people from 20 households in 7 villages engage in the CBT activity. It is registered as a cooperative and has a legal constitution.

The study adopted a qualitative research approach underpinned by a descriptive case study design to get an in-depth understanding of the issues under investigation since it is described as an inquiry from the inside (Creswell, 2014). The qualitative approach allows for use of focus group discussions and interviews that provide data that is in-depth, rich, and explanatory. The case study design allows for detailed data collection through an extensive examination and investigation of a particular place, setting, or community to understand the subject matter and answer the research question (Chawawa, 2002). The case in this study is the Chesvingo Cultural Village, a CBTE in Masvingo District, Masvingo province Zimbabwe. The study was guided by the interpretivism paradigm which allows the researcher to gather in-depth data from respondents using qualitative data gathering techniques (Creswell, 2014). Data was collected using a focus group discussion guide with the Chesvingo Cultural Village management committee of seven members in January 2020. The seven committee members were purposively selected as the researcher considered them to be a source of vital data for the study. Also, document analysis was adopted as a data-gathering tool to enrich the findings.

Data were thematically analyzed following Creswell's (2012)'s steps of analyzing qualitative data. Step one involved organizing and preparing the data including relistening to audio recordings and transcription of the focus group discussion. The second step involved reading all the data repeatedly to get the overall meaning before analyzing it. Step four involved coding the data and

organizing it into categories of text by the researcher and the codes were grouped to form broader themes. Lastly, data interpretation was done and findings were presented in detailed narrations following the dominant themes. The next section presents the results and discussion.

6. Results and discussion

Table 1: Profile of study respondents

Respondent	Designation	Gender	Age	Experience	Education
R1	Chairman	Male	71	22 years	O' level
R2	Deputy Chairman	Male	68	20 years	ZJC
R3	Secretary	Male	45	15 years	O' level
R4	Treasurer	Male	40	10 years	O' level
R5	Committee member	Female	42	10 years	O' level
R6	Committee member	Male	43	12 years	O' level
R7	Committee member	Female	41	14 years	O' level

6.1 Benefits of Chesvingo Cultural Village to the community

Based on the findings, the benefits are divided into four dominant themes, namely, the economic, social, cultural, and environmental, and each of these is presented below.

6.1.1 Economic benefits

In terms of economic benefits, the respondents do admit that since its revival in 2014, the CBTE has the potential to generate revenue and wealth for the community in the medium to long term. Currently, through the CBT the community has been enlightened and empowered to eke a living out of their cultural and community natural resources through showcasing these tourism products to tourists and other visitors. In terms of jobs, the CBT has created jobs as some community members are working as tour guides. The community members do undertake and participate in the following activities; tour guiding services, preparation of traditional food, and participation in the activities of the Chesvingo Karanga daily life trail. The daily life trail which is a unique selling point of Chesvingo Cultural Village, depicts the daily living culture and activities of the Karanga people such as preparation of traditional foods, rearing of domestic animals, milking of cows, cultivation, harvesting, drying, threshing, pounding, winnowing, roasting, grinding of traditional crops such as Rapoko and traditional games like tsoro and nhodo. Furthermore, in terms of community infrastructure, a borehole was drilled for the community, which has become a source of fresh and clean water thus enhancing the quality of life. Respondents remarked that:

Respondent 1, *“Our greatest benefit so far is the borehole. However, we look forward to our project generating more income from both local and international tourists as our offering is appealing.”*

Respondent 2, *“The project has managed to create jobs for our people in the community, some are working as tour guides, handicraftsmen among others.”*

This is in agreement with Runyowa (2017)'s study of Ko Mpise Cultural Village in Victoria Falls found out that the CBT activity benefited the community through the drilling of a borehole, which has become a source of water for both the local people and their animals.

However, the respondents openly stated that since the revival of Chesvingo Cultural Village in 2014, community members have not realized meaningful economic benefits in terms of income and wealth from the CBT activity. The community is participating through the provision of services with the hope that in the future they will receive tangible benefits. Therefore in terms of revenue, income, wealth, and wages community members are yet to realize these benefits. Respondents commented that,

Respondent 3, *"However, have we are yet to receive meaningful financial returns, to be honest, the number of tourists is low; we hope that in future the project will give us better financial returns"*.

Realization of dividends, for now, is difficult due to depressed tourist arrivals to Chesvingo Cultural Village. This finding is in agreement with several studies of CBTEs in and outside Zimbabwe, in which the local communities realize very little or no economic benefits (Nyaruwata, 2011; Sebele, 2010; Godwin & Santili, 2009; Chibaya & Matura, 2018; Mitchel & Muckosy, 2008).

6.1.2 Social benefits

In terms of social benefits, respondents revealed that Chesvingo Cultural Village has managed to build and strengthen community relations as more than twenty households are actively involved in the CBT activity. Moreso, community members have been empowered to make decisions concerning the operations of the CBT activity. More importantly, community members were empowered with new knowledge, skills, and values. The Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality industry and JICA organized training workshops for the Chesvingo cultural Village. Community members received training in the following areas; tour guiding, basic accounting, basic principles of marketing, and basic hygiene and food preparations. The training program was meant to ensure the sustainability of the CBTEs. These new skills which the community members received are transferrable to other life areas hence the community members benefited in this regard as a result of Chesvingo Cultural Village. Respondents commented that:

Respondent 1, *"This project has created a platform for all the community members involved, about thirty of them to get trained in marketing and accounting skills and the skills are helping people beyond the operations of the project. In that regard, we are particularly happy."*

This is in agreement with study findings by Mitchel & Ashley (2007) that all found that CBTEs bring education and training benefits to the community helping to enlighten and empower the community with basic entrepreneurial and management knowledge and skills.

6.1.3 Cultural benefits

Respondents revealed that Chesvingo Cultural Village has benefitted the community through revitalizing, reviving, strengthening, and preserving of Karanga culture. Chesvingo Cultural village is the center for the preservation of Karanga culture for both the present and future

generations. It provides a tangible and intangible heritage base for the Zimbabwean culture as it showcases the Karanga culture, for example, rain-making ceremonies "Mutoro" are done during September yearly. Bira which is an indigenous religious event to commemorate the souls of ancestors is also done where dances like Jukwa, Mhande, and Shangara are performed. The Chesvingo Cultural Village has the following establishments to depict the culture of the Karanga; The Chesvingo Eco museum concept, Chesvingo Daily life trail, and the Chesvingo Legend Trail. These provide an authentic real-life experience to tourists. Chesvingo Cultural village allows tourists to interact with the local community and immerse themselves in the daily lives of the Karanga people. Respondents agreed that community members take immense pride in their daily cultural activities that are appreciated by the tourists. This is captured in the following remarks by respondents:

Respondent 2, *"Our project, to be honest, is a custodian of the Karanga Culture. We have managed to keep our traditional and original culture of the Karanga people through the daily activities of the project."*

Respondent 4, *"Our youth, I can say are the biggest beneficiaries of this project because this project preserves and perpetuates the living culture of the Karanga people. Here we teach the youth about our culture."*

Respondent 7, *"School children who came from as far as Harare are exposed live to the living culture of the Karanga people for the good of the society."*

This finding is in agreement with Runyowa (2017) and Manyara & Jones (2007) who praised CBTEs for playing a key role in preserving cultural values and heritage of communities in which they operate and at the same time a means to eliminate poverty through the empowerment of local people.

6.1.4 Environmental benefits

In terms of environmental benefits, Chesvingo Cultural Village has helped instill the importance of looking after the environment, since it is a vital source of the community's daily life. In this case, for example, the community has been made aware of the importance of indigenous trees for food security and medicinal purposes which is also a benefit to the local communities themselves and the tourists. Agriculture, that is the growing of crops and rearing of animals, forms the backbone of the community's life. The community uses subsistence agriculture for their day-to-day livelihood, thus their lives are dependent on the environment. Respondents revealed that deforestation had declined since the revival of the CBT project in 2014. Moreso, community members use sustainable methods of agriculture such as zero tillage, and use of cattle dung for manure to conserve the environment. Respondents remarked that:

Respondent 1, *"This project has managed to conscientise the community of the benefits of protecting the environment. We teach people on conservation issues like limiting deforestation, avoiding streambank cultivation among other good farming methods. We teach traditional methods of farming, that is, the Karanga way."*

The enlightenment which the community received through awareness programs on the need to conserve the environment to attract tourists and sustain lives has helped in shaping positive

attitudes towards the environment by the community. This is in agreement with study findings by Mbaiwa (2011), Sebele (2010).

However, overall the above findings are in disagreement with the study by Goodwin et al., (2014) who regretted some of the negative impacts of CBTEs that included; disrespect by tourists of the privacy of local community; reduced quality of life for the community due to high tourist traffic; inadequate or limited overall economic benefits for the local community; unfair distribution of benefits among the locals; growing drinking problems among the locals especially the youth; economic dependence on external funds; worsened intergroup conflicts; economic leakages through the outsourcing of goods and services; negative impacts on nature from tourist traffic; disruption of local practices and access to communal land by locals among others.

6.2 Challenges faced by Chesvingo Cultural Village

6.2.1 Internal challenges

In terms of internal challenges, Chesvingo Cultural Village is grappling with; lack of business planning, limited business management skills, lack of marketing linkages and networks, lack of sanitary facilities such as toilets at the model village / open exhibition center, lack of funds to support CBT activities and they rely on donations and handouts. Inadequate or limited overall economic benefits for the local community are also another challenge. These challenges were also reported in the studies by Runyowa (2017), Nyaruwata (2011).

6.2.2 External challenges

Chesvingo Cultural Village is grappling with the following external challenges according to the study; poor performance of the wider tourism industry in Zimbabwe has negatively affected the number of tourist arrivals to Chesvingo Cultural Village. This has negatively impacted the revenue and income received by the CBT activity. More so, the economic problems bedeviling Zimbabwe as a whole have negatively affected the revenue generation capacity of Chesvingo Cultural Village. The bad economy has also weakened the domestic tourism market (mostly relies on schools and domestic tourists) thus leading to a decline in visitorship to Chesvingo Cultural Village. These challenges were also reported in other studies by Runyowa (2017), Chibaya & Matura (2018), and Nyaruwata (2011).

7.0 Conclusions

The study sought to assess the benefits and challenges of Chesvingo Cultural Village, a CBTE, in Masvingo since its revival in the year 2014 through a qualitative case study design approach in which a focus group discussion was conducted with the management committee. In conclusion, Chesvingo Cultural Village has brought about more social, cultural, and environmental benefits and less economic benefits to the local community. In terms of challenges, the economic crisis in Zimbabwe as well as the poor performance of the wider tourism industry in Masvingo province and Zimbabwe proved to be the biggest hindrance to the sustainable success of Chesvingo Cultural Village. The study recommends both the government and the private sector to fully support CBTEs through continuous monitoring, regular training workshops on marketing and management of their enterprises to prevent possible collapse. The government should see to it that it implements sound economic policies that drive sustainable economic growth if it is to enhance the performance of CBTEs including Chesvingo Cultural Village.

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