Title: Principles and practices of effective inclusive community stakeholder engagement for accessible tourism

Abstract:

In this chapter, we present the case that, to be inclusive and accessible, tourism destination management requires important (re)consideration of the processes used to involve community stakeholders in the tourism planning process. Whilst the importance of community collaboration is frequently heralded in tourism destination management, traditional community engagement tends to involve an organisational-centric approach, positioning the research/practitioner as expert and adopting one-way consultation methods for working with stakeholders. To achieve accessible tourism, there has been a call for effective inclusive stakeholder approaches that include meaningful engagement, diverse knowledge, participatory governance, and dialogic approaches. The benefits of these inclusive engagement practices are that they bring all key stakeholders together within a locality and draw on how the needs of the community may be met, as well as its future needs. As such, this chapter will discuss the principles and practices of effective inclusive community engagement, with a focus on effectively bringing together diverse stakeholders, such as community, tourism stakeholders and access organisations for accessible tourism destination development.

Facilitation of inclusive community engagement requires a mind-set of reciprocal relationships (i.e not just for personal/business gain). Within this perspective, the key philosophical differences are the values, mind-set, and principles that inform how we plan and enact the communication *with* and *within* communities. Inclusive community engagement involves an inclusive mind-set that views the relationship between businesses, organisations, and communities within a wider ecological system with them aiming to work together in collaborative, joint decision-making activities in order to engage in authentic dialogue and action for social change. As such, inclusive stakeholder engagement will endeavour to adopt practices that enhance individual and group voice, develop agency, and use creative approaches to enhance diverse thinking and intersubjective dialogue for co-created solutions. We demonstrate this with reference to a specific case study project, the New Zealand Tourism For All campaign, that sought to bring together diverse stakeholders using the principles of meaningful engagement and a dialogue approach to make the destination more accessible for tourists with disabilities.

Keywords: Stakeholder, community engagement, dialogic theory, tourism planning, inclusive destination, accessible tourism.

Introduction

In this chapter, we present the case that, to be an inclusive and accessible tourism destination requires important (re)consideration of the processes used to involve stakeholders in the tourism planning process (Cockburn-Wootten, McIntosh, Smith & Jefferies, 2018; Head, 2007). Whilst the importance of community collaboration is frequently heralded in tourism destination management, mainstream community engagement still tends to privilege an organisational-centric approach, positioning the researcher/practitioner as expert and adopting one-way consultation methods for working with stakeholders. To achieve accessible tourism, there has been a call for effective inclusive stakeholder approaches that include meaningful engagement, diverse knowledge, participatory governance, and the use of dialogue approaches (McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2016). The benefits of these inclusive engagement practices are that they invite and encourage all stakeholders and publics to come together to consider issues important to them, discuss collaborative solutions that they could take ownership of and propose an anticipated vision for their future needs (Mckinlay & Douglas, 2009). As such, this chapter will define and discuss the principles and practices of effective inclusive stakeholder engagement, with a focus on effectively bringing together diverse stakeholders, such as community, tourism stakeholders and access organisations for accessible tourism destination development. The final sections of the chapter present a case study from our involvement with/in a community stakeholder project, to illustrate and consider how we sought to engender inclusive stakeholder collaboration for the development of accessible tourism in the destination.

There is no doubt that bringing stakeholders within a community together is crucial for destination planning and can develop rich and meaningful communicative spaces to engage communities for change (Okazaki, 2008). In fact, the remit for many tourism academics is a desire to share and disseminate their research as it is seen as crucial for a broader range of stakeholders and publics and ensuring that “we ought to be accountable for the change that we create with our work” (Font, Higham, Miller & Pourfakhimi, 2019, p. 5). The key challenge for tourism researchers and planners has been how to work across intra/inter

networks of organisations and communities to mobilise knowledge, resources, and practice authentic engagement. Unrecognised assumptions, power and unacknowledged values can reduce and become detrimental to practices of authentic engagement and inclusion (Saito, & Ruhanen, 2017). Community engagement and inclusion terms, however, have become prevalent and ubiquitous concepts for many organisations, and certainly, within broader society (Taylor & Kent, 2014).

The concept of community engagement is usually framed positively, with the value and benefits of the activities promoted around the notion of citizenship. Love & Tilley, (2014, p. 34) aptly warn that the term may inadvertently become "a legitimising label for practices of engineering public consent and cop-opting publics to organisational agendas without any actual influence on organisational decision-making". Conceptions of what good citizenship participation entails draws on communication, engagement, and consultation, both of which have a long history in democratic western societies stemming from the foundational features of democratic civic life of the ancient Greeks (Head, 2008). The underlying assumption in this perspective is that society will become dysfunctional if self-interest prevails (Hirst, 2021). The resurgence and interest towards more participatory and inclusive engaged forms of governance illustrates that there is a wider desire to involve stakeholders in an authentic manner as citizens who participate in dialogic processes to identify priorities and governance issues (Head, 2008).

Legislation in some countries can drive the desire for some form of participation and may emphasise local governance and sovereignty too. The New Zealand government provides a notable example with legislation and their Policy Project that communicates words such as 'trust' 'enduring relationships', 'decision making', 'sharing', 'co-produce', 'collaborative leadership' 'good practice', 'better results' and 'genuine intention of listening' (The Policy Project, New Zealand Government, 2020, p.4). Similarly, the UK's Local Government Association (LGA) states that activities and processes should "strengthen trust, build resilience and respond to today's challenges through high-quality engagement" (LGA, 2017, p.5). The assumption underlying these concepts of civic life is that they "presume a balance between trust in self and in others as the enactment of shared control. Thus, engagement breeds trust, as trust breeds engagement" (Heath, 2018, p. 42). Yet, questions remain, and conflict can emerge when stakeholders have varying, competing definitions and expectations of what these ambiguous concepts will mean in practice.

To overcome silos, difficulties of understanding, and to share resources, communities and organisations have turned to adopting meaningful engagement strategies (Hardy, 2022). Meaningful engagement strategies aim to challenge unjust practices, reduce inequalities, and unravel the power of dominant institutions (Hirst, 2021). There is, however, a wide disparity of interpretation regarding what engagement is and should involve, ranging from perspectives that draw on community development approaches to the other end of the continuum focused on organization-centric consultation practices. The difference along this continuum is whether "powerful voices, policy makers, academics, and senior executives, are not prioritized at the expense of "seldom heard"" (Willis, Tench & Devins, 2018, p. 383).

So, how do we define engagement and what is needed for effective engagement? What are the general principles that guide mindsets and the processes for effective engagement? Acknowledging here that the historical, socio-political, culture and diversity of stakeholders will shape interpretations and what is deemed effective in that situation as the "issues and the terms [of] relationships are the relevant loci of analysis" (Taylor, Vasquez & Doorley, 2003, pp. 266-267). Engagement has been defined in various ways; each interpretation highlights mindsets, approaches and interests that are seen as paramount to the process. For instance, mainstream tourism, marketing, and public relations academics have tended to focus on engagement from an organization-centric perspective, where relationships and dialogue between the organisation and key stakeholders are initiated, managed, and identified as important due to the issue and by the organisation (Cockburn-Wootten, McIntosh, Smith & Jefferies, 2018; Goodson & Phillimore, 2012). This tends toward top-down approaches to stakeholder engagement. As Hirst (2021) aptly observes: top-down approaches enact a "paternalistic" mindset that puts the organisation's needs first as "*we* the powerful organisation, are going to make a decision and *we* are going to be deciding the level *you* be engaged in it" (sic, p. 99).

Other scholars drawing on community development, communication, and political science approaches have defined engagement as a public-centred approach with the aim that the processes should focus on issues, challenges and the needs of publics and wider communities (Hardy, 2022; Hirst, 2021; Head, 2007). Taylor and Kent (2014) see engagement in this vein as an inherently communitive processes, that draws on relationships to develop social capital. They note that "engagement is part of dialogue … an orientation that influences interactions and … guides the process [for] organizations and publics [to] make decisions that contribute to social capital" (p. 384). While Johnston and Lane (2021) add that it also involves

"advocacy to dialogic and cocreational forms" (p. 1). Inherent within both these definitions, is a desire to develop trust within reciprocal dialogic relationships, communication, and importantly, social capital. The language, rhetoric and processes that inform engagement actions are aiming to achieve change, either micro, meso, or at the macro levels and ideally will develop social capital for individuals and their communities too.

Here it is important to briefly note that notions of publics are not straightforward or stable entities, as organisational conceptualisations of the notion of publics, in terms of who engages with who, as well, as who is allowed decision-making power, stems from their mindsets (Place, 2022). As Heath (2018) notes "each organization is likely to encounter its own mind set as a hindrance to collaborative stakeholder engagement" (p. 35). Instead as Mahony and Stephanse (2017) identify in their discussion, three perspectives have emerged and dominated engagement research: pre-existing, normative, and emergent self-organising. These mindsets frame notions of publics, shape the engagement processes and tools, as well as what is deemed to be effective for change. Notions of pre-existing publics are prevalent in mainstream positivist approaches that view the public as existing, stable communities that can be easily categorised and targeted with marketing and promotional campaigns. The emphasis of a normative perspective is on the ideals of citizenship, neoliberal values and what publics could become and enact for civil society. The emergent self-organising public-centric approach is relevant here as it develops within collaborative spaces of community, that allow discussions to emerge and identify strategic actionable outcomes for change (Fitch & Motion, 2020). This perspective acknowledges "intersectionality, forces of subjugation … and privilege" that inform an individual's life, gained through diverse experiences shaped by socio-political historical contexts (Place, 2022). Each of these perspectives will place emphasis on certain principles of the design and will determine if the engagement is deemed effective. Regardless of the perspective taken, communication is central to effectiveness of the engagement practices, as it involves reciprocal relationships, dialogue, and sense-making processes to understand, engage, challenge, and enact change on issues.

Engagement can then be defined as "a socially responsible relational concept featuring psychological and behavioural attributes of connection, *interaction*, participation, and involvement, designed to achieve or elicit an outcome at individual, organizational, or social levels" (sic, Johnston & Lane, 2021, p. 1). Meaningful community engagement practices endeavour to gather decision-makers, influential stakeholders and community stakeholders who may have been silenced, and/or do not exercise control over representations of

themselves, organisations, and influential community leaders to collaborate around an issue for change solutions (Bazrafshan, McIntosh, & Cockburn-Wootten, 2023). It involves facilitating a communicative perspective focusing on privileging relationships, dialogue and interactions that create spaces for inclusion, and decision-making to hear from people about issues that impact their community, to develop collaborative change solutions (Cockburn-Wootten, McIntosh, Smith & Jefferies, 2018; Wearing, Wearing, & McDonald, 2010). Engagement is, then, both a reflexive mindset and processes of sense-making, collaboration, and actions for change over certain periods of time.

Wrapped within these engagement considerations are concepts defining notions of 'community', particularly in terms of who is ex/included and questions of how to define the physical and social boundaries of the community. As community spaces are "complex and often contradictory … physical and social environments, dynamic and changing with many different qualities … multiple and overlapping experiences forged through a shared sense of place, ethnicity or other circumstances" (Warr, Mann & Williams, 2012, p. 217). Indeed, the diaspora community illustrates that individuals can feel a sense of community, through emotional and/or family and/or cultural relationship ties to a space, even if they only lived there for a short time or never lived in that area. The principles of meaningful engagement with community need to be open to hearing from stakeholders to allow emergent design solutions to emerge in spaces that support dialogic process, rather than an overly controlled and planned process (Hirst, 2021). Additionally, any planning and processes implemented need to ensure that the community's needs are heard and avoid discursive closure which tends to "promote choice, [while] also [putting] limits on choices, [and involvement] thereby constraining the agency" (Guo, Munshi, Cockburn-Wootten & Simpson, 2014, p. 1027).

Within community engagement processes, dialogue theory illustrates the principles previously mentioned needed for creating effective engagement. As Taylor and Kent (2014) state, dialogue theory and associated dialogic tools are central to "engagement [and] assumes accessibility, presentness, and a willingess to interact" and as such "position the discussion of engagement within dialogue theory" (p. 387). Dialogue theory has a rich history drawing on traditions from philosophies (Toledano, 2017) feminist theories (Noddings, 1988; Stanley & Wise 2002), and community development (Hirst, 2021). It is a mindset that is open, flexible, ethically driven by values, that endeavours to privilege often silenced 'voices' and to reduce power relations within relationships (Kent & Taylor, 2002; Shelley, Ooi, & Denny, 2021). The theory involves using dialogic communicative tools to support processes that facilitates

an engagement perspective that is designed to be audience 'other' centred (Kent & Taylor, 2018). In other words, tools included in the design need to allow for flexibility so that they can focus on the stakeholder, hear interpretations, listen to wisdom, and widen access boundaries (Place, 2022). The design processes should occur over time to develop trust and to gain a deeper understanding of the community, stakeholders, "reflecting a shared well-being" to tackling change (Khazaei, Elliot & Joppe, 2015, p.1052).

Dialogue and dialogic communication tools are central within community engagement as they draw on ethics, values, a reflexive consideration of power and cocreation to focus on 'others'. To note here is the difference between theory and the dialogic tools, as the tools allow communicative processes that align and support the principles from the theory. Dialogue theory is situated as an orientation that recognises a community's background, dignity and aims to reduce power relations through developing social capital through self-efficacy (Toledano, 2017). Dialogic tools are the methods used for facilitating interactions, to hear, challenge assumptions and cocreate solutions for change. Any tools used need to facilitate inclusive decision-making, self-efficacy, and respect to develop social capital. To reduce unequal power relations requires a consideration of language used and planning for where any stakeholder interactions will be held, how the room will be set up and adopting dialogic tools that allow flexibility for emergent content gained from discussions (Cockburn-Wootten, et al, 2018; Gillovic, McIntosh, Darcy & Cockburn-Wootten, 2018). In sum, this theory orientation requires organisations to put their needs in the background and prioritise the individual and community issues through designing processes using dialogic tools that achieve understanding, shared resources, and cocreation for change solutions.

Dialogue theory is an emergent and inductive process that draws on indexical knowledge. Indexical knowledge is the meanings gained in relationships through being involved and reflexive in that moment. Dialogue theory "challenges deductive assumptions" to allow "new forms of organising … learning, leadership, and relationships [to] create new heuristics for solving problems" (Cockburn-Wootten et al, 2018, p. 1487). Heath (2007) explained that dialogue has three principles: generative, diversity and power. 'Generative' involves conversations that challenge and develop new understandings, through a recognition of 'diverse' knowledge and lived experiences. 'Power' needs to have an ongoing reflexive consideration in both the mindset and planning to ensure trust, collaboration and inclusive shared power occurs and to be attentive to any attempts at discursive closure (Cockburn-Wootten, et al, 2018; Duedahl, 2021). Later communication scholars extend this to include

mutuality, propinquity, empathy, risk, and commitment (Kent & Taylor, 2014). Taylor & Kent, (2018) state these principles involve a 'mutually' reciprocal, collaborative approach that is "respectful and [develops] ethical discussion" (p. 63). 'Propinquity' brings people together to hear, share resources and work on issues that are relevant and matter to community stakeholders. 'Empathy' involves taking the time to get involved within communities to understand issues and develop trust. This calls upon the facilitator to make a commitment to be inclusive, take 'risks', take the time needed with stakeholders to develop social capital and challenge the usual managerial discourses and hierarchies. For instance, organising a space for a meeting, arranging it in a trusted location and removing the usual managerial structures of control and discursive closure typically used by having an agenda for meeting or seen in "a variety of non-negotiable boundaries that represent potential constraints on [organisations'] willingness to engage [with] stakeholders" (Lane & Kent, 2018, p. 67).

Table 1 insert about here.

Participation, inclusion, cocreation, empowerment and collaboration are again terms that are used interchangeably yet, are ambiguous and can become performative when "used as a 'buzz' word, often adopted on a rather superficial level … without [a deeper and broader] consideration" (Phi & Dredge, 2019, p. 285). The key tenant underlying all these terms is that stakeholders are involved in some way during the engagement processes. The depth and extant of the involvement can vary, however, from minor requests that simply endorse already established decisions, to actions that mobilise broader stakeholder ownership in the decision-making processes of issues identified as pertinent by the communities affected. As White (2011) notes: not all "sharing through participation … mean[s] sharing in power" (p. 57). Arnstein's (2011) often quoted eight rungs on her 'ladder of participation' reminds us that participation can range from manipulation and one-way telling stakeholders what has been done, or more tokenistic approaches of consultation, or 'tick box exercises', with groups being heard without any real decision-making or governance in the issue (Bazrafshan, McIntosh, & Cockburn-Wootten, 2023).

Authentic participation, like dialogue theory, should create partnership opportunities where power is shared, and social capital developed for communities. Authentic participation design for engagement needs to be driven by the reflexive considerations of who initiates the action to engage, why is participation required, who participates and to what level, and when, should

it happen. Also, there is a need for consideration with stakeholders of the level of involvement they would like for the project and explicit discussion around what are the expected outcomes of participation for the community stakeholders. So often dissemination of any community stakeholder research remains with the academic, or ownership and leadership capabilities have not been developed with stakeholders, so that the impetus and any possible benefits are lost for stakeholders. If stakeholders are authentically involved in ownership and decision-making, then opportunities occur for empowerment and "transforming tourism by allowing new understanding[s], knowledge and importantly an ethics of care to emerge among involved stakeholders" (Duedahl, 2021, p. 443).

The implication that involving community stakeholders is an easy, quick, and straightforward procedure is naive as there can be wider critical challenges from funding, time, and questions raised by significant others around credibility and reliability of the research. For instance, researchers working with and within vulnerable communities around sensitive issues have trained interested stakeholders to become paid peer interviewers and, while this approach empowered the individual, there were ethical concerns. Warr, Mann & Williams (2012) noted that ethics, confidentiality, social distress, risk, and objectivity were challenged along with the integrity of the community interviewer by various external audiences and community stakeholders as "being a 'local' was clearly a 'double-edged sword" (p. 224). Similarly, Brown, Scullion and Niner's research involving paid interviewers from the Gypsies and Travellers communities for their research had to comprise, and they acknowledged, that "most roles for Gypsies and Travellers have, [within the study] unfortunately, been superficial" due to their restrictions around leadership, lack of trust from other community members when being interviewed by the person and decision-making" (Brown, Scullion & Niner, 2012, p. 66). While this form of inclusion develops social capabilities, researchers caution that a critical reflective approach is required around ethical issues, and that it is "only a partial embrace of the participatory potential" (p. 227). Instead, more time needs to be given to enacting a fully involved approach where community engagement begins and is driven and analysed by community stakeholders. As Hirst (2021), a community engagement specialist, notes from the Cocreate Adelaide movement that involved stakeholders coming together to share ideas, resources, and ideas: it "was the community deciding what was important, and then deciding what level of involvement they wanted or needed … to enable their ideas to come alive" (p.171).

While the context will differ depending on the issue, facilitation of inclusive community engagement requires a communicative mind-set to develop reciprocal engaged relationships (i.e. not just for personal/business gain). Within this perspective, the key philosophical differences are the values, mind-set, and principles that inform how we plan and enact the communication *with* and *within* communities (Cockburn-Wootten et al., 2018). Inclusive community engagement involves an inclusive mind-set that views the relationship between businesses, organisations, and communities within a wider ecological system with them aiming to work together in collaborative, joint decision-making activities to engage in authentic dialogue and action for social change. There can be competing and mitigating issues that consciously or unconsciously create discursive closure to restrict community stakeholder involvement and decision-making (Timothy, 2006). As such, authentic inclusive stakeholder engagement will endeavour to adopt practices that enhance individual and group voice, develop agency, and use creative approaches to enhance diverse thinking and intersubjective dialogue for co-created solutions (Gomez & Sorde Marti, 2012; McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2016; 2021; Wengel, McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2016). The following case study, the New Zealand Tourism For All campaign, illustrates the key principles of meaningful engagement, using a dialogue approach with stakeholders to achieve change on an issue for their communities, that of accessible tourism development, to remove the barriers of access to tourism for people with disabilities. This is an appropriate case study to highlight that access and inclusion go beyond the focus of any one single tourism stakeholder group and is a community issue. Equally, scholars continue to attest the minimal collaboration between relevant stakeholders in the development of accessible tourism (McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2021; Nyanjom et al., 2018).

Case study: New Zealand Tourism For All campaign

This section presents a case study of the New Zealand Tourism For All campaign to illustrate some of the principles and practices of inclusive community stakeholder engagement outlined in this chapter. The campaign was funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development in 2015 and was undertaken by a project team, led by the co-authors. It sought to understand the needs of the access tourist, and to bring together tourism and access sector stakeholders to engage collaboratively in a plan to make tourism in the city of Christchurch, in the South Island of New Zealand, more accessible for travellers with disabilities (see McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2021). The city of Christchurch was chosen to launch the campaign because there was an opportunity to prioritise a focus on access and inclusion

during the rebuild of the city following its destruction after a series of earthquakes in 2011. Christchurch is a major hub for tourism in New Zealand, being an important gateway city to the South Island.

The first stage of the New Zealand Tourism For All campaign was to raise awareness about accessible tourism and garner new knowledge for the tourism industry about the requirements of travellers with disabilities to start a conversation about access and inclusion. A series of face-to-face interviews were carried out with local Christchurch individuals living with different disability types to record their lived experiences of travel. The heterogeneous nature of disability was highlighted, the barriers to access they had experienced, and the important messages they wanted the tourism industry to hear. This included messages such as, "just ask us how you can help us", "better training for better results", "accessible tourism for Deaf people", "think outside the box", "it is not impossible" and "take the time". Their stories and advice were shared widely as a video on YouTube and as part of a social media campaign (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xux0nKY2MQ0&t=61s).

The second stage of the campaign involved bringing tourism and access sector stakeholders together to facilitate inclusive dialogue and collaboration between them. Noting the centrality of the importance of inclusion, and the need to reduce power play and the potential influence of the dominant voice in the stakeholder engagement process, the project team used the Ketso toolkit (www.ketso.com) to conduct a round-table workshop with the stakeholders. Ketso is a hands-on tool kit that is beneficial for building new (co-created) knowledge and challenging the assumptions in the worldviews of tourism stakeholders, in this case around inclusion. It has also been found to be accessible for participants with disabilities and is therefore seen as a toolkit suitable to enable inclusive collaboration and co-created solutions within the tourism planning process (McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2021). Importantly, the use of Ketso in stakeholder engagement centres the process on shared dialogue and inclusion, with participation and individual voice enabled for all participants, not just a dominant few, as well as the ability to co-create outcomes. The Ketso process is founded upon participatory action social science research methods (Tippett et al., 2007).

Despite different community engagement methods being used within tourism planning, inclusive engagement and decision-making has not always been applied in much stakeholder collaboration efforts for tourism planning and development, despite the important

requirement for community involvement (Wearing et al., 2010). When planning for access and inclusion in destination development and management, however, the need to put access, inclusion, and meaningful engagement at the heart of the process becomes critical. Equally important is the need to create space for reciprocal knowledge transfer at the heart of stakeholder dialogue so that tourism stakeholders can come to understand the perspectives of different stakeholders to the ones they usually collaborate with; in this case, the access/disability sector. The need to include the perspectives of the access sector and stakeholders with disabilities is fundamental for addressing barriers to access and inclusion, enabling greater equitable opportunities through involving the lived experiences and expertise of the excluded group in the community (Darcy & Dickson, 2009). This is also particularly important in the wider context of a destination that has, to date, mostly ignored the requirements of the access sector (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2015).

As participation in tourism is an ideal of equality (Darcy et al., 2011), inclusive, collaborative, and creative future thinking for social change was at the heart of the round-table stakeholder workshop to develop accessible tourism in Christchurch. As such, the New Zealand Tourism For All campaign presents a case study that has important insights to be gleaned about how to engender inclusive stakeholder engagement in a destination, New Zealand, that currently tracks poorly compared to some other countries in relation to its readiness to compete for attracting the access market (Porto et al., 2019). Indeed, the Ketso toolkit was found successful in bringing stakeholders together in an inclusive manner to share dialogue and reciprocate learnings they would not otherwise have had, and co-create solutions (McIntosh & Cockburn-Wootten, 2021; Wengel et al., 2019). The Ketso output from the round-table workshop with stakeholders (see Figure 1) showed a variety of actions possible for achieving accessible tourism in Christchurch, with few barriers to achieving these. Priorities for action determined by the stakeholders included: attention to communication to improve public awareness and understanding around access and inclusion; providing opportunities for innovation; building on positive momentum; providing quality for everyone; moving from initial awareness to action; and promoting the business case of access and inclusion to garner buy-in.

Figure 1. Ketso workshop output ‘Planning for accessible tourism in Christchurch’

However, the inclusive stakeholder engagement process used in the New Zealand Tourism For All campaign was not found to be without problems. Despite over 200 invitations being sent to all tourism and hospitality organisations in Christchurch using publicly listed contact details, only eight stakeholders participated in the roundtable Ketso workshop, reflecting the combined challenges of bringing disparate stakeholders together within a community and garnering industry buy-in for a focus on access and inclusion. Notably, only two tourism industry stakeholders participated in the session; the other participants were access stakeholders, a local resident who lives with disability, and one representative from the local Council – stakeholders who arguably already have investment in priorities for access and inclusion. A further issue was that none of the stakeholders felt responsible for taking the next steps in moving forward with an accessible tourism plan. As such, there is a need for greater critical consideration of the learnings from the New Zealand Tourism For All campaign for accessible tourism, as well as those from other destinations, to serve future efforts to break down silos between diverse community stakeholders and challenge and reconsider the practices of the tourism industry to ensure access and inclusion become central in tourism destination planning and development.

Conclusion

With the aim of making tourism destinations more inclusive and accessible, there is no doubt that a (re)focus on achieving effective community stakeholder engagement is needed. The involvement of local community members in the tourism planning process is pivotal to achieving this. Whilst previous tourism research heralds a bottom-up community-based approach to tourism planning, one needs to question how effectively this has been achieved (Tosun, 2000). In this chapter, we outline the principles required for effective and inclusive community stakeholder engagement in the tourism planning process. Ultimately, the community is the heart of tourism as community members seek to benefit or be impacted the most through tourism activity in the place they reside, and community engagement remains a prominent ideological foundation of participatory tourism planning and development. As such, considering their views, involving them in the decision-making process, ensuring they gain actual benefits and that they maintain control of the tourism development process are paramount to an effective planning process (Shani & Pizam, 2011). Balancing the needs of local community with other more prominent tourism stakeholder interests, for example tourism businesses, developers, environmentalists, remains a challenge. With a focus on inclusion, the need for shared understandings and dialogue with diverse communities who may remain otherwise marginalised from tourism stakeholder engagement processes is particularly crucial, such as the engagement of those who live with disabilities and may be otherwise excluded from discussions that are about them and impact them (Nyanjom et al., 2018).

In this chapter, a case study of community stakeholder engagement for accessible tourism, the New Zealand Tourism For All Campaign, was presented to demonstrate the principles of effective inclusive community stakeholder engagement in the tourism planning process. To support this orientation, the case study focused on the use of the Ketso hands-on participation technique to guide community stakeholder inclusion for collaborative cocreated outcomes to make the city of Christchurch more accessible for tourists with disabilities. Whilst the Ketso tool was found to be an effective engagement technique as it facilitated the delivery of a cocreated action plan and inclusion for community members otherwise marginalised and siloed from tourism stakeholder engagement, it was not applied without challenges. Most specifically, drawing tourism stakeholders' attention and priority to inclusive and accessible tourism development, and the need to cross traditional stakeholder silos to do so, remained

major barriers in this case. There is a need therefore to have realistic expectations about the application of principles in community stakeholder engagement whilst simultaneously learning from mistakes from the past that have been characterised by selective participatory practices (Shani & Pizam, 2011).

Ultimately, achievement of more sustainable and inclusive ethic and processes for tourism in the future will require greater attention to how communities can be included, equitably and actively engaged, empowered, and ultimately influence decisions that affect their lives and the environment they reside in and reap the benefits of tourism to their community and quality of life. The inclusion of people with disabilities in the community engagement process requires tourism destinations to adopt a shared inclusive mindset, an understanding of disability (Oliver & Barnes, 2012), in addition to effective approaches to counteract the continued decries of their exclusion (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2015; Michopoulou & Buhalis, 2011; Nigg & Eichelberger, 2021; Nyanjom et al., 2018) and instead garner social inclusion and change through tourism. Greater consideration and practice of inclusive engagement with community members with disabilities through community stakeholder collaboration for accessible tourism that are authentic and inclusive could be actioned though activities, such as, strategic decision-making panels who are involved in identifying collaborative solutions for embedding access and inclusion as an imperative vision for all tourism planning and development. Overall, it is imperative that the principles and practices discussed in this chapter are embedded into existing tourism stakeholder processes for our espoused aspirations for sustainable social change to be enacted.

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