

COMMUNITY BASED ECOTOURISM MANAGEMENT PRACTISE, A PANACEA FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN LIBERIA.

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ABSTRACT

Ecotourism practise is a sustainable management tool targeted at improving livelihood and wellbeing of the rural populace. This paper examined the roles Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation (KCCO), is playing in the management of Kpatawee water fall, Suakoko District, Bong County, Liberia. Multiple research techniques employed for this study include Focus Group Discussion, House hold questionnaire survey and field observation. Three Sustainable Development Indicators (SDI) selected to assess the impacts of Community Based Ecotourism Management Practise (CBEMP) on the four selected rural communities include level of income, social capital and infrastructural facilities. Demographic characteristics of the respondents were descriptively analysed while income levels were subjected to ANOVA. Multiple effects of ecotourism practise are observed to be very low; there is significant difference in income of inhabitants in the communities at $P \leq 0.005$. $F(3, 78) = 4.615$ and result of post-hoc multiple comparisons revealed that income level of inhabitants of Dumai community is significantly different from others. Proportion of the population having access to infrastructural facilities is low (5-10%). Low rate of intentional homicides and crimes (4%) are indications of improve social capital in the communities. Part of the proceeds attracted to the waterfall is used to improve the health facilities in the communities and maintain the aesthetic values of the waterfall. CBEMP has brought changes in land use pattern and management of the waterfall. The need for improvement in the provision of infrastructural facilities and interpersonal relationship between individuals and KCCO are emphasized taking into consideration limitations of the local communities.

Keywords: Ecotourism practise, sustainable development, rural communities, multiple research techniques

INTRODUCTION

Community-based natural resource management has been defined as, “a process by which landholders gain access and use rights to, or ownership of, natural resources; collaboratively and transparently plan and participate in the management of resource use; and achieve financial and other benefits from stewardship” (Child and Lyman, 2005).

CBNRM encompasses management of agricultural resources, wildlife, water and fish as well as forests. It refers to the collective use and management of natural resources in rural areas by a group of people with a self-defined, distinct identity, using communally owned facilities (Fabricus and Magome, 2001). The authors opined that the focus of CBNRM is not merely wise management of

natural resources , as for important, if not more so, is the need for community development , local self-government and the creation of local institutions for managing common property resources. In other words CBNRM combines conservation objectives with generation of income for the local communities. It is a management approach that has ecological and economic advantages. Apart from generating income for the locals, the non-financial opportunities provided by CBNRM approach include creating enabling environment for rural governance and empowerment insuch a way that the communities see themselves as managers of their resources. Other non-financial benefits are the diversification of risks and development of community security.

Ecotourism is environmentally sustainable travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features-both past and present) that promotes conservation has low negative visit impacts and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations (Mader, 2000). Benefits accruable from the development of ecotourism potentials of a country are immeasurable. Ormsby and Mannle (2006) also opined that ecotourism venture have sustained the economy of most nations for example East Africa countries like Kenya , Tanzania and part of West Africa. Ecotourism plays critical role in economic

development and diversification, particularly in regional areas. Part of its role also include the generation of income for conservation and the management of National Parks and other Public land as well as employing local people. Ecotourism creates a value for local knowledge and with this comes increased awareness and pride in the local community. Ecotourism is a responsible form of tourism management strategy embracing potential assessment (evaluation of the community attractions, visitor services, organizational capabilities, ability to protect resources, as well as marketing), planning (setting of priorities and measurable goals), management (protection and preparation for visitors), product development and marketing to bring about positive economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts (Reid *et al.* 2004).

Community-Based Ecotourism Management is described as a form of tourism ‘where the local community has substantial control over and involvement in its development and management, and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community (WWF International, 2001). It can be regarded as a form of natural resource management practise that is sustainable, environmentally responsible, support conservation and equal sharing of benefits among the locals. It is based on the premise that the locals are better placed to conserve and manage natural resources especially if these resources are

directed towards improvement of their livelihood and the benefits are more than the cost. According to United Nations (2008), only by taking a long-term perspective can we ensure the well-being of future as well as present generations. It was emphasised that it is now more important than ever to put into practice the concept of sustainable development, which integrates economic growth, social development, and protection of the environment.

One other significant aspect of community based ecotourism management is that it gives room for community participation. Planning for the community based tourism must involve community participation in tourism planning as ‘a process of involving all relevant and interested parties (local government officials, local citizens, architects, developers, business people, and planners) in such a way that decision making is shared(Timothy, 1999).A typical example of community based ecotourism practise is a pilot community based ecotourism project known as the “ Nabji Trail” in Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park (JSWNP) established in 2006 targeting Monpa and Khenga ethnic groups of Bhutan(Namgyel, 2007 and DoT,2007).The authors revealed that local residents provide and derive income from services like porters, guides, cooks and cultural entertainment. It was reported that village-level “Community Tourism Management Committee” (CTMC) manages

tourism activity and revenue through “Community Development Funds” (CDF) and 10% of total tourism earnings are deposited into respective CDF accounts.

There is need for proper financial arrangement on how proceeds from community based ecotourism management practices are being shared among the communities. This is to ensure that there is equal share of benefits accruable from this practise. Despite the gains accrued form practising community based ecotourism practise substantial financial profits have rarely been made and the benefits to individuals are often overstated(Mogaka *et al.*,2001). The authors stressed that Community-based forest management strategies have, to date, rarely factored economic considerations into their planning or practice. Many CBNRM initiatives have no knowledge of markets and no economic planning and this generates false expectations (Fabricus *et al.*, 2001). The authors observed that another problem with large numbers of people sharing benefits is that although the size of the collective benefit can run into tens or even hundreds of thousands of U.S. dollars, the individual or household benefits are very small.

The authors also emphasised that even in the widely acclaimed CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) project in Zimbabwe, the average annual benefit to households is

about Z\$250 (less than US\$7) per annum. Communities who practice good natural resource management should be rewarded by being given more secure access to resources and benefits that match the quality of their management to develop socioeconomic indicators for natural resource management (IFAD, 2006). The gains from employment in one way or another plays a role in poverty alleviation at household level. Initially Community based ecotourism management faced financial challenge needed for initial take off the project by the local community. In this regard it has been suggested that there is need for financial assistance in form of donor funds to ensure initial take off. Fabricus, *et al* (2001) warned that donor funds are useful in the early stages of initiatives, as “seed funds,” but there is a danger that projects can become too dependent on donor funding and that donor money can be abused by the communities and facilitators or nongovernmental organizations. In Africa, agriculture production is a crucial economic activity, providing employment and livelihoods for many and serving as the basic for many industries. (IFPRI, 2007). The author found that in most African countries, agriculture supports the survival and well-being of up to 70 percent of the population. Thus, for many, the livelihoods are directly affected by environmental changes, both sudden and gradual, which impact on agricultural productivity (FAO, 2012).

Rural agricultural production is not new in Liberia; it has been the major source of income generation and only means of survival (ILO, 2006). About 53% of the population lives in rural areas, and 70% of the active population in Liberia is engaged in agricultural activities; agriculture is the dominant contributor to export and trade earnings and a source of livelihood for a greater number of people than any other sector (LASIP, 2010). The sector was reported to be dominated by traditional subsistence farming systems. There is therefore a need for diversification of Africa economy and a shift from over dependence in Agriculture cannot be ignored. Ecotourism practise is alternative livelihood project generating income, employment and improve rural livelihood for rural communities in developing countries of Africa. This is a serious consideration for this study with the aimed of assessing the impacts of community based ecotourism management practise on Kpatawee community in Suakoko district, Bong County, Liberia. The roles of Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation (KCCO) in achieving these objectives were emphasised.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study Area

Bong County is situated roughly at the geographic center of Liberia. It is bordered by Lofa County on Northwest, Gbarpolu County on the West, Margibi County on the

Southwest, Grand Bassa County on the South and South-East, and Nimba County on the East and the North-East. On the North, Bong County is bordered by the Republic of Guinea. Suakoko district is one of the districts that make up Bong county (Fig.1). Kpatawee clan is one of the clans in Suakoko district. Kpatawee Clan consists of different communities from which four were selected for this study. The four selected communities were Dumai, Mboleetown, Waterfall station, and Gobies-town. These communities

were selected based on their proximity to the waterfall with considerable consideration of the potential for the locals to engage in anthropogenic activities that have impacts on the forest area surrounding the waterfall. These communities were selected based on their proximity to the waterfall with consideration of the potential for the locals to engage in anthropogenic activities that have impacts on the forest area that is surrounding the waterfall. Figure 1 shows



Figure 1: Map of Bong County showing all the districts

METHODS

Multiple research techniques were used in the data collection. These include household

questionnaire surveys; Knowledge, Attitude and Perception (KAP) analysis; discussion with

village heads, and KCCO officials; and direct field observation .

Household questionnaire surveys

Face-to-face semi-structured questionnaires comprising open and closed questions were administered to 79 households sampled from the village register books. Systematic sampling technique was the chosen method for administering the questionnaire (Jie *et al*, 2011) . Before administering the final questionnaire, pre-sampling data was used to calculate the size of the final sample which took into account both quantities and variables in a ratio form (Steriani and Soutsas 2005). Only members of households aged above 18years were picked. This age was thought by the author to be appropriate given the nature of the study. The sample intensity was between 10 to 10.3% (Oladeji and Kayode, 2013).

Focus Group Discussion

Group discussions were held with six members of Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation (KCCO) and another group of seven of village heads and opinion leaders.

Prior to the group discussion the consent of the community's heads and other relevant groups were sought as a way to seek for their cooperation in order to achieve meaning full result.

Direct Field observation

Field observation was conducted to Kpatawee water fall to observe the scenery and aesthetic values of the site; vegetation composition and wildlife resources of the adjoining forest area were documented; observed anthropogenic activities such as illegal logging, fishing e.t.c were recorded and photographs were taken to substantiate the findings.

Knowledge, Attitude and Perception (KAP)

Perception of the local communities were assessed in order to evaluate the level of their access to social capital using various parameters such as element of trust between individuals in a community, elements of trust between individuals and Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation and violations of traditional norms

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Dumai 150		Waterfall station 223		Mbolele-Town 210		Gborsiah-Town 200	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Age								
10-20	2.00	13.33	0.00	0.00	3.00	14.29	2.00	10.00
20-30	5.00	33.33	5.00	21.73	4.00	19.04	4.00	20.00
30-40	4.00	26.66	9.00	60.00	9.00	42.86	9.00	45.00
40 -50	2.00	13.33	6.00	26.08	3.00	14.29	4.00	20.00
50-above	2.00	13.33	3.00	13.04	2.00	9.52	1.00	5.00
Gender								
Male	7.00	46.67	12.00	52.17	13.00	61.91	15.00	75.00
Female	8.00	53.33	11.00	47.82	8.00	38.10	5.00	25.00
Marital status								
Married	9.00	60.00	14.00	60.87	15.00	71.43	11.00	55.00
Single	4.00	26.67	9.00	39.13	6.00	28.57	7.00	35.00
Widow/widower	2.00	13.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	10.00
Occupation								
Civil servant	0.00	0.00	1.00	4.34	0.00	0.00	1.00	5.00
Non-Civil servant	2.00	13.33	3.00	13.04	3.00	14.29	2.00	10.00
Private enterprise e.g Trading, farming	6	40.00	10.00	43.48	8.00	38.10	9.00	45.00
Studying combine with private enterprise e.g farming, trading	7	46.66	9.00	39.13	10.00	47.62	8.00	40.00
Level of Education								
Primary	4.00	26.66	9.00	39.13	4.00	19.05	2.00	10.00

Secondary	2.00	13.33	5.00	21.74	5.00	23.81	0.00	0.00
Tertiary	0.00	0.00	1.00	4.34	0.00	0.00	1.00	5.00
Illiterate	9.00	60.00	8.00	34.78	12.00	57.14	17.00	85.00
Monthly Income								
<5,000	1.00	6.67	9.00	39.13	16.00	76.19	17.00	85.00
5,000-20,000	11.00	73.33	10.00	43.48	2.00	9.52	1.00	5.00
21,000-50,000	2.00	13.33	4.00	17.40	3.00	14.29	2.00	10.00
51,000-100,000	1.00	6.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
>100,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Household size								
1-5	4.00	26.67	17.00	73.91	5.00	21.74	15.00	75.00
6-10	9.00	60.00	5.00	21.74	14.0	66.67	5.00	25.00
>11	2.00	13.33	1.00	4.35	2.00	9.52	0.00	0.00
Total	15.00	100.00	23.00	100.00	21.00	100.00	20.00	100.00

Result of the demographic characteristics of the respondents revealed that those in the age range of between 10-20years recorded the lowest percentage of between 3-13.3% while those in the age range of 30-40years recorded the highest percentage of 42.86-60%. Percentage of female respondents was the highest (53.33%) in Dumai compared to what was obtainable in Gborsah town where male respondent took the lead (61.91%). Greater percentage of the respondents are married in all the communities. Two out of the total number of respondents are civil servant this represent 2.53% of the respondents. The non-

civil servant includes those working with CARI , Chinese owned farm and members of Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation (KCCO), this represents 10% of the respondents. The level of illiteracy in all the villages is high compare with percentage of respondents with secondary and tertiary qualification. Monthly income varies between the ranges. Analysis of the result obtained on the level of monthly income revealed that percentage of respondents earning between 5,000-20,000 and 21,000-50,000 is high among the inhabitants of Dumai and waterfall station, while greater percentage of the

inhabitants of Mbolee and Gborsia town fall within the range of <5,000. Household size of 1-5 was the highest as recorded in Gborsai town (75.00%) and Waterfall station

(73.91%). Household size of 6-10 was recorded in Dumai and Mbolee representing 60.00% and 66.67% respectively.

Table 2: Proportion of respondents with or without access to infrastructural facilities.

Infrastructural facilities	Have access to facilities		Not having access to facilities	
	Number	%	Number	%
Sanitation facilities	4	5.1	75	94.9
Improved drinking water source	8	10.1	71	89.9
Electricity power supply	0	0.0	79	100.0
Accessible motorable road network	6	7.6	73	92.4
Health centre	8	10.1	71	89.9

Proportion of the population having access to infrastructural facilities is low (5-10%). Greater percentage of the respondents have no access to infrastructural facilities

such as sanitation facilities(75%), improved drinking water source(71%), electricity power supply connected to National grid (79%).

Table 3: Access to social capital and good governance

Social capital	Respondents	
	Number	%
Element of trust between individuals in a community	38	48.10
Elements of trust between individuals and Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation	21	26.58
Violations of traditional norms	3	3.84
Occurrence of homicide and crimes	4	5.06
Interpersonal trust among members of Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation.	13	16.45
Total	79	100

Low rate of intentional homicides and crimes (4%), low level of cases of violations of traditional norms (3.84%) and high rate of elements of trust between individuals in a particular community are good indication of good governance and improve social capital

in the adjoining communities to Kpatawee water fall . However, there is low level of interpersonal trust among members of Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation (16.45%)(Table 3).

Table 4: Result of the ANOVA on the income value among the communities

	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F value	Sig.
Between groups	2960533859	3	986844619.5	4.615	0.005
Within groups	16035907660	75	21312102.1		
Total	18996441519	78			

Analysis of the result revealed there is significant difference in the income of the respondents in the four selected communities at $P \leq 0.005$. $F(3, 78) = 4.615$ (Table 4). Since there is significant difference in income of the

respondents there is need to conduct a separate test (post-hoc multiple comparisons) to determine which mean is or are different. Hence Duncan Test is conducted. The result of the Duncan Test is as presented in Table 5

Table 5: The result of Duncan Test

Group Value	N	Subset for alpha =0.05	
		1	2
Gborsia	20	8500.00	
Mbole town	21	9076.19	
Waterfall	23	13504.35	
Dumai			25200.00
Sig.	15	.322	1.000

The table revealed that income value of the people of Dumai is significantly different from income value of other communities.

Analysis of result obtained from the Focus Group Discussion with the members of KCCO

Group name: Members of KCCO, Number in the group = 6

Synthesised data

<p>What is the average number of visitors that visited the waterfall annually?</p>	<p>There is no available secondary data on the visitor's influx to the site. However, members were able to provide information on the average attendance based on their experience. The average number of visitors as provided by the members varies from 1300-1500. Visitors include foreigners and domestic .</p> <p>Most of the respondents gave average influx of between 1450-1500/annual</p> <p>Next to the most of respondents gave average influx of between 1300-1498/annual</p>
<p>What is the average amount of proceed realize from entry/gate/toll fees.</p> <p>Ticket -Adult-100-150LD Children-50-100LD</p> <p>@exchange rate of 81LD /\$</p>	<p>Available secondary data on proceed is lacking. Information provided was based on experience of the respondents over the years. Proceeds realises in form of fee paid on ticket by the visitors was reported to vary depending on the festive season.</p> <p>Average amount at the peak of the season -49,000 LD (\$604.93)</p> <p>Average amount at the dip of the season – 5,000LD(\$61.73)</p>
<p>How do you spend proceed realized from the sales of ticket?</p>	<p>All the respondents provided the same information on how the proceed from the sales of ticket is being shared</p> <p>Part of the proceed is used in paying the wages of the members that served attendant and guard</p> <p>Part of the money is paid to labour that work on construction of fences, kitchen, sitting and cleaning</p> <p>Remaining money is remitted to the account of elders of the clan</p>

DISCUSSION

With the exception of Dumai community greater percentage of respondents in Kpatawee clan are adult male in the age range of between 30-40 years. This is slightly different from what was reported in NRC Needs Assessment Report (2007) that males in Bong County, Suakoko district are estimated to be 40 percent while females are 51 percent. Respondents between the age range of 10-20 years recorded the lowest percentage of 3-13.3%. Although this research study did not include children below the age of 10 years but there are indications that their proportion will be higher than those in the age range of 10-20 years. This supports the findings of NRC Needs Assessment report, 2007 that children under 5 years are 15% and about 46% of females are the children bearing age (15-49 years). Household size recorded are headed by male and dependant ratio was observed to be high this support the findings of Bong County Development Committee (2008) as reflected in Bong County Development Agenda Report (2008-2012). High level of illiteracy as recorded in this study is as a result of fourteen years of war the country has experienced. This is line with findings of NRC, Need Assessment report (2007), that many of the young people have spent more time engaged in war than in school. Nationally, almost 35 percent of the population has never attended school, including nearly 44 percent of females (NRC

Need Assessment Report, 2007). NRC Need Assessment Report (2007) further states that illiteracy rates among children and young people remain high at 68 percent (male 55 percent and female 81 percent). Percentage of civil servant and non-civil servant (artisan) is very low compared to the percentage of those engaging in farming and trading in Kpatawee Clan. FAO (2012) observed that rural agricultural production is not new in Liberia; it has been the major source of income generation and only means of survival. The report stresses that about 53% of the population lives in rural areas, and 70% of the active population in Liberia is engaged in agricultural activities; agriculture is the dominant contributor to export and trade earnings and a source of livelihood for a greater number of people than any other sector. The sector was reported to be dominated by traditional subsistence farming systems (F.A.O 2012). This research study noted that there are lacks of infrastructural facilities in all the selected communities in Kpatawee Clan. This is characterised by inaccessible road network, poor sanitation facilities, and unavailable improved pipe borne water and electricity supply. The nearest health centre is in Suakoko which is about 15 kilometres to these communities. Simon *et al.* (2002), highlighted several problems affecting maximization of local community income from agriculture to include inaccessible road network and market

facilities. Agricultural activities such as oil palm production, sugar cane and rice production are recorded among the rural communities of Kpatawee Clan. Overdependence of greater percentage of the population on agriculture has not brought much desire improvement in the local economy hence there is need for diversification of the rural economy and seek for alternative livelihood project. Development of Kpatawee waterfall will go a long way towards bringing much desire changes in the economy of rural dwellers in Kpatawee clan with a diversify economic base. Analysis of result of focus group discussion held with members of Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation, a community based organisation saddled with responsibilities to oversee management of the water fall revealed that average of 15,000 visitors came to the waterfall annually from outside and within Liberia to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the water fall, coolness, bird watching, aesthetic and limited recreational facilities. Oladeji *et al.* (2011) noted that wetland of this type serves as suitable habitat for aquatic and terrestrial wild animals most especially avian species of migrants and Palaearctic birds. The authors emphasised that a clean water body offers opportunities for pure pleasure, recreation, picnicking, resort and camping. Proceeds realises in form of fee paid on ticket by the visitors was reported to vary depending on the

festive season. For instance, members of the KCCO reported that about 49,000 LD (\$604.93) was realised on the 25th of December, 2013 and a little below this amount was realised on the New Year day of 1st of January, 2013. This money was reported and handed over to the elders of Kpatawee clan (no official record). Part of the money is being used in paying the staff or members of KCCO stationed at the waterfall and maintain the aesthetic, cleanness and beautiful scenery of the waterfall. Reasonable percentage of the money realised was also set aside to fence and demarcate the parking lot from the recreation site and construct bamboo/woody sitting arrangement for the visitors. Necessary arrangement are being put in place to construct locally made huts popularly known as 'palafas' hut and barbeque stands at strategic places around the water fall. These will improve the aesthetic values of the waterfall, make it to be more attractive and thereby lead to generation of additional revenue. An aesthetic value is a strong contributor to a sense of wellbeing and is perhaps the most personal and individualistic of the socio-cultural value types (The Getty Conservation Institute, 2000). Hydrological formations of this nature were observed to provide highest aesthetic values and it was recorded to score highest on tourist elements/features scale according to the result obtained through objective – descriptive inventory assessment of nature based site

(Oladeji *et al.*, 2012). Kpatawee waterfall offers opportunities for recreation, picnicking and appreciation of nature. In an apparent move to raise money towards rehabilitation and provision of adequate facilities at Phebe Health centre, Suakoko an event was organised by the management of this institution on 29th of November, 2013 at the recreational site close to the waterfall. This is part of the gain of ecotourism practise. Ecotourism benefits developing countries by supporting their local sustainable projects and building cross-cultural awareness (Oladeji and Kayode, 2013). It has brought the promise of achieving conservation goals, improving the well-being of local communities and generating new business — promising a rare win-win-win situation (Drumm and Moore, 2002).

Social capital

There are indications of good governance and improve social capital among the adjoining communities of Kpatawee water fall. The social capital of a society includes the institutions, the relationships, the attitudes and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development (World Bank,2001). Low level of homicide, violations of traditional norms and high level of elements of interactions among the individuals in Kpatwee clan provides favourable environment for ecotourism industry to thrive in this

community. Over the years the significant and importance of the social relations, networks, norms, traditional practice and values in the economic development of the community has been emphasized in many literatures (Coleman, 1988; Putnam *et al.*, 1993; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). Community social system has important role to play in the development of nature based through the development of social capital (World Ecotourism Summit Quebec Declaration, 2002). The social network is essential for the success and sustainability of nature tourism development at an area (Jones 2005). One of the social capitals required supporting the success and sustainability of nature tourism is a good relationship between the stakeholders and individuals in the communities (Soekanto, 2009). This was found to exist in this research work as indicated by over 26% of the respondents that there is element of trust between individuals and Kpatawee Citizen Community Organisation .However, low level of interpersonal trust between individual members of KCCO could have negative impact on the development of the site. This is because some members of the KCCO berated the way and manner elders of the clan spent the proceed handed over to them by the attendants. Part of the money was said to be spent on entertainment of their guest and fuelling of personal vehicles while going for any occasion. Social systems that

exist in society will affect tourism development efforts in the area.(Patterson *et al* 2003). There is therefore the need for interpersonal relationship to be strengthening between individuals that are residence in these communities and other stakeholders; and among members of the group or stakeholders. Rachmawati *et al.*, 2013 reported that interaction that occurs between individual and groups in Gunung Sari and Mount Bunder villages is the primary positive factors, that leads to cooperation and ecotourism development of Gunung Salak Endah Tourism Area (GSE), Gunung Halimun – Salak National Park, West Java, Indonesia. There is significant difference in the level of income of the respondents in the adjoining communities to the waterfall. Result of the post-hoc test conducted revealed that income of the inhabitants of Dumai community is significantly different from that of others in the three villages. This is because the inhabitants of Dumai benefits directly from the sales of oil palm and other palm produce that were harvested from large estate of palm plantation bordering their community. The palm plantation was in the early 70s by the Liberia Government during the regime of President Tolbert. Government eventually released this farm estate to the communities and has since been the source of income to the inhabitants. Unlike the inhabitants of Gborsia-town and Mbolle town that are living

a little bit far away from the palm plantation. The inhabitants of these communities are boarder by Kpatwee water fall and forest area at the upper end and rice plantation managed by Chinese firm and CARI (Cenre Agriculture Research Institute) at the lower end. Access to farm land to practise agriculture is therefore restricted living them with the option either to live on the proceed from the sales of domestic animals such as goats and pig or income generated from the sales of palm wine, roasted meats to the visiting tourists to the water fall. Wages received by those of them that have opportunity to work with the Chineserice plantation and CARI is considered meagre. The issue of income imbalance among the communities should be taken into consideration in order to achieve sustainable ecotourism development of Kpatawee Waterfall. One of the key components of ecotourism is to achieve beneficially active socio-economic involvement of the local communities. Community-based ecotourism is a form of tourism ‘where the local community has substantial control over, and involvement in its development and management, and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community (WWF, 2001).Thailand Community Based Tourism Institute, 2012 opined that since community based tourism is managed and owned by the community, for the community, with the purpose of enabling visitors to

increase their awareness and learn about the community and local ways of life there is need to take the environmental, economic, Institutional, operational and cultural

limitations of the local community into account when planning.

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