

Note on measuring the social dimension of sustainable tourism

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I would like to make a preliminary general remark. My research work started from a general focus on the social dimension of sustainable development, looking then for publications focused specifically on tourism related aspects. Based on what I have been able to find in literature, I consider that in general nothing is really missing in Chapter 4 of the SF-MST (the current draft). In particular, as concerns themes, I believe that possible additional ones for consideration at the forthcoming meeting of the WG might be really few.

The setting of the template essentially corresponds to what is discussed in Chapter 4, including all relevant aspects though implicitly, apart from what concerns the fourth point in the template, details and the way said chapter is structured in sections ("key policy issues", while not being something explicit in Chapter 4, is implicitly covered therein in the final list of "Potential aspects of the social dimension for sustainable tourism").

Given the above, I found that trying to have an overview of the four points of the template, at the same time linking them to each other, and to attach to them a selection of quotations/considerations derived from my research work could be of particular interest. This is what I tentatively did in the table attached hereafter.

The above four points were difficult to organize in the table so that a one-to-one connection could be equally explicit for each of the four "dimensions", but I considered that the option of starting from the point concerning potential approaches could be particularly useful. So, you can find below a table with the potential approaches as row headings and the other three points of the template as main headings for columns. A number of quotations/considerations are presented in three additional columns - where also I tried of organize pieces of knowledge I had gained - with two of them relating to positive and negative impacts of tourism on the different social aspects on which the potential approaches are centred.

I must say that for various reasons, including a probable excess of overlapping, at this stage I limited my attempt to fill the different cells of the table focusing mainly on social capital, even considering that this approach seems to me having the potential to provide more concrete suggestions for the discussion. Also, notwithstanding my attempt to organize the collection of the necessary knowledge, the current contents of the table has still a little bit the character of a brainstorming.

I also have kept in the present note, after the table and in the form of an annex, a number of annotations for my own use.

POTENTIAL APPROACHES	COMMENTS TO POTENTIAL APPROACHES	IMPACTS OF TOURISM		KEY POLICY ISSUES	KEY THEMES	FRAMEWORKS, STATISTICAL STANDARDS, ETC.
		Positive	Negative			
SOCIAL INCLUSION / SOCIAL EXCLUSION	Social capital could be a dimension to be explored when looking at policies for dealing with poverty and social exclusion – indeed the very term social exclusion implies the denial of access to social capital.	Tourism can provide opportunities to promote social inclusion of disadvantaged groups (people with disabilities, low-income families, women, especially mothers, etc.) and facilitating social interaction and networks.	<p>Political, gender, race differences can be successfully manipulated at the destinations if local planners decide and market it strategically. For instance, the use of ethnicity as a resource in tourism may cause social exclusion for ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Different touristic marketing strategies could promote specific landscapes to the detriment of other tourist destinations within the same place.</p>	<p>Tourism should be an occasion for a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways.</p> <p>Exploitation of social exclusion for tourism purposes.</p>	<p>The terms “social inclusion” and “social exclusion” are broad and mean different things to different people in different contexts.</p> <p>Possible themes related to these concepts in view of the measurement of sustainable tourism could be: participation in society, well-being, social equity, institutions, networks, norms.</p> <p>Social capital could be linked to social inclusion/exclusion.</p> <p>For those on the “inside” of particular networks and communities, there are important means of access to resources from which “outsiders” are excluded.</p> <p>Acute forms of social exclusion (by social, ethnic, gender or regional status) appear to go hand in hand with lower levels</p>	<p>Efforts for measuring social inclusion are still at a developing stage.</p> <p>A large literature in economics and sociology focus on labor market discrimination. The most common methods use labor market surveys and compare market outcomes (e.g. earnings) of different groups (e.g. race, gender, immigrant status, disability status, ethnicity) controlling for productivity-related individual characteristics (e.g. human capital endowments).</p>

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					of trust and civic engagement.	
SOCIAL CAPITAL	<p>Social capital resides in social relationships, and as capital, may be conceived as a resource in which we invest to provide a stream of benefits. The Joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development (WGSSD) articulated a broad conceptual framework for sustainable development measurement with the concept of capital at its centre.</p> <p>However, in the case of social capital neither directly observed values nor well-established indirect methods exist.</p> <p>The focus should be on three types of <i>proxy</i> indicators: membership in local associations and</p>	<p>Tourism can contribute to enhance social capital through the consolidation of shared values and community identity, the creation of networks and associations to organize and coordinate tourism activity within a community and through the creation of relationships – between hosts and visitors – which can prove strong and lasting despite the geographical distance.</p>	<p>Tourism can feed on social capital without reintegrating it.</p> <p>An inequitable access to tourism opportunities and benefits can generate a depletion of social capital by eroding trust and cooperation.</p> <p>An excessive presence of visitors risks eroding the collective assets in an unsustainable way, compromising the social capital and the quality of life of the host communities.</p>	<p>Different forms of social capital present in different territories may suggest different tourism strategies.</p> <p>How much does tourism, in a given territory, rely on an informal economy, thus impacting on the social dimension of the sustainable development of that territory?</p>	<p>Measurement of social capital is difficult.</p> <p>Much of what is relevant to social capital is tacit and relational, defying easy measurement or codification.</p> <p>Typically, most available measures of social capital centre around trust and levels of engagement or interaction in social or group activities.</p> <p>Another relevant theme related to social capital concerns the quality of society's institutions.</p> <p>There is uncertain evidence on the links between social exclusion, social capital and inequalities in health.</p>	<p>There are no international standards yet on the measurement of social capital.</p>

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	<p>networks, trust and adherence to norms, and collective action.</p> <p>Only the indicator of membership in local associations and networks has an obvious flow parallel: change in membership in these same groups. No obvious flow variable parallels the indicator of trust and adherence to norms or the indicator of collective action.</p>	<p>resident in event management and coordination could be an opportunity to socialize, to strengthen community pride, to share identity and values between themselves and with visitors and, therefore, to enhance social capital. If, on the contrary, events are not consistent with values and perceptions of host communities and overwhelm or exclude locals, a depletion of social capital will occur.</p>				
SOCIAL EQUITY		<p>Tourism can contribute to gain skills, increase in understanding of different cultures and can be a vehicle for sustainable community development by contributing to equity and social justice. This happens, for example, as visitors engage in development</p>	<p>Tourism, mass tourism particularly, can produce social inequities in a variety of ways, including reinforcing prejudices and stereotypes of other cultures.</p> <p>When host communities begin to modernize their culture, facilities and amenities in order to</p>	<p>With a view to sustainable tourism, it is important to seek a fair and widespread distribution of economic and social benefits from tourism throughout the recipient community, including improving</p>	<p>Social capital is linked to equality, although the direction of causality is uncertain.</p> <p>Countries with high levels of trust and civic engagement tend to be more equal in terms of income, adult literacy and access to further learning.</p> <p>Economic inequality may</p>	

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		<p>projects that contribute to reduce social inequities in disadvantaged areas.</p> <p>Tourism can improve standards of living for locals: host communities may begin to modernize their culture, facilities and amenities in order to accommodate visitors.</p> <p>Tourism businesses may make changes so that everyone, including the poor local communities, can benefit from tourism.</p>	<p>accommodate visitors, this may result in a loss of culture, identity and traditional customs.</p> <p>The exploitation of visited countries (in terms of land use, food resources and water supply) can adversely affect host communities.</p> <p>Foreign owned businesses that build resorts in developing countries may adversely affect the local people.</p> <p>Tourism marketing favouring some cultural identities in so doing exclude others.</p>	<p>opportunities, income and services available to the disadvantage people.</p>	<p>be both cause and consequence of inequality in social capital.</p>	
INDIVIDUAL AND	The Joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Task Force on	Tourism can provide objective improvements in	The presence of visitors can put pressure on facilities		The concept of human well-being has many	In recent years, there have been several significant initiatives to measure

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COMMUNITY WELL-BEING	<p>Measuring Sustainable Development (TFSD) takes the well-being of the current generation into account.</p> <p>Human well-being can be affected by social capital through three channels: individuals who are strongly embedded in societal networks tend to be happier and more satisfied with life than those who are less integrated in society; social capital can stimulate increases in other types of capital; due to network externalities, social capital formation may lead to increases in efficiency and declines in transaction costs.</p>	<p>quality of life of host communities through tourist facilities, amenities, attractions and events (these include essential services such as water and energy, roads and transport services, health services, shops, garages, leisure and entertainment facilities, and outdoor amenities).</p> <p>Tourism can provide jobs for locals and can result in the accumulation of wealth and the elevation of person's status.</p> <p>Tourism can contribute to the well-being not only of individuals directly interacting with visitors but of all people living in the neighborhood of</p>	<p>and services, adding to the cost of their provision and maintenance, reducing the enjoyment of them by local people and making access to them difficult or even impossible.</p> <p>An excessive presence of visitors, as well as compromising the quality of life of host communities, can lead to changes in habits of them and local people could experience difficulty in accepting change of habits.</p> <p>Tourism can violate human rights of the host communities.</p>		<p>different connotations.</p> <p>Among the common themes used in studies on human well-being, can be included: subjective well-being; health; labour; education; trust; institutions.</p> <p>The notion of quality of life as a more general indicator of well-being of citizens is spreading among governments in order to quantify national advancement.</p> <p>The creation of social networks may have a direct well-being effect as individuals who are strongly embedded in societal networks tend to be happier and more satisfied with life than those who are less integrated in society.</p>	<p>societal progress more comprehensively, and many have incorporated subjective reports of well-being.</p> <p>The OECD framework for measuring well-being, conceptually, reflects elements of the capabilities approach, with many dimensions addressing the factors that can expand people's choices and opportunities to live the lives that they value – including health, education and income.</p> <p>This approach to measuring current well-being has several important features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It puts people (individuals and households) at the centre of the assessment, focusing on their life circumstances and their experiences of well-being. ● It focuses on well-being outcomes – aspects of life

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		<p>tourism areas.</p> <p>Tourism can influence not only the well-being in term of health, but also the emotional, psychological, cognitive and spiritual dimensions of well-being, both for visitors and host communities.</p> <p>Specific types of tourism can have a positive impact on specific groups of people in society: for example, social tourism trips impact on the older people's subjective well-being and levels of social engagement and increase their self-esteem and confidence.</p>				<p>that are directly and intrinsically important to people – rather than the inputs and outputs that might be used to deliver those outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It includes outcomes that are both objective (i.e. observable by a third party) and intrinsically subjective (i.e. those where only the person concerned can report on their inner feelings and states), recognizing that objective evidence about people's life circumstances can be usefully complemented by information about how people experience their lives. • It considers the distribution of well-being outcomes across the population as an important feature shaping the well-being of societies, including disparities associated with age, gender, education and income.

Annex

There are some transversal elements to be kept in mind which are relevant when it comes to defining statistical domains and specific data in the present exercise.

From the "**International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008**" (IRTS 2008):

- **Tourism** is a subset of travel (§2.2).
- The term "**country**" can be transposed to a different geographical level using the term "place" instead (either a region, municipality or other subnational geographic location) (§2.3a);
- **Travel** refers to the activity of travellers. A **traveller** is someone who moves between different geographic locations for any purpose and any duration (§2.4).
- The concept of **residence** allows for the classification of visitors according to their place of origin and for the characterization of their destination, thus making it possible to distinguish the different forms of tourism (§2.16).
- The **country of residence of a household** is defined in exactly the same way as in the balance of payments and in the **System of National Accounts**. All exceptions and special cases considered in these frameworks apply in the case of tourism statistics (§2.17).
- The concept of "**country of residence**" of a traveller is different from that of his/her nationality or citizenship. (...) A traveller might have more than one passport and thus more than one citizenship. (...) the concept of **citizenship is not part of the requirements or definitions of tourism statistics** (§2.19).
- (...) It is recommended that travellers (and visitors) be **classified on the basis of their country of residence** (§2.20).
- The **usual environment** of an individual, a key concept in tourism, is defined as the geographical area (though not necessarily a contiguous one) within which an individual conducts his/her regular life routines (§2.21).
- It is a characteristic attached exclusively to an individual that **complements the concept of country of residence used in the national accounts** and the balance of payments and that of place of usual residence used in household statistics (§2.22).
- The purpose of introducing the concept of usual environment is **to exclude from visitors** those travellers commuting regularly between their place of usual residence and place of work or study, or frequently visiting places within their current life routine (§2.23).
- The country of reference and forms of trips and tourism:

IRTS 2008		
TRIPS		
A trip refers to the travel by a person from the time of departure from his usual residence until he/she returns: it thus refers to a round trip. A trip is made up of visits to different places (§2.7)		
DOMESTIC	INBOUND	OUTBOUND
One with a main destination within the country of residence of the visitor. A domestic trip might include visits outside the country of residence of the visitor	One with a main destination outside the country of residence of the visitor	
	An inbound trip includes only visits within the country of reference	An outbound tourism trip might include visits to places within the country of residence
BASIC FORMS OF TOURISM		
DOMESTIC	INBOUND	OUTBOUND
activities of a resident visitor within the country of reference either as part of a domestic tourism trip or part of an outbound tourism trip	activities of a non-resident visitor within the country of reference on an inbound tourism trip	activities of a resident visitor outside the country of reference, either as part of an outbound tourism trip or as part of a domestic tourism trip
OTHER FORMS OF TOURISM DERIVED FROM THE COMBINATION OF THE BASIC FORMS		
INTERNAL	NATIONAL	INTERNATIONAL
comprises domestic tourism and inbound tourism, that is, the activities of resident and non-resident visitors within the country of reference as part of domestic or international tourism trips	comprises domestic tourism and outbound tourism, that is, the activities of resident visitors within and outside the country of reference, either as part of domestic or outbound tourism trips	comprises inbound tourism and outbound tourism, that is, the activities of resident visitors outside the country of reference, either as part of domestic or outbound tourism trips and the activities of non-resident visitors within the country of reference on inbound tourism trips

From the **SF-MST** §4.3:

Three main perspectives are considered exhaustive for sustainable tourism: the visitor, the host community and tourism businesses¹.

The **visitor perspective** can be separated into the social dimension **at the place/s visited** and **within their usual environment**. Key features of the social dimension **at the place visited** will include visitor perceptions, visitor experiences (e.g. of health, crime, congestion), engagement with local communities (e.g. cultural experiences, heritage, local products) and issues of accessibility (for example with respect to age, disability, or to infrastructure).

Within their usual environment, it may be relevant to consider the extent to which engagement in tourism provides visitors with improved overall well-being, improved social networks, educational outcomes, or more negatively, experience-limited access to tourism opportunities (e.g. due to cost, ethnicity).

¹ I wonder if a specific focus on the so-called third sector might be of interest: when looking at tourism-related social aspects, voluntary work - which may be not that important in strictly economic terms according to the supply perspective- can turn to be relevant.