

Experiences from Laos

Successes:

- Luang Prabang Night Market: \$millions spent per year on traditionally pro-poor products.
- Stay Another Day: driving tourists to businesses and projects with demonstrated community benefits.
- Nam Ha Eco Guide Unit: Guide cooperative under Provisional Tourism Department.
 - Offered 1-4 day treks with village homestays
 - Generated revenue for villages, national park, guides and provisional Government.
 - Good connections with the private sector
 - Private company given exclusivity to run rafting and kayaking trips – specialised skillset and product diversification
 - Nam Ha model was replicated in at least 5 other provinces.
 - Challenge was product diversification.

Market for CBT in Laos:

- Highly orientated towards western backpackers
- Some use by local and international travel agents.
- Little interest from domestic or regional market.

Personal Reflections for Myanmar

Exporting products or importing tourists?

Who is the target market?

CBT is part of a commercial industry. CBT projects are small businesses. Standard business principles need to apply.

- Market demand
- Market access
- Target market
- USPs
- Develop relationships with travel companies from the outset.

However the private sector alone cannot usually provide the skills and resources necessary for the successful development of CBT.

- CBT needs to be part of a larger village development strategy. It is not an end-goal in itself.
- Need experts on community development. A lot of internal mechanisms and training needed within the community.
- Needs a multi-stakeholder approach.