

Developed by:

EUROPEAN UNION FUNDED ENVIRONMENTALLY
& SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE TOURISM (ESRT)
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND WWF-VIETNAM



VIETNAM COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM HANDBOOK

A Market-based Approach



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

WWF-Vietnam and the EU-funded ESRT programme kindly thank the Vietnam Institute for Tourism Development Research (ITDR) and SNV Netherlands Development Organisation (Vietnam) for their input into the development and refinement of this Handbook. All pictures are copyrighted by Vietnam National Administration of Tourism and SNV Vietnam.

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union funded Environmentally and Socially Responsible Tourism Capacity Development Programme (ESRT) and the WWF-Vietnam.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Vietnam's Responsible Tourism Programme (ESRT)

The European Union funded Environmentally and Socially Responsible Tourism Capacity Development Programme (ESRT) Programme aims to build the capacity of stakeholders in the Vietnamese tourism sector in order to fully realize the substantial socio-economic development benefits available from tourism while protecting the natural and cultural resources on which the sector depends. The Programme builds on the success of the former EU funded the Vietnam Human Resources Development in Tourism Project (2005-2010). The ESRT Programme works in three key areas: policy support and institutional strengthening, product competitiveness and public-private dialogue, and vocational training and education.

WWF Vietnam

WWF-Vietnam, part of WWF-Greater Mekong, works to conserve the region's biodiversity and build a secure and sustainable future for its people by securing landscape integrity and climate change resilience, ensuring sustainable hydropower development, strengthening law enforcement and protected area management, and securing sufficient sustainable and leveraged financing for conservation. Improving the livelihoods of local communities in and around protected areas and reducing their dependence and pressure on natural resources are focus areas of WWF-Vietnam and have been integrated into numerous projects. In a step towards mainstreaming Community Based Tourism, WWF-Vietnam is working in close collaboration with the ESRT Programme to make a stronger positive impact on the lives of the local people as well as the quality of the natural environment.

Intended use of the handbook

The Vietnam Community Based Tourism Handbook is designed as a practical reference guide. Its simple but comprehensive perspective, covering all stages of the project cycle and inclusion of practical tools and tips for use in this cycle makes it of interest to Provincial, District and Local Tourism Authorities, Non-Government Organisations working in Community Based Tourism in Vietnam, private sector organisations wishing to partner with communities to develop tourism products, or alternatively the communities themselves who may wish to drive the development of tourism in their locality.



BACKGROUND

Defining community based tourism

Whilst the concept of community-based tourism (CBT) began in the early 20th Century, different perspectives and understandings of the concept exist, with different concepts and definitions often dependent on the author, geographic region or specific study/project. There are however some universally applied principles such as that of sustainability and the involvement and benefit of local communities.

A commonly held definition of CBT might be:

CBT provides visitors with an experience of local life, in which local communities are directly involved in tourism activities and get socio- economic benefits from tourism activities and take responsibility for protecting the natural resources, environment and local culture.

Key principles

The key principles of CBT include social equity, respecting local culture and natural heritage, and local ownership and participation.

Social equity. Members of the community are involved in the planning, implementation and management of tourism activities in their community. There is an emphasis on the participation of local community in the preparation, organisation and implementation of tourism activities. Economic benefits are shared equally; not only to tourism companies, but also to community members.

Respect local cultural and natural heritage. Almost any tourism activity has the potential to impact on the local community and natural environment either positively or negatively. It is important that local cultural values and the natural environment are protected and

respected by the positive actions of all actors within the local tourism sector, critical to maintaining the fabric of local society. As such, communities must not only be aware of their role and responsibilities in providing a successful tourism experience, but must also understand the positive and negative impacts tourism may bring upon them and their natural environment through inadequate planning and management.

Benefit sharing. The sharing of benefits from tourism to the community requires that the community is able to receive the same benefits as other relevant stakeholders. In benefit sharing, revenue from tourism activities is usually divided amongst all people participating, with a portion set aside as a contribution to the whole local community through the community fund which may be used for such purposes as re-investment in infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and electricity, or other areas of communal benefit such as health care and education.

Local ownership and participation. Successful CBT effectively harnesses the knowledge and resources of the local community to achieve tourism outcomes. The involvement of the local community from the planning process through to implementation and evaluation is critical to ensure local ownership is best achieved and participation is maximised.

Government Organisations working in Community Based Tourism in Vietnam, private sector organisations wishing to partner with communities to develop tourism products, or alternatively the communities themselves who may wish to drive the development of tourism in their locality.

Positive impacts of community based tourism

There can be many positive impacts of CBT, of which most are founded within and work towards meeting the principles of sustainable development, namely that it delivers social, environmental and economic benefits. These three “pillars” are based on the concept of the triple bottom line for sustainability that are commonly promoted by international agencies such as APEC and the United Nations. Some of the key benefits of developing a CBT product include:

Benefit 1: CBT contributes to increased income

CBT contributes to increased income for local communities, especially in remote areas where poverty is more pronounced. This is critically important as it reduces human pressures on local natural resources and landscape.

Benefit 2: CBT fosters equality

CBT promotes equality in tourism development by providing whole communities with benefits from the provision of tourism services and infrastructure.

regardless of whether they are actively participating in tourism, e.g. better transportation, electricity, improved access to freshwater, telecommunications etc.

Benefit 3: CBT creates employment

CBT enterprises generate local job opportunities. CBT can help change the local job structure and improve labour quality in local areas, and reduce outward migration from rural areas to cities.

Benefit 4: CBT protects & promotes natural & cultural heritage

CBT contributes to restoring and developing traditional cultural values and crafts, including the protection of natural resources and the environment. It creates opportunities for cultural and economic exchange between Vietnam and other countries. This is an important factor in the conservation and promotion of Vietnam's traditional cultural values and in the development of opportunities for economic development in impoverished areas.

Key challenges in community based tourism

Whilst opportunities for positive social, environmental and economic impacts are clear, there are however a number of challenges in CBT that must be overcome:

Challenge 1: Ensuring access to natural resources

In many cases CBT requires a “re-zoning” of communal land or water for use by tourists. As a result access to a section of a beach, reef, grazing land, river, or forests may become restricted, thereby limiting benefits such as fish for household consumption or sale, firewood for cooking, money from sales from livestock etc. Although families or communities in Vietnam do not actually have ‘real’ ownership over the natural resources in their area, pursuing CBT may still require an alteration to its traditional use and consideration must therefore still be given to the ramifications of this potential eventuality at an early stage in the CBT planning process.

Challenge 2: Ensuring demand exists

If a CBT project only makes enough to pay its workers, it may lose the support of the community, which expects more benefits, in terms of employment and income generating activities. Careful market research and analysis of a tourism destination is required before embarking on project implementation to ensure there is adequate market demand to meet socio-economic targets.

Challenge 3: Developing good community management & co-ordination systems

Participation of the community must extend beyond their initial involvement in the decision making process about whether or not the community should proceed with CBT. CBT boards must actively promote and provide easy and regular access for the community to be heard and involved in its development. Simply providing election to the board on an annual or bi-annual basis is not enough. Boards must fairly represent all sectors of the community, provide regular communication with the community about its activities, and seek to promote the development of additional opportunities that are realistic and further involve the rest of the community such as the provision of ancillary products and services like cafes / restaurants, bars (or bia hoi's), tours, handicraft stores etc.

Challenge 4: Managing the exit of donor aid

When CBT projects involve an over-reliance on NGO or donor aid a dependency syndrome can be created which CBT operators may find difficult to get off once donors eventually pull out. CBT organisations must actively work with their donors to ensure they are able to achieve economic self-sufficiency prior to the final withdrawal of external aid.

Challenge 5: Dealing with limited capacity

The capacity of local communities to operate CBT businesses in Vietnam is generally still weak. Inadequate competencies to manage a CBT enterprise limits the ability of operators to best manage and develop their products, thereby affecting the growth of the business and potential to increase income. Key issues of human resource capacity include:

- Limited understanding of mechanics of tourism industry and tourist needs and wants (they may not have been a tourist themselves)
- Limited awareness of need for environmental protection
- Limited capacity in product development and management in general and CBT products in particular
- Limited access to markets and limited capacity of making CBT product promotions
- Limited capacity in providing tourism services (e.g. communication, professional skills etc)
- Limited capital investment in CBT product development

Challenge 6: Sharing limited benefits

The role and contribution of tourism enterprises, especially travel agencies and tour operators in CBT development and publicity in Vietnam remains weak. In other words, many travel businesses are not yet sufficiently interested in CBT product development. The combined effect of CBT being an emerging and niche tourism sub-sector, and expectations that a percentage of revenue made will be reinvested in conservation works and community development at local destinations reduces the overall profit retained by such private enterprises and hinders its further development in comparison to mainstream tourism experiences.

Challenge 7: Restrictions on movements of foreigners

A market analysis may reveal CBT to be a viable sector for development in a community or region however in some places government restrictions on the movement of foreigners can hinder such development. Reviewing government regulations is therefore a critical first step in the CBT development process, and seeking official guidance and support from the local authority is a must before any investment takes place.

Challenge 8: Disruptions to daily life and delayed benefits

Local people need to meet every-day needs including conducting daily chores and undertaking their core livelihood obligations. With tourism projects typically taking a number of years to build up a market and become profitable, obtaining support from community members to dedicate significant amounts of their time to a project with delayed benefit may be difficult.

Challenge 9: Navigating government bureaucracy

Navigating juridical procedures at different levels and identifying the correct people within the local government agencies to deal with for the different aspects of the CBT development approval process can be at times confusing. If a particular approval is accidentally not received before development takes place the project proponents may be blamed for a legal violation and a block may be placed on the further development or operation of the project. CBT project planners must therefore pay careful attention to ensuring all the correct legal documents and procedures are obtained, and cross-checking with different management agencies for greater precaution.

Case study: Lessons learnt from the Talai longhouse

In the establishment of their community guesthouse ('longhouse') the Talai people's local project partners (including the Protected Area Board of Management, the Commune People's Committee and District People's Committee) jointly resolved that the longhouse could follow a standard development process that could remain at the District level.

However, by the time the project was finally open for business a much more complex array of approvals had been required that included the Provincial People's Committee and related provincial departments such as Construction, Natural Resources and Environment, Culture, Sport and Tourism, and the police - both at the provincial and district levels.

The procedures required for the Talai case can be summarized as:

1. Permit for land use conversion issued by the district Department of Natural Resources and Environment
 2. Permit for construction issued by Provincial Department of Construction
- Permit for operation issued by the Provincial People's Committee (supported by supplementary permits including the plan for management with regard to finance, administration and security, a permit for food safety and hygiene, a permit for the prevention and fighting of fires; a commitment for environment protection)

Development context

Tourism sector

CBT enterprises can operate almost anywhere; from an urban community group in a town or city coming together to develop a street crafts district, through to members in a rural village developing a community guesthouse or a cultural performance group.

In Vietnam however, CBT goods and services can mostly be found in the rural areas such as the mountainous North (Lao Cai, Lai Chau, Hoa Binh, Ha Long Bay), the central coast (Hue, Hoi An, Nha Trang), and around the Mekong Delta in the south. Here, natural beauty commonly intersects with a rich cultural heritage.

In particular, CBT is almost always found where there is a strong presence of ethnic minority people whose many unique cultures, traditions and the natural surrounds within which they live, lend a particularly attractive combination of products for visitors. Moreover, with alternative livelihood options often not being readily accessible, CBT offers a supplementary income to their generally subsistence way of life.

Demand for Responsible Tourism in Vietnam

An AC Nielsen survey commissioned by SNV in 2010 of more than 200 domestic and 200 international travellers across major Vietnamese tourism centres however has also identified a number of key findings that provides a positive outlook for CBT in Vietnam:

- 65% wish to experience local culture and heritage
- 54% wish to experience nature and to relax and rejuvenate
- 84% wish to visit a local site of natural beauty
- 97% are willing to pay more for a holiday that is environmentally friendly and results in increased net benefits for the poor
- 70% are willing to spend more money on the preservation of the local environment
- 48% are willing to spend more money on experiencing local culture and heritage
- 45% are willing to spend more money supporting a local charity

Moreover, international travellers showed a willingness to pay on average an additional US\$47 on top of an average US \$1,000 cost for a holiday that was environmentally friendly and resulted in increased benefits for the poor. Domestic tourists were willing to pay an additional US \$27 to provide the same benefits.

Market segments

The most common market segments that will typically undertake a CBT experience in Vietnam include:

International freely independent travellers

Typically single or travelling in couples, international freely independent travellers (FITs) engage in CBT experiences as a result of their strong interest in learning about the Vietnamese history, culture and natural environment. FITs will often undertake CBT experiences as a part of a short or multi-day trek in the mountainous areas of the North and Central Vietnam which usually incorporates visits to ethnic minority villages, shopping in village markets to sample local food and purchase traditional handicrafts, and staying in homestays.

International package ("Classic") travellers

Another segment is the international package holiday maker who might integrate a CBT experience into their broader holiday itinerary, for example by spending a single night in a village homestay, or taking a day trip to an ethnic minority village or craft village to experience the local culture. These travellers are mostly on a 2 week itinerary and outside the cities, do not usually stay in any one place for more than a day or two.

City worker weekend breaks

Whilst the Vietnamese domestic market has an inherent understanding of its own culture and heritage there remains an considerable interest in CBT experiences. Domestic travellers are often city workers interested in an escape to the countryside to enjoy the fresh air and rural scenery of traditional villages and natural attractions such as waterfalls and caves. Travelling in self-organised groups (often hiring a bus) often over 1-2 days, these travellers enjoy visiting local markets to pick up gifts of fresh local produce and handicrafts for friends and family, dining in local restaurants (sometimes with a local traditional performance), and having a good time socialising with one another.

Phuot

There are also indications of the beginnings of growth in the sub-sector with Vietnamese students and young workers. Referred to as 'Phuot', or Vietnamese backpackers, this market segment is mostly made up of Vietnamese students and young workers who use motorbikes to travel with friends to explore Vietnam's regional areas and tourist attractions. At destinations, they tend to use budget accommodation and dine at small local restaurants. The Phuot is particularly interested in buying local produce to take home to share with their friends and family, and purchasing lower cost handicrafts and herbal remedies. Unlike international visitors, the Phuot are not dependent on tour companies or expensive hire cars with drivers that can cost US\$150 a day.

Legal environment

At the time of writing, the Vietnam government was in the process of developing a Community Based Tourism Policy. It is expected that this will help provide stakeholders with a clear and coherent definition of CBT for Vietnam, and a vision for all to work towards. Principles supportive to CBT can also be found in a range of other existing policies in Vietnam, including:

Vietnam's Tourism Law (2006)

The highest legal document to regulate tourism activities in the country. The law covers provisions to support CBT development and specifically mentions the close relationship between eco-tourism and CBT in achieving sustainable tourism development (Clause 1, Article 5).

Decree Number 109 (2003 / ND-CP)

Issued on 23/9/2003, the Decree mentions wetland conservation and exploitation activities should be sustainable in relation with the role of local communities and mentions that tourism development is considered a priority in wetland areas, especially eco-tourism, as an effective conservation approach.

Forest Protection and Development Law, Decree No. 23 (2006 / NĐ-CP), & Decision No.186 (2006 / QĐ-CP)

These laws and decrees promulgate regulations on forest management in relation with eco-tourism development (Clause 53, Law on forest conservation and development; clause 55-56; Decree 23 and Clause 22 under Decision Number 186). Within the law ecotourism business activities may take place in special used forests (e.g. national parks, nature conservation and forest landscape protection areas) and contribute to conservation activities.

Decision Number 104 (2007 / QĐ-BNN)

Issued on 27/12/2007 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Decision provides guidelines on eco-tourism activities in National Parks including the principles of business within Natural Protected Areas, “The local people have the right to participate and be the beneficiaries from Ecotourism activities to get more income sources and also knowledge on biodiversity and natural protection” (Item 3, Clause 4).

Environmental Protection Law (2005)

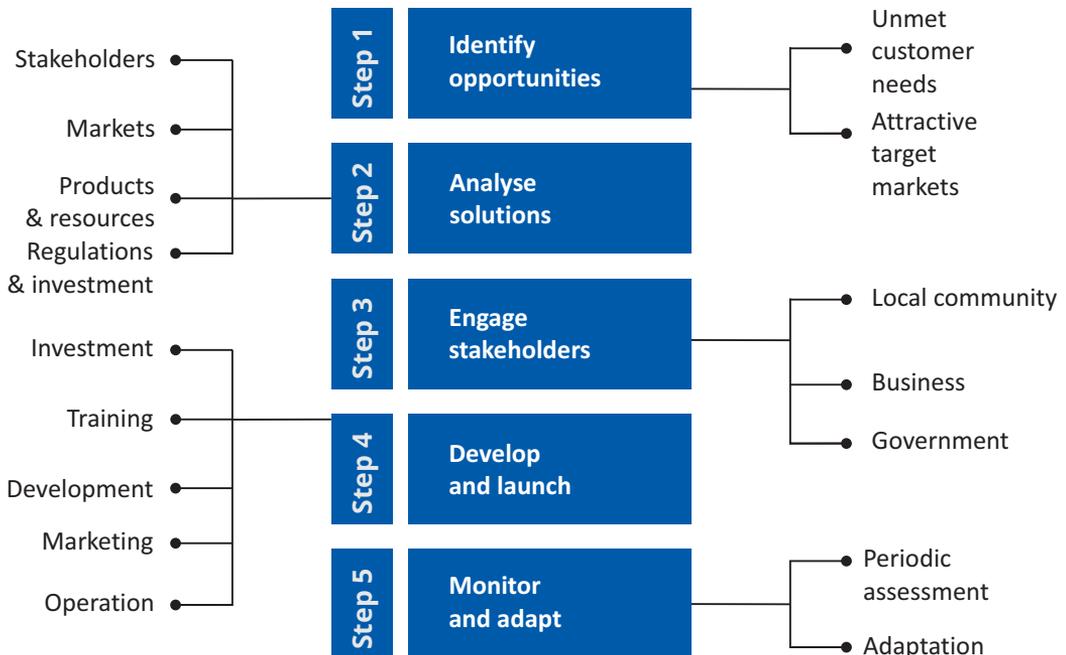
In addition to providing regulations on environmental protection in tourism activities, the Environmental Protection Law encourages “the development of eco-tourism models in tourist destinations and other natural landscapes to harmonize humans and nature” (Item 1, Clause 31).

Biodiversity Law (2008)

The Biodiversity Law underscores that eco-tourism is one criterion in the establishment of Natural Parks (Item 4, Clause 17), Natural Reserves (Section b, Item 2, Clause 18), and Landscape Protected Areas (Section C, Item 2, Clause 20). Eco-tourism is also highlighted as an activity for local households or individuals legally living in the aforementioned natural reserves providing them with the right to “participate, [and] get benefits from tourism business activities in the areas” (Noted B, Item 4, Clause 30).

The 5-Step market-based community based tourism development approach

For a CBT development to take a market-based approach, it is recommended that five key steps be followed, namely: identify opportunities, analyse solutions, engage stakeholders, develop and launch, and finally monitor and adapt. The Vietnam Community Based Tourism Handbook has been structured to follow this five-step market-based development approach.





STEP 1. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

Market demand

Opportunity identification

If we build it, will they come? The first step in the CBT development process is to identify areas of market demand. A CBT venture that is not based upon an identified need is destined to fail. Like most tourism ventures, a CBT project concept will generally flow from an opportunity within one of the following three areas:

1. **Address limitations on tourism growth.** Is there strong demand for CBT products that are not being sufficiently met by existing communities in your region? Would the development of your CBT venture help meet this market demand? An example of this might be a village that opens a community guesthouse to cater to an overflow of visitors that are not being met by existing accommodation suppliers.
2. **Fill a gap in the marketplace.** Is a CBT product or service experience not currently being provided in your region? Would the development of your CBT venture help meet this market demand? For example, perhaps no one is offering authentic village tour experiences in your region yet your discussions with nearby hotel operators shows that there is a clear demand.
3. **Develop a new concept.** Do you have an idea for a CBT concept that is not currently being offered in your region? Are there some types of CBT ventures operating successfully elsewhere that you could develop and thus create a new demand? An example of this might be introducing a new lunch and cultural performance package to tour groups that pass by your village that is not currently being offered by anyone else.

However, no matter which of the above options you might follow, your decision needs to be based upon a good understanding of the size, nature and characteristics of the market to ensure the CBT concept is delivered in a manner that meets the market's expectations.

Gathering information

Is there likely to be demand for the CBT venture? What is the number and characteristics of visitors who might want to undertake such a CBT experience? A broad analysis needs to be carried out to assess the CBT opportunity. Sources of information are many. Some of the most common methods of gathering information includes:

- **Discussions.** Informal discussions with tour operators, accommodation providers, restaurants operators, attraction site managers, or even transport providers can provide an excellent picture of the characteristics of the local or regional tourism market, as well as trends and opportunities. Likewise, speaking with representatives from tourism industry associations and clubs can also be a great way to obtain information.
- **Observation.** Simply keeping your eyes open and observing tourism dynamics in your area can be a great way to obtain information. What types of tourists visit (young, old, groups, nationality etc)? What types of activities do they engage in (e.g. trekking, handicrafts shopping, biking etc)? What attractions do they like to visit (e.g. natural, cultural, historical)? Where do they like to dine (e.g. street food shops, local restaurants, international restaurants, cafes etc)?
- **Research.** A range of information including tourism reports, plans and strategies on tourism in Vietnam can be found by researching tourism websites or through the offices of tourism authorities, tourism clubs and associations, visitor information / promotion centres, district government offices, local and international NGOs working in tourism, or other tourism agencies and authorities. Opportunities may be defined through research into tourism survey reports, tourism development and investment plans, identification of infrastructure projects committed or planned, tourism strategies and plans, or an examination of comparable geographic areas, social and demographic trends or data on economic or environmental change.

Market analysis

The purpose of conducting a market analysis is to understand potential market/s' size and growth, motivations and needs, travel means and patterns, and spending patterns. To help identify market opportunities within a region it is necessary to first identify the type of information you would like to obtain. Some relevant research questions might include:

Potential market survey questions⁽¹⁾

1. How many people are visiting the region (domestic and international)?
2. Is the number of visitors increasing, decreasing or staying the same?
3. What is the purpose of their travel?
4. What are the most common age groups?
5. What activities do they undertake?
6. Where do they like to go?
7. How long do they stay?
8. How much do they spend?
9. Do they travel independently or in groups?
10. Are there gaps in the current provision of CBT services or facilities? If so, why?
11. Are there visitor trends that indicate strong or growing interest in CBT experiences in the region?
12. What is the delivery of complementary market products in the region?
13. What are the asset strengths of the region?
14. What is driving tourism activities and demand in the region?
15. Are there particular market segments for which the locality has appeal?
16. Are there special interest groups that CBT could cater for?

Potential CBT market segments

Typical potential markets for CBT products in Vietnam include:

- International tourists who are interested in culture and the environment and like getting “off the beaten track” to experience something new, different, or “more authentic”
- Local Vietnamese and expatriate city-dwellers looking for short holiday trip to a rural village to get away from city life and relax in a rural setting
- Local Vietnamese students and young urban population who want to explore the Vietnamese countryside with their friends and experience rural life during their free time
- Students and researchers visiting rural areas for excursions, study, and research in such areas as sociology, anthropology, the environment, birds and animals, and flora and fauna
- Backpackers and FITs for trekking, village market experiences, and meeting ethnic minorities



STEP 2. ANALYSE SOLUTIONS

Stakeholders

In order to develop the CBT project concept an analysis of stakeholders needs to occur. Simply put, who can do what? The stakeholders in the CBT venture can be anyone who is potentially directly or indirectly involved or affected by the CBT project.

Stakeholder analysis

An effective way to identify and assess the range of stakeholders in the CBT project and their potential role and responsibilities for each is to undertake a 'stakeholder mapping' exercise for those both within and external to the community. Once the stakeholders have been identified and their potential skills and interest in CBT has been assessed, an examination should be undertaken of how and where external input or collaboration from different stakeholders can take place and the role each stakeholder might be able to play to support the CBT initiative.

Internal (community) stakeholders

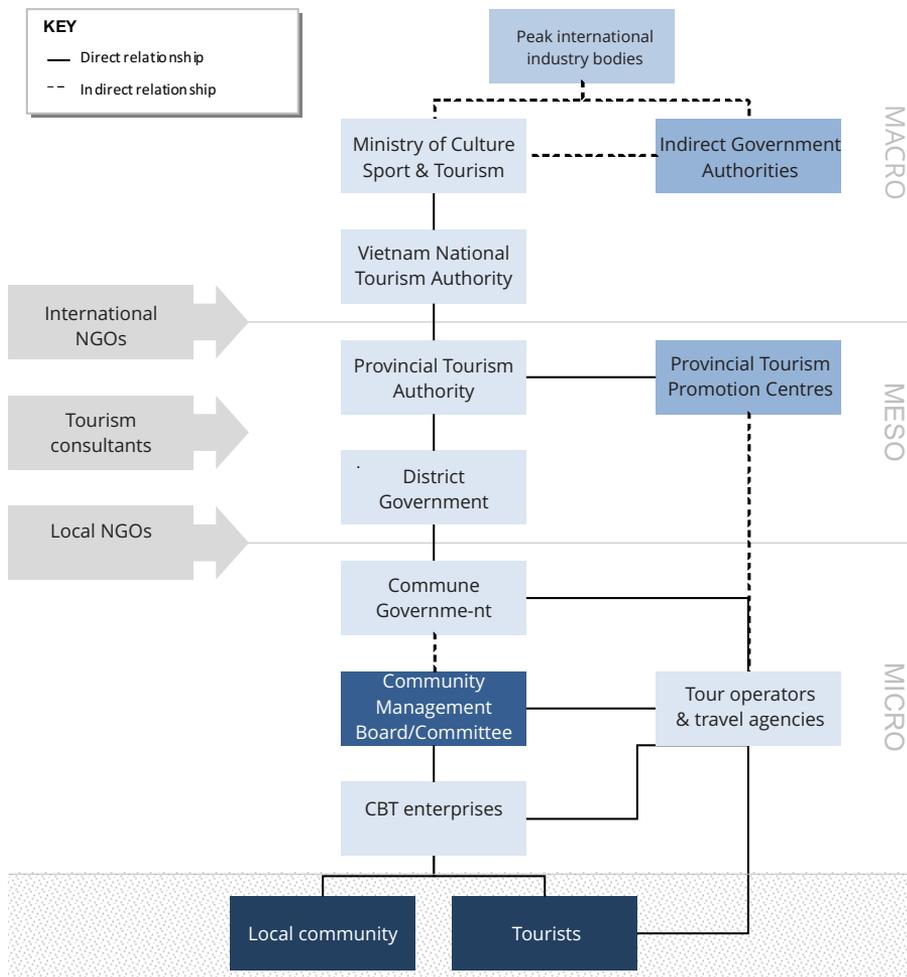
Within the community the mapping of stakeholders can take many forms and be as simple or as detailed as is useful, at a minimum the process should involve identifying: names, location, contact details, and particular interest in or relevance for the CBT initiative. It is at this time that the community is also able to ensure the inclusion of the community's marginalised segments in the process (e.g. women, youth, the poor).

During the identification (and allocation) of roles, community members should be placed where they fit best according to their areas of skills and expertise rather than simply trying to include everyone (a skill inventory map can help). For example, it may make more sense for the poorest people with little education and no experience in small business management to be the suppliers of agricultural produce for visitor meals or alternatively work as cooks or transport providers than to be the providers of homestay services as this would require skills in such areas as marketing, communication, and finance, skills that take some time to be able to learn and implement.

External stakeholders

Stakeholders outside the community will typically be from the private sector, public sector and non-profit organisations. In terms of CBT development, the main focus for community members should be obtaining a clear understanding of the stakeholders that can have the most direct connection with the CBT venture. This will often include:

- Commune and district governments
- District tourist promotion / information centre
- Tour operators and travel agents working in the region
- NGOs working in the region



Map of Vietnam tourism sector "external stakeholders"

Products & resources

The availability, type and condition of natural or cultural assets of a community and the surrounding region can play a key part in determining the success or failure of a CBT venture. An assessment of products and resources should therefore take place in order to identify what are its strengths that can be developed and marketed to tourists, and likewise, what products or resources might need protection from the potential undesirable impacts of tourism.

The selection of which products and resources to develop should be informed by the previous market research and in particular, the advice of key private and public sector stakeholders.

Additionally, as identified by Armstrong in his Occasional Paper OP 21, "...The tourism products and resources must be marketable, of sufficiently high quality and inherent attractiveness to tourists, as well as close to good local amenities, services, infrastructure, and facilities. Good levels of tourist safety and health are also important, as are human and physical capital".⁽²⁾

Types of resources

A community's resources for tourism can be split up into socio-cultural resources and natural resources.

- **Socio-cultural resources** pertain to the human elements of the community, whether this is past or present. Socio-cultural resources can be both tangible, such as historic buildings and traditional handicrafts, and intangible, such as folk songs and traditional dances.
- **Natural resources** are the features of the environment around us. This may include types of terrain such as beaches, mountains and lakes, or the plants and animals living within the environment.

Analysing resources

A useful exercise for a community to undertake in order to identify its natural and tangible cultural resources is to draw a resource map of the community and surrounding region on a large piece of paper. A simple, rough hand-drawn sketch of the area, the focus of the resource mapping exercise is not so much about the accuracy of distances between sites or places, the height of mountains or the specific bends in a river, but rather to identify the key natural or cultural features of a place.

On the map participants should identify:

- Types of landforms such as mountains, bays, lakes, rivers, beaches, fields, waterfalls, caves etc;
- Built infrastructure such as houses, roads and trails;
- Historical or cultural sites such as temples, pagodas or colonial buildings; and
- Other places of potential interest to tourists such as hospitals, market places and stores.

After the resource mapping exercise is complete participants should brainstorm their intangible cultural heritage that may be of interest to tourists such as interesting songs, dances, traditions, festivals and events. Other products unique or special to the region can then be added to the list such as specialty food and drinks, or interesting plants and animals.

Prioritising products & resources

From the resource mapping exercise a comprehensive list of community resources can be developed and weighting criteria applied in order to prioritise the products into those that should be developed first, and those that can be developed later (see example below).

⁽²⁾Armstrong R. 2012

When examining the products and resources the community should aim to identify one or two flagship or “hero” products, those products that are powerful enough to be the main purpose of a visit to the community, and also identify linkages between products such that they can be connected together to form a tourism circuit walk, bike ride or boat trip.

Example of matrix for prioritising products & resources

Potential CBT product: Village homestay	Score 1 Poor – 10 Strong	Weighting (% of 100)	Total score
Easily accessible	6	15%	0.90
Quality of nearby attractions	8	4%	0.32
Range of available activities	6	5%	0.30
Existing available services	4	3%	0.12
Authentic product	8	8%	0.64
Distinctiveness of product	8	5%	0.40
Easily accessible target markets	10	10%	1.00
Sufficient target market size	6	8%	0.48
Favourable target market trends	6	5%	0.30
Private sector existence	6	3%	0.18
Supportive regulatory context	10	4%	0.40
Available human resources & infrastructure	8	6%	0.48
Economically sustainable	8	10%	0.80
Environmentally sustainable	10	7%	0.70
Socio-culturally sustainable	8	7%	0.56
TOTAL	112	100%	7.58
			10

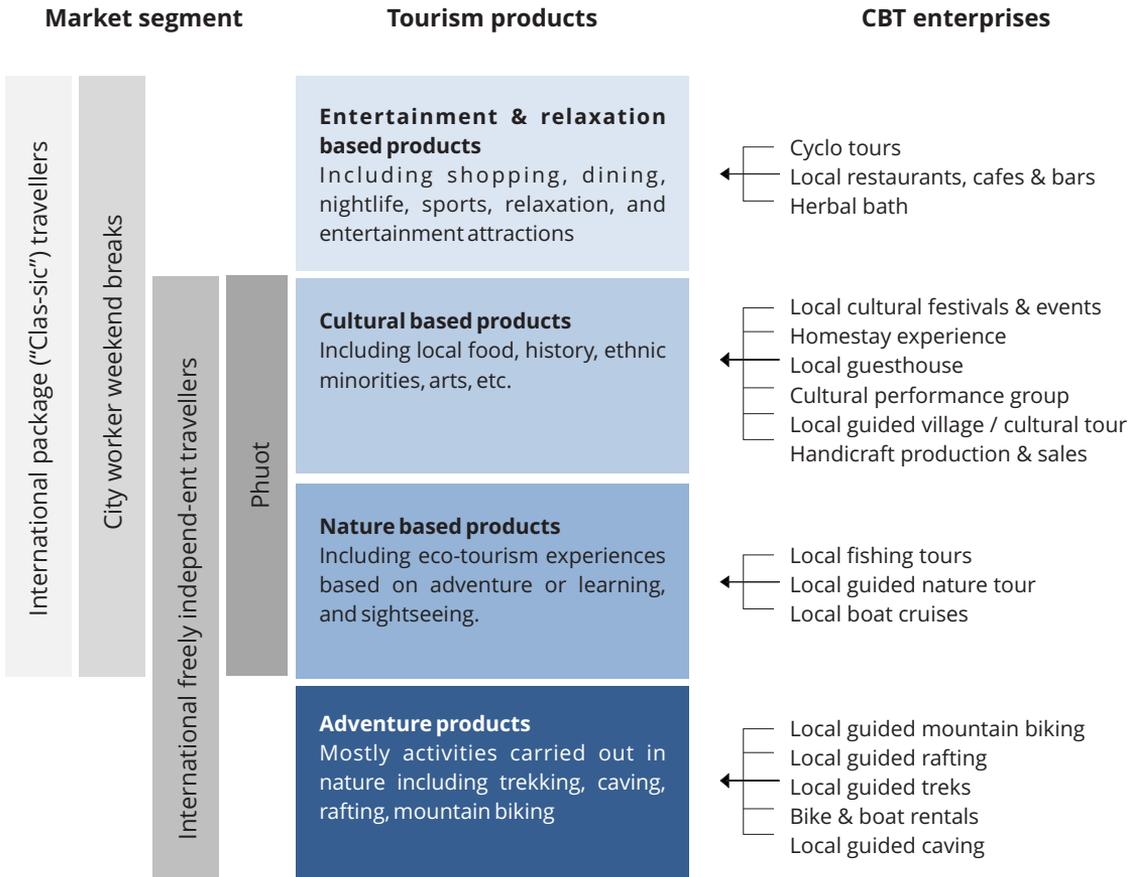
Potential CBT enterprises

Once the key product/s and resource/s have been identified as suitable for development, potential CBT enterprises can be connected. A table of typical CBT products in Vietnam can be found in the Appendix. Examples of CBT enterprises include:

- **Cultural.** Tours of historic or religious buildings or sites; Demonstrations of traditional ways of life (cooking, farming, hunting); Performance of traditional music, dance or storytelling; Sale of local arts and crafts, produce, specialty food and beverages; Visits to local schools
- **Activities & events.** Organisation of local festivals and events (music, sport etc); Provision of traditional or local market days; Fishing, boating, kayaking, and rafting tours
- **Natural.** Guided walks to natural sites; Sale of traditional forest medicine; Demonstrations of traditional farming / fishing techniques
- **Tourism services.** Local guiding; Homestay or guesthouse accommodation; Local produce; Food and beverages

Matching markets to enterprises

It is important that CBT enterprises and products are matched to identified target market/s. The following diagram provides an example of Vietnam's typical market segments, connected tourism products and suitable CBT enterprises.



Regulations & investment

A community's ability to successfully develop CBT products is to a considerable degree a function of its political system and the policies and plans for the tourism sector. Before settling on a CBT development plan an analysis of the regulatory environment needs to take place. If planned and managed correctly, CBT can serve as a valuable element in diversifying and enhancing existing community, local and regional development plans,⁽⁴⁾ so an awareness of the "fit" of the CBT venture within the external environment is imperative.

Policies & systems

CBT ventures are more likely to succeed where there are institutional structures that provide enabling policies and linkages between organisations, skills or technical assistance. Ideally there will be a framework that starts with the national government committing to relevant international conventions governing sustainable tourism development or responsible tourism followed by a reflection of this commitment in national laws, most specifically a national CBT policy. National, regional, provincial (and even district) tourism plans and strategies should then be developed, with each working towards achieving the objectives of the higher level document. Incorporation of CBT for poverty alleviation in national development plans can also foster CBT development, in particular community-private joint venture partnerships.⁽⁵⁾ A careful analysis of the policy environment within which the CBT venture will operate therefore needs to occur.

Common policy characteristics that support CBT development include:⁽⁶⁾

- Prioritisation of socio-economic benefits to local communities
- Rights of communities are respected and enhanced, and the community's active involvement in management is promoted
- Contribution to the conservation of natural and cultural resources is identified
- Sector policies have been developed that include the design of appropriate approaches and instruments for planning and management, and the establishment of supporting and capacity building institutional arrangements.

In Vietnam specific policies, rules and regulations that should be considered in the planning of a CBT venture include:

- Provincial permits for visitors to access particular places
- Provincial, district or commune regulations on the payment of village entrance fees for foreigners
- National or provincial restrictions on the types of activities visitors may engage in
- National or provincial restrictions on the places that foreigners may visit
- Provincial pricing policies for accommodation or other services
- District small business licensing requirements
- Joint venture contract conditions between private sector, public sector and communities
- Community codes of conduct for tour operators and visitors
- Monitoring, recording and reporting requirements of tourist activities (e.g. number of visitors, length of stay, purpose of visit etc.) to government authorities

Government planning requirements

The CBT venture should ideally also be formulated such that it is consistent with overall existing and proposed development plans for the area. An awareness of the objectives and policy guidelines within strategy plans can also be used in marketing the development opportunities of the CBT venture. The research of local planning policies or zoning requirements is therefore critical to ensuring the CBT venture will be permitted to operate.

Government planning policies typically regulate the coordination of development, protection of the environment, housing, economic development and infrastructure provision. At the local (commune or district) level planning policies and frameworks will often describe the principal planning objectives and strategies for the area and are an important foundation for decision making by government officials on development proposals.

Planning frameworks that may potentially impact on CBT ventures and thus need to be investigated as a part of the CBT planning process include:

- Integrated or rural development plans
- Conservation or biodiversity plans
- Regional land use plans
- Tourism master plans
- Other livelihoods programs
- Community based natural resource management plans
- Coastal management plans

