

Working Paper

Community Based Tourism Entrepreneurship & Market Access

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C a m b o d i a M S M E

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Strengthening Project

Executive Summary

USAID-funded Cambodia MSME has been working in Cambodia since 2005 to strengthen micro, small and medium enterprise projects in Cambodia using value chain approach. The project activities cover seventeen provinces nationwide focusing on several value chain including swine, aquaculture, wild bees raising, safe water and sanitation, garment, clay tile, non-timber forest products, citrus and tourism. The project assist rural business to better serve markets to make more profits, overcome technical constrains and improve business to business and business to government relationship.

Having seen the potential and challenges of tourism development in Cambodia, in 2009, MSME started integrating tourism as one of the value chain. The dimension of tourism activities are working at three levels comprising of community, provincial and national level. At community level, MSME is working with six projects around the country: two of them are in the North-west and the rest four are in the South-west. At provincial level, MSME is working with Provincial Investment Subcommittee in certain selected potential provinces to develop tourism investment plan and attract investors to invest in tourism sector. The national level, MSME is working with Ministry of Tourism to coordinate between public and private sector to establish Marketing and Promotion Board in order to promote tourism in Cambodia independently to the world.

What are the challenges of tourism development in Cambodia? Tourism development in Cambodia is developing as polarization at certain big cities not countrywide; many potential provinces/cities are just the across area; therefore the benefit does not distribute nationwide and a lot of economic leakage happens. Human resources, technology, infrastructure, legal framework, networking, update information, cost in production are considered limited to push tourism growth.

Regarding to CBT development, it has been starting for a decade but still not very well organized and managed yet. Human resource is a main challenge; there are not so many local experts in tourism. Furthermore, CBT has been considered as a tool for nature conservation rather than a business that provides opportunities for local people to have a better life. Many CBT initiatives in Cambodia have been initiated by conservation organization rather than by the community itself; therefore the feeling of ownership is limited and they depend very much on donor to do for them. However, those NGOs focus on conservation as the main goal of their project and lack of business concept. To date, there are approximately 30 CBT projects around Cambodia; however, very few of them are connected and working with private sector and the concept of CBT is not understood widely.

On the other hands, Cambodia is a new destination for ecotourism/community based tourism development, many things to explore, and many opportunities to develop in term of nature and culture. The number of tourist arrivals in Cambodia keeps increasing though challenged with global economic crisis. The infrastructure to support tourism is getting improved in many part of the country which is a good indicator for development. Transportation is connected to many cities, though the quality is not meet the right standard but considered better than in the past five years.

What are the strategies of USAID-Cambodia-MSME to promote CBT to become entrepreneurship and access to market for sustainable development and achieve economic viability for all? MSME has the approach to engage them with private sector, build the business idea to them, train them to rely on themselves and be more independently. MSME focuses on services quality, marketing stuff and improving, maintaining and selling their products. MSME assesses the situation and condition of each site, provides different supports to each site based on reality needs, connect them with each other to exchange lessons learned and experiences, put them in contact with private sector, and keep the private sector informed what those projects are going on.

The alternative way for CBT to access to market; firstly, they need to understand themselves very well, what their strength and weakness are, engage themselves to private sector to be involved at the early stage and in order to get their feedback to develop products which matched with the market demands, keep those private sector informed with up to date information. Secondly, they need to understand their market demand, which they want to sell to, find out those needs, and develop their products match to those needs but be on their own basis. Once their products are ready, they need to think about marketing strategies, what are the best ways to promote and sell their products, how to make their products reach their targeted markets. One last secret thing is to keep maintaining their service quality as a must to build trust to their clients.

“CBT is a tourism business beyond the tool for nature conservation, business skill is important for them to sustain their activities, so make them think like a businessman”

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CBT Entrepreneurship and Market Access
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USAID-Cambodia MSME

I. Background of Cambodia MSME and Tourism Initiative

Micro Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) is an USAID funded project working in Cambodia since 2005, using value chain approach to strengthen business enabling environment, improve the dialogue between business and business, and business and government. MSME Cambodia is working in seventeen provinces focusing on several value chain including swine, aquaculture, wild bees raising, safe water and sanitation, garment, clay tile, non-timber forest products, citrus and tourism. In addition, the project assists rural business to better serve markets to make more profits and overcome the technical constrains in the business. There are three main components in MSME working as a cross cutting components to support and help each other; they are value chain, strengthen private sector voice and strengthen public sector voice.

Tourism is one of the value chains, which has been initiated in 2009 to strengthen the business minded for communities and enable them to deal with private sector for sustainable development and economic viability. There are six communities that MSME is working with at the moment; four of them are in the south-west (Chambok, Chi Phat, Peam Krasop, and Tataikrom Community) and the two are in the north-west (Banteay Chhmar and Phare Ponleu Selpak). Each community has been has applied to get award from USAID as the Hidden Treasure Contest 2010. The project that has won the award will get the technical support from MSME to strengthen their entrepreneurship skill and lead them access to their targeted markets.

In addition, MSME also works with public sector at provincial and national level with private sector engagement. At the provincial level, MSME is working with Provincial Investment Subcommittees, providing trainings on investment; especially focusing on tourism investment. There are five provinces have been selected as the targeted areas to work with; they are Kampong Cham, Kratie, Svavieng, Battambang and Kampot. At the moment Kampong Cham has been selected as the pilot area and will replicate to other provinces if the impacts of activities done worth well. The rational on this task is to strengthen the capacity of the Provincial Investment Subcommittee in attracting investors, and improve the investment procedure and environment in order to attract more investors investing in tourism sector at those provinces. It was found that there are many attractions which are very potential for tourism development in those provinces but the infrastructure and facilities support in tourism are still limited and could not attract people to visit and keep them stay long enough.

At the national level, MSME is working with the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), coordinating, and supporting MoT and private sector to establish Marketing and Promotion Board (MPB) in order to promote Cambodia as a whole to the world. The MPB will be an independent institution which has MoT and Private sector as a management board.

Cambodia MSME integrated tourism as additional value chain because it is seen obviously that tourism is one of the main sources of economic benefit to develop the country, it

employed thousands of people to work; in addition, tourism also contributes in human resource development. In Cambodia tourism contributed 12.5% in GDP, improved the hospitality skill for Cambodian people, changed the poor habit of local people in the remote area, promoted the local culture revitalization, contributed in nature conservation, and built image to the country. MSME has goal to strengthen the skills for local people to develop tourism independently, know how to work and deal with private sector, less dependent on donors, be proud of themselves and confident in tourism business operation. Furthermore, tourism investment will be an alternative complimentary in tourism development to operate smoothly; improve tourism facilities and infrastructure support tourism activities to attract more tourists, extend length of stay and increase revenue for economic development. In addition, Marketing and Promotion Board, which will be an independent institution promoting tourism in Cambodia to be more well-known, improve image of Cambodia beyond Angkor Wat and Killing Field, and attract more tourism investments as well as tourists.

II. Tourism Development in Cambodia

Cambodia is a country which is rich of nature and culture with highly potential for tourism development. The land area is covered by the natural resources such forest, mountains, waterfalls, lakes, river, wildlife, birds and many other rare species; in addition, there are thousands of temples around the country, history and traditional culture of Cambodian people. Those thousands of temples and the pure culture of Cambodia have built the reputation of Cambodia as a country of culture. Angkor Wat has made Cambodia received a lot of international tourists and keeps increasing every year. In 2009, Cambodia received two million and expecting to get 2.4 millions in 2010 (MoT, 2010). The Royal Cambodian Government has recognized tourism as one of the main sectors contributing to Cambodian economic development; in 2008 tourism has contributed to GDP 12.5% (MoT, 2009).



There are four main zones that Cambodian government identified as the main hubs for tourism development; they are Coastal area, Northeast, Phnom Penh and its surrounded, and Tonlesap Great Lake with surrounded provinces. With the rich of the natural and cultural resources, the Royal Cambodia Government decided that tourism development in Cambodia must be nature and culture based tourism; however, cultural tourism seemed be more developed than the nature one (Yin, 2009). Angkor Wat is the main attraction to serve in cultural tourism and attracted thousands of people around the world to visit Cambodia; ecotourism and community based tourism is a new concept for Cambodia. SNV, the Netherlands Development Organization has been working with Ministry of Tourism to develop ecotourism strategy and policies to promote ecotourism development in Cambodia. At the same time; there are also many conservation/environmental organizations working in Cambodia and integrating tourism as one of their activities to support and build capacity of local communities to develop tourism for community development and environmental

conservation. Cambodia MSME supports technically to the Ministry of Tourism to establish Marketing and Promotion Board (MPB) to promote tourism in Cambodia as a whole to breakdown the revenues from tourism to nationwide; especially to reach the local people and reduce the economic leakage and poverty alleviation through tourism.

Developing tourism needs a good infrastructure both soft and hard infrastructure to support tourism. There are many opportunities for tourism investments because Cambodia is still a weak country after recovering from the internal war (Khmer Rouge). Those infrastructures need to be improved because they do not meet the standard yet. Cambodian government tries to attract investors in tourism investment by improving investment procedures, identifies potential resources and opportunities for investment, and opens its economic into free market economy.



Opportunities and challenges are on the same track; there are many issues happening as the barriers in tourism development such as the following:

1. Land conflict
2. Illegal logging/ land and forest concession
3. Wildlife under threats
4. Poor infrastructure – limited access to tourism sites; especially CBT sites
5. Poor waste management – lack of knowledge to recycle the waste to reuse
6. Unequal benefit sharing
7. Unclear role of stakeholders
8. Lack of quality service
9. limited human and financial resources
10. Economic leakage
11. Unsustainable uses
12. Lack of information sharing
13. High cost of energy
14. Weak coordination
15. Limited legal framework, etc.

The above issues are the barriers in tourism development and the consideration points that tourism developer must pay attention how to improve and solve those issues.

In the last recent years, Cambodia has been changing and improving its face to compete with the neighboring countries. Infrastructure has been developed and fixed; road connections to provinces though cannot reach the remote areas but at least to each town. Hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, resorts are expanded to other provinces; not only in big cities like Siem Reap, Phnom Penh and Sihanouk Vile as before. Services quality has been improved at

each province to reduce polarization development – in the past only few big cities have been developed and promote tourism and most of the provinces though also with high potential were just the across provinces and were less interested by tourism operators.



Khmer cuisine



Accommodation in Cambodia (Bamboo house)

III. Issues in Cambodia CBT Development

Community Based Tourism initiative has been developed for a decade in Cambodia; to date, there are approximately thirty CBT projects around the country; however, they are still not well prepared and managed yet. Most of the CBT initiatives in Cambodia have been initiated by Nongovernmental Organizations that work on environmental protection and nature conservation. Those organizations are Mlup Baitong, Save Cambodia's Wildlife, World Wide Fund for Nature, International Union for Nature Conservation, World Conservation Society, Agir Pour Le Cambodge, Wildlife Alliance, Conservation International, SNV, Cambodia Community Based Ecotourism Network, Fauna and Flora International etc. When the initiative does not come from community itself; ownership is limited and causes donors dependency. CBT has been considered as a tool for nature and culture conservation and community development through community participation approach because most of the CBT happened in protected area.

In the past Cambodia was so rich in nature (75% of the land area covered by forest), local people who lived in and around those protected areas, they were very much dependent on the natural resources within their area, many people from other areas also migrated to those natural areas to do business there. They did lodging, hunting at commercial scale, exported to foreign countries; especially to the neighboring countries which was really harmful and extinct many rare species, wildlife and forests. In this regard, many NGOs came to work in Cambodia to strengthen the nature conservation and improve the environment quality at the same time; they introduced tourism as the alternative livelihood for those local people to change their behavior from destroying the natural resources to using those resources in sustainable way. Many CBT projects in Cambodia have similar story in developing tourism for instance: Chambok in Kampong Speu, Chi Phat, Peam Krasop and Tataikrom in Koh Kong. It was really hard at the beginning to stop people in doing illegal lodging; they got used to in those activities; they found it easy to earn a living; they did not care for the next generation; they did not understand how those activities affect the globe.

When tourism initiative was introduced to them, they did not understand at all; they even never heard the notion of tourism; it took time and efforts to change their behavior. Finally, the local people were interested and would like to participate in community based tourism development. Economic benefit is the strong motivation for them to participate and environmental protection comes later in their mind because people could not stop their stomach from eating; they need to fill their stomach so they have energy to participate in

environmental protection and they will see the advantages of using natural resources in sustainable way.



The view along the way to Chi Phat CBET



Waterfall in Chi Phat CBET

A study on selected eight CBT sites in Cambodia done by CCBEN and SNV showed that less than 1% of international visitors to Cambodia have visited CBT sites (CCBEN and SNV, 2008). However, in 2007, the selected eight CBT sites generated roughly US\$ 75,377 of which 55% was allocated to the villagers providing the service, 23% to environmental conservation, 7% to community development funds and 15% to other purposes such as supporting the poorest families and the projects in general. It is estimated that around 2,000 families are directly or indirectly involved in CBT activities in the eight sites presented in the report. Since the normal family size in Cambodia is 5 it could be stated that these sites benefit around 10,000 people.

Presently the Ministry of Tourism has expanded tourism development dimension nationwide. The Royal Cambodian Government is trying to build and improve infrastructure such as road connection, public transportation, tourism facilities comprising of hotels, restaurants, resort, at all scale to extend the length of stay and increase the expenditure of tourists. In addition, they are building the image of Cambodia; especially they are promoting the campaign “Cambodia, Kingdom of Wonder”, as well as the “Clean city, clean resort and good services” to improve and upgrade the service quality standards at each destination. Community base tourism also draws a lot interest from tourism developer and tourism operators, the Ministry of Tourism has recognized that CBT does benefit the poor and contributes a lot to nature conservation and culture revitalization.

In Cambodia, CBT is hardly to show any of them that can be considered as the successful project because none of them are independently developed and managed; they are still under supports from NGOs both technically and financially. In the next five years, they could be evaluated because many NGOs will finish their funding and activities with some communities, so communities have to be strong and sustain their activities. At the moment, those NGOs are trying to build capacity of communities, enhance the relationship and networking with other communities as well as private tourism operators, strengthen the business skill to deal with their clients and improve their hospitality in their business operation.

1. CBT Principles in Cambodia

In Cambodia context, “CBT or CBET is a tourism owned and managed by community in collaboration with other stakeholders in order to enhance the local well-being; natural and cultural resource conservation; host and guest interaction and education” (CCBEN and SNV,

2009). To enlarge the understanding and using of CBT concept, its principles also have been developed together with the definition which comprise of ten principles to be called as CBT in Cambodia context. The ten principles are:

1. “Involve and empower community members to ensure ownership and transparent management
2. Establish partnership with relevant stakeholders
3. Gain legal recognition from relevant authorities
4. Achieve social well-being and human dignity
5. Establish a fair and transparent benefit sharing mechanism
6. Enhance linkages to local and regional economy
7. Respect the local culture and tradition
8. Contribute to natural resource conservation
9. Improve quality of visitor experiences by strengthening meaningful host and guest interaction
10. Work towards financial self-sufficiency” (CCBEN and SNV, 2009)

A study conducted by CCBEN and SNV about Cambodia CBT supply chain in 2009 showed that among the selected thirteen CBT projects; only 5 met the criteria of CBT principals set. With this regards, it could be said that CBT development in Cambodia is still in its fancy and still needs to be improved and strengthened a lot. Human Resource is a big challenge for Cambodia not only in tourism but in almost every sector. All the CBT projects in Cambodia do not have the same standards; some are more advanced and developed and some are less and still a lot of improvements.

2. CBT Entrepreneurship and Market Access

Entrepreneurship is very important for community to sustain their operation. Yet the entrepreneurship in CBT development is still a challenge and question for many tourism developers because the capacity of communities is still limited in CBT operation; especially in management. Capital and knowledge are the main input to build their entrepreneurship, in this regard; their commitment and time contribution from community side will be the major pull factor to attract those inputs from many tourism stakeholders.

It is seen obviously that at the moment their capacity is able to operate at the ground level – need to be told what to do and they are lack of initiative. They are not still able to deal with private sector by themselves yet. Among the thirty CBT projects in Cambodia, very few of them have been engaged to private sector. A study about “Engaging Private Sector with CBT development” at one case in Chi Phat community based ecotourism showed that NGOs play very important role in CBT development; they built capacity of community, they deal with private sector, strengthen the capacity of community to meet with private sector and engage them to work together while community is operating at the ground level and need to told what to do; they are lack of ownership and independency (Sok. 2010).

The level of market access is also limited; there are more than one hundred and eighty tour operators and travel agents in Cambodia (CATA, 2009); however not many of them know about CBT and sell CBT as their products. At each CBT site does not have enough information; they do not see the significant of producing information and distributing the update information to their partners; as the result, they do not have enough visitors, not enough revenues, not enough job employments for their local people, not enough chances to build their sustainability. Engaging private sector in their operation is very limited. Tour

operators who are the main actor to bring visitors to their sites have not been involved at the early stage, so the products were developed which were not matched to the market demand and not interesting enough to attract tourists to their sites (Sok, 2010).

Among the thirty CBT projects in Cambodia, very few of them engaged private sectors and promoted their products to those private sectors, so they also got the satisfactory results – get tourists to visit, get feedback to improve their site, get revenues to continue their operation, and get local people involve actively. While some of them have been developed for a decade but could not be convincing enough to attract tour operators to send visitor there.

3. Cambodia MSME Approach to Sustain Cambodia CBT Development

Cambodia MSME is using value chain approach to sustain Cambodia CBT development. MSME focuses on demand driven, engages suppliers, builds the relationship among the suppliers – how they can maintain the relation and work together without NGO involvement afterward. MSME identifies what is missing, challenging, and overcomes those stuffs. For instance, MSME conducted FAM trip (familiarization trip) for several selected leading tour operators to visit and give feedback to the six awarded hidden treasure sites. The feedbacks give the chance to communities to improve their site and develop products and services which match with the market demands. MSME tries to connect those tour operators to work with communities, build capacity to communities based on what is needed in tourism business operation. After few months; it is seen that those tour operators are interested and willing to support communities; they are willing to contribute their time and their opinion to improve the quality of the CBT sites; especially in the low season. This is one good indicator that community and tour operator can work together, so community will understand better what the market needs and wants and they will be able to improve their site, build trust to their clients and maintain their operation.

MSME connects the CBT sites that won award from USAID together to support and promote each other, exchange knowledge and experiences. Each site has different unity and strength which enable them to learn from each other to growth forward together. MSME does not hire trainers to train community but invites private tourism operators to share practical experiences; share what the market needs and wants, give direct feedback to community to improve their operation. In addition, MSME organizes and conducts cross provincial learning trips for communities to learn and experience from other private tourism operators or well functioning communities, so they can see and learn practically. Doing like this; community will be able to continue such approach latter on.

In addition, MSME built relation with private tourism business to get internship opportunity for communities to get more practical experience. For instant, cooking internship – learn how to prepare and organize food better; especially focusing on hygiene and sanitation. Commitment from communities is the key to draw attention from MSME to support them, if no commitment and initiative from community, MSME will not put its effort to work with those communities. MSME does not provide visible financial support but provides the technical support, build up business skill, engage them with private business operators and strengthen their independency. Furthermore, MSME has been working with Equal Access to produce Radio Program – educational spots about tourism, so the tourism operators can learn from those programs. Each radio program show, the team invited the experienced partners based on the topics to share and exchange knowledge and lesson learn how to

improve their business. Marketing and promotion are also the significant part that MSME put its effort on.

IV. Good Practice of CBT in Cambodia (Banteay Chhmar Community)

1. Background

Banteay Chhmar Community Based Tourism is geographical located in Banteay Meanchey Province, the North-west part of the country. CBT has been initiated for this community in 2007 by Agir Pour Le Cambodge (APLC) for community development and temple conservation. There is one big temple, Banteay Chhmar Temple which is one of the 12th centuries Agkor period built temples, and several small temples surrounded this community served as the tourist attractions.

Communities who did not care about the temple became to love and felt proud that they have such a wonderful temple in their community; tourism created that feeling and made them feel ownership to those resources. Agir Pour Le Cambodge got the trainers to build community's capacity in tourism skill both service operation and management and tried to engage them with tour operator and other network to keep their sustainability.

At the end of 2008, APLC finished its fund as well as its activities with Banteay Chhmar community; fortunately, Global Heritage Fund (GHF) was interested to continue supporting community and would like to renovate the temple which is the main attraction for Banteay Chhmar Community. GHF has objectives to support community as following:

- To strengthen CBT as a local community-based organization by raising their capacity as tourism service providers.
- To enhance CBT's ability to gather revenues from tourism and disperse these in an equitable fashion.
- To increase the amount of funds available to CBT's "Local Development Fund" for community projects.
- To raise Banteay Chhmar and CBT's profile as an ethical destination for tourism
- To achieve self-sufficiency in CBT as an organization by 2011.
- To empower CBT through GHF's conservation project, and to encourage their members to adopt an attitude of stewardship towards local cultural heritage.
- To support a well-governed, ambitious and equitable community group in Banteay Chhmar.

In 2009 when Cambodia MSME started tourism activities, Banteay Chhmar has applied the Hidden Treasure contest and won the award from USAID as the Hidden Treasure Winner. Later on this community has been followed up by MSME to strengthen their services quality and engaged them to private tourism business operators such as tour operators, small scale resort, restaurants, and other communities to learn and exchange experience with each other and sustain their business operation in a long run.

2. Community Participation

There are 3430 families living in Banteay Chhmar commune of whom 1,278 families support tourism activities in Banteay Chhmar; 74 families get direct benefit such as providing tourism services (food, home-stay, guiding, committee, etc.) and the rest 1,204 get indirect benefit through tourism development. Banteay Chhmar community has strong commitment to participate in tourism development; keen to see their community developed and well-known

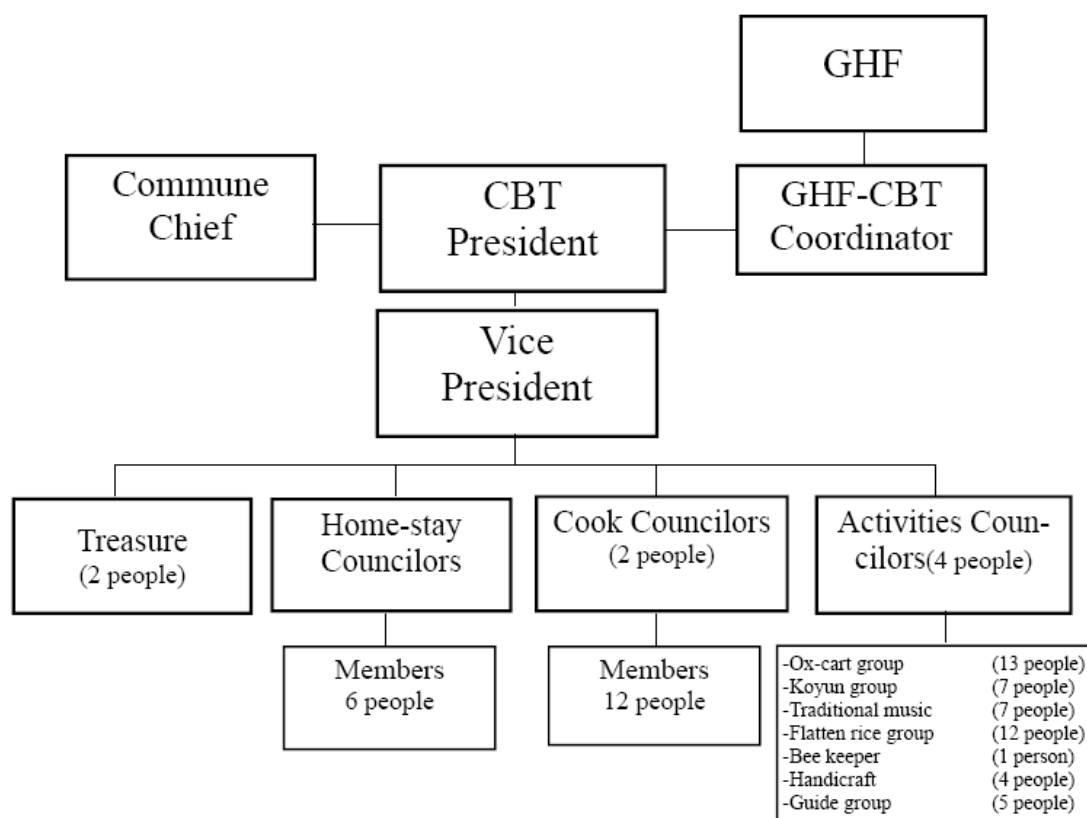
and open to learn and get feedback to improve their operation and services delivery. They are very enthusiastic and take action immediately if they can do and they are not very much dependent on donor; they are very initiative community.

Every two year, the committees have been re-elected by majority votes cast by the CBT members, two commune councils and four heard of the four villages. They have clear criteria to select the committee members; they must be people who live in Banteay Chhmar commune, has strong motivation and willing to work voluntary, has basic Khmer understanding (read and write) and be a communicative person also popular amongst people.

The goal for Banteay Chhmar community is to:

- Manage tourism in Banteay Chhmar and help villagers to benefit from it
- Provide supplementary income for villagers through tourism activities
- Use a part of tourism benefits to develop the commune with community projects
- Be involved in tourism development in Banteay Chhmar
- Improve knowledge how to develop tourism as a business for the CBT members

Management Structure of Banteay Chhmar Community



3. Products and Services

Temples and life style of local people serve as the main attraction for Banteay Chhmar community to develop tourism. In addition, tourists can enjoy the following when visiting Banteay Chhmar community:

- Temple tour visiting Banteay Chhmar temple (the main attraction), and other temples around Banteay Chhmar
- Picnicking at Banteay Top

- Ox-cart riding/Koyun riding/cycling tour to explore the village and understand the countryside life
- Visiting and buying silk products at Soeries du Mekong (Mekong Silk Center)
- Viewing sunset at Ang Cheung Kros if there is clear blue sky
- Testing local food prepared by Banteay Chhmar community
- Experiencing home-stay and interact with local people



4. Entrepreneurship and Access to Market

Banteay Chhmar community has very high commitment to build their entrepreneurship when the fund supported by GHF and technical support from Cambodia MSME end by 2012. They have been trying to upgrade their skill and knowledge as well as to strengthen their networking with other communities, private tourism operators and public sector. Each community member has put their effort to sustain the current activities onward. Even though they have challenges to overcome but they have the capacity to build up their entrepreneurship.

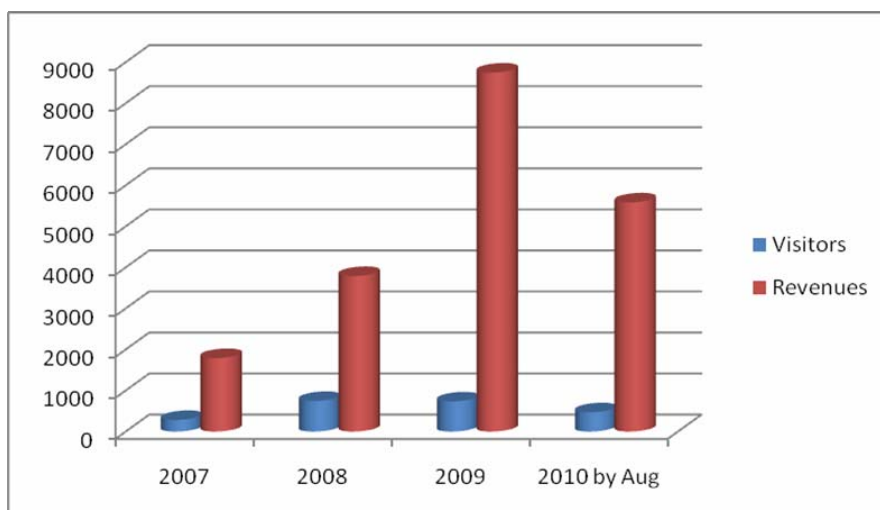
Comparing to other CBT development projects in Cambodia, Banteay Chhmar community is at the intermediate level in engaging with private to access the markets. There are eleven tour operators are working with Banteay Chhmar and sending regular tours to them.

How did Banteay Chhmar access to markets and engage itself to tour operators? At the early stage when they were about ready to operate their tourism business, the community committee with supports from APLC, they contacted to tour operators, promote their products and kept follow up with their partners. They have participated in many tourism events as many as possible to promote their community and build network with other communities. They built relation with Cambodia Association of Travel Agents (CATA) to arrange Familiarization Trips to promote their site. Since then, many tour operators knew about Banteay Chhmar and some of them sent their clients to visit and experience the site.

Keep improving the services quality and operation management, updating information to their partners, and open mind to get feedback from their clients are the key for them to build more trust to their clients and enable them to maintain their tourism business operation.

Since Banteay Chhmar operated tourism business, the number of visitors and revenues keep increasing, the local people have changed and improved their bad habit and they have improved their hospitality skill as well. In 2009 Banteay Chhmar received 732 visitors and

USD8.746 as revenue; remarkably, by August 2010, the number of visitors in Banteay Chhmar was 469 with the revenues USD5.583.



5. Challenges

Accessibility to Banteay Chhmar is not convenient, road condition is the main challenge (from Banteay Meanchey town to the site), it takes about 8-10hours drive from Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia, or 5-6hours drive from Siem Reap town and in the rainy season, it becomes more difficult and takes longer time for busses. There is no public direct bus to the sites, so the connection is using private taxi or car. This leads to high cost for transportation and limited number of tourists visiting Banteay Chhmar community, less revenue to sustain its operation and discourage some community members not very much interest in CBT development.

Access to clean water is also limited too for the local people as well as waste management. People are using water from the well, pond and rain water in the rainy season. Knowledge of sanitation is still needed to be improved.

The temples were broken a lot but they have been supported from the Global Heritage Fund to be renovated; it will take years to be renovated.

V. Conclusion

Community based tourism entrepreneurship in Cambodia is considerably limited. CBT concept and development is still in its fancy; lack of human resources among the tourism operators; especially at community level; therefore, CBT development in Cambodia is not well managed and organized yet and need a lot of improvements.

Accessibility to CBT sites is difficulty which leads to less interest of visitors and tour operators to engage themselves with CBT projects. In this regard, CBT does not receive enough visitors, less revenues, less job opportunities for local people, so they do not have enough chance to sustain their operation.

Tourism facilities such as hotels, restaurants, transportations, are not enough at tourism spots; especially, at CBT sites which normally located at protected areas in the remote and far areas. Those challenges and difficulties are the opportunities for tourism investors who are interested to invest in Cambodia.

NGOs and private tourism operators who are social responsible actors are working with the community based tourism to build their capacity in operation, management, business skill and enhance their networking with private sector and their independency to maintain and sustain their operation onward without NGOs involvement.

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