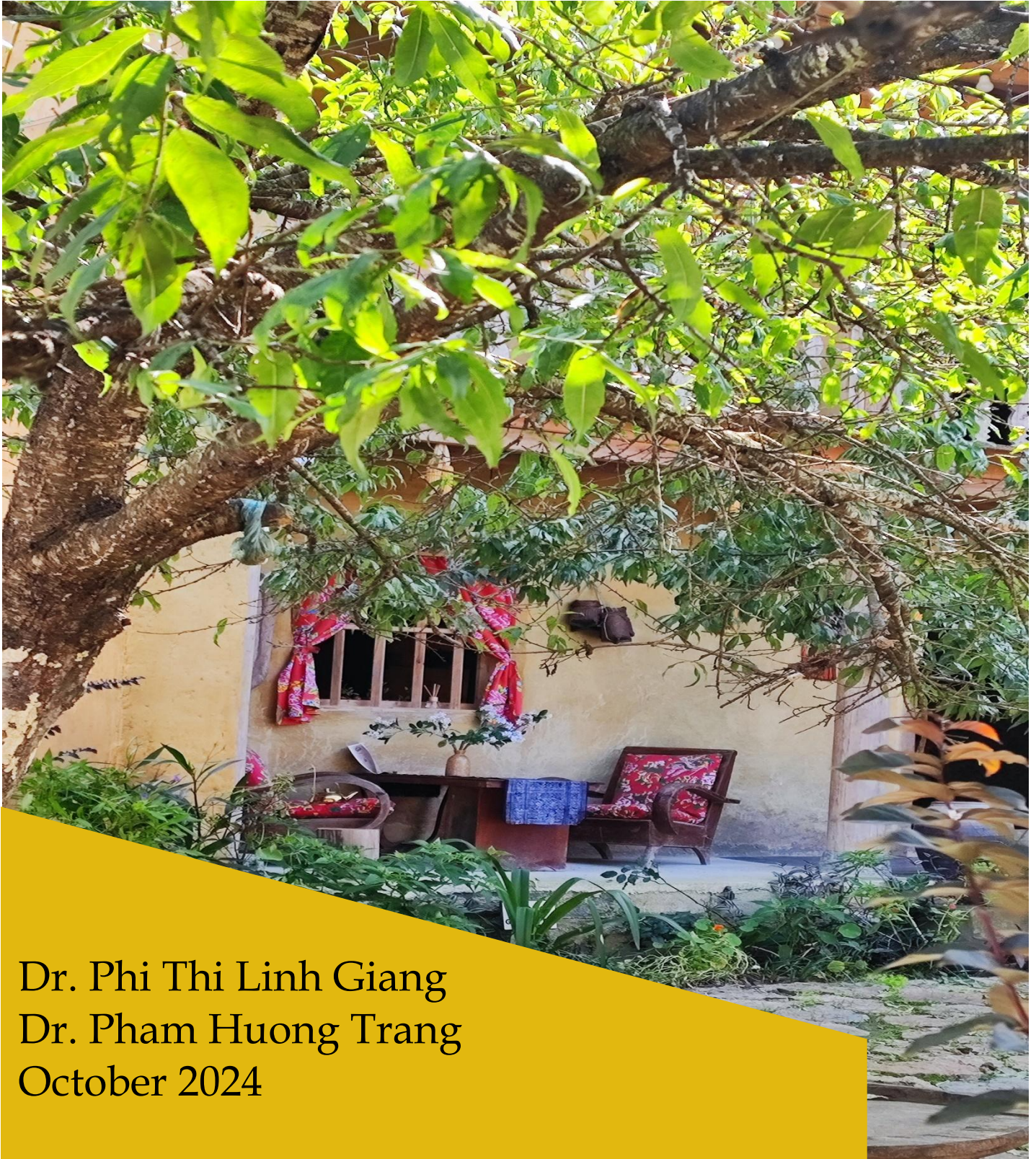


# Research to support Ha Giang Community-based Tourism Regulatory Framework Development



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## Executive summary

This report outlines strategic actions for enhancing community-based tourism (CBT) in Ha Giang, Vietnam, by reviewing existing tourism regulations and standards of Vietnam while integrating internationally recognized frameworks such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) standards and ASEAN CBT standards. The focus is on fostering sustainable tourism development that benefits local communities, preserves cultural heritage, and protects the environment.

key findings from the rapid appraisal of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) frameworks:

- **Inconsistent Legal Basis:**
  - Definitions of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) vary across documents, leading to confusion in implementation.
  - Some frameworks lack a solid legal foundation, complicating understanding.
- **Commitment to National Standards:**
  - National frameworks like Vietnam's TCVN 13259:2020 show commitment to formalizing CBT practices.
  - Variations in detail across documents may hinder effective application.
- **Limited Local Participation Incentives:**
  - Some frameworks emphasize capacity building and local participation, but many provide insufficient guidance on specific incentives.
- **Focus on Sustainable Development:**
  - All documents highlight sustainable practices in CBT, including waste management and cultural preservation.
- **Community Rights and Governance:**
  - Strong emphasis on community rights and governance in frameworks like ASEAN standards.
  - Effective local authority involvement is necessary for sustainable practices.
- **Need for Monitoring and Evaluation:**
  - Significant gaps in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms across frameworks; most address this area only partially.

Ha Giang's CBT sector is characterized by many small villages spread across the province, each showcasing unique cultural identities and tourism offerings. Notable examples include:

- **Nam Dam Village:** Home to the Dao Cham ethnic minority, it has developed a robust tourism model with a strong community management structure, achieving a 4-star OCOP rating.
- **Ha Thanh Village:** An emerging destination with potential for growth but currently lacks coordination among homestay operators and structured management.
- **Thon Tha Village:** Focused on sustainability, it has established community clubs that enhance visitor experiences but requires broader dining options.
- **Lo Lo Chai Village:** Known for its rich cultural heritage and ancient architecture, it faces challenges in diversifying its tourism offerings.

These villages demonstrate both the potential and the challenges of CBT in Ha Giang, highlighting the need for improved regulatory frameworks and capacity-building initiatives.

To capitalize on the existing tourism framework and enhance CBT in Ha Giang, the following actions are recommended:

- **Strengthen Regulatory Frameworks:** Align local regulations with GSTC and ASEAN CBT standards to ensure sustainable practices are embedded in all tourism activities. This includes clear definitions of CBT, sustainable development objectives, and guidelines for local participation.
- **Enhance Governance Structures:** Establish clear governance models that empower local communities in decision-making processes. This includes forming community management committees that represent diverse local stakeholders, ensuring all voices are heard in tourism planning.
- **Capacity Building and Training:** Implement comprehensive training programs tailored to different stakeholders, including local entrepreneurs and government officials. Focus on sustainable tourism practices, hospitality management, and environmental conservation to improve service quality and operational efficiency.
- **Promote Local Participation:** Develop incentives for local residents to engage in tourism activities. This can include job creation initiatives targeting marginalized groups, such as women and youth, ensuring equitable distribution of economic benefits from tourism.
- **Diversify Tourism Offerings:** Encourage villages to expand their product range beyond homestays to include cultural experiences, traditional crafts, and culinary tours. This diversification can attract a broader audience and enhance visitor engagement.
- **Establish Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms:** Create systems for ongoing assessment of CBT initiatives to ensure they meet sustainability criteria. This should include feedback channels for both tourists and community members to facilitate continuous improvement.
- **Foster Collaborations:** Strengthen partnerships between local communities, government agencies, and external stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, private sector) to enhance resource sharing and support for CBT development.

By implementing these strategies, Ha Giang can effectively utilize its existing tourism regulations while aligning with international standards to build a resilient, sustainable community-based tourism sector that benefits both visitors and local residents. Finally, the report offers insights into training needs of Ha Giang tourism for different stakeholders.

# Introduction

Community-based tourism (CBT) in Ha Giang, a northern province of Vietnam known for its stunning landscapes and rich cultural heritage, has seen rapid growth in recent years (with 54 recognised CBT villages in 2024). However, this development comes with significant challenges, particularly in ensuring that tourism is sustainable for both the environment and local communities. Data from Ha Giang's CBT initiatives show that while the region attracts thousands of visitors annually, the benefits often do not fully reach local communities. Challenges such as over-tourism, environmental degradation, and inadequate infrastructure have hindered sustainable progress. Local people, though central to the tourism experience, sometimes lack the training or resources needed to engage effectively with tourism enterprises. Balancing tourism growth with the preservation of Ha Giang's cultural identity, natural resources and equitable benefit distribution requires a robust and well-coordinated regulatory framework.

To address these complexities, this report critically reviews seven existing CBT frameworks from both Vietnam and international sources, identifying best practices and areas for improvement. Additionally, case studies of five Ha Giang CBT projects, based on data collected during field trips, provide insight into the local regulatory context and its effectiveness.

The report also offers recommendations for improving Ha Giang's CBT regulatory framework, such as strengthening community participation, integrating environmental conservation into tourism policies, and promoting collaboration between local authorities, tourism operators, and the community. These measures will help Ha Giang preserve its cultural and natural heritage while delivering long-term benefits to its residents.

By learning from successful CBT models worldwide and tailoring solutions to its specific needs, Ha Giang can enhance local management, foster sustainable development, and ensure that tourism benefits the community while minimizing negative impacts.

## What is community-based tourism?

The concept of Community-based tourism (CBT) is contested and in Vietnam it is often associated with homestay tourism, as many locals started involvement in tourism by offering homestay services to tourists. Homestay tourism however is not CBT, as many homestay may be completely owned by external investors from outside, and local people are merely tourism employees.

CBT is actually about shifting the level of ownership and control with relation to tourism development (not just with accommodation services but with all tourism-related activities) to local community.

*CBT is typically defined in many national tourism laws as tourism that is 'developed based on community cultural values, managed by local communities, and designed to benefit those communities'.*

## Classification of Community-based tourism

Various models of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) exist in practice, each with differing levels of community ownership, participation, and control. Mtapuri and Giampiccoli (2017) identified three prominent CBT models:

### 1. CBT Community-Owned:

- In this model, the entire community develops and manages tourism through a unified structure, such as community lodges or tours. This approach fosters collective decision-making and ensures that benefits are shared among all community members.

### 2. CBT Individually & Locally-Owned:

- This model does not operate at a community-wide level but consists of multiple local micro and small enterprises offering tourism products and services. Each enterprise functions independently, allowing for diverse offerings but may lack the cohesive management seen in the community-owned model.

### 3. CBT Externally-Owned or Managed:

- This model involves external investors who develop tourism in local areas through specific ownership and management agreements. While these agreements may aim to retain local control and adhere to CBT principles, **if done incorrectly**, they can also create unequal power dynamics, where local communities receive only marginal benefits from their resources.
- Over time, some local enterprises may choose to rent or sell their businesses to external investors, diminishing local control over tourism management and profit-sharing.

According to many national tourism laws, any initiative that does not actively involve community members in its governance, planning and management cannot be rightfully

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***Vietnam's Law on Tourism (2017) defines CBT as a form of tourism that is developed on the basis of community's cultural values, managed, used and benefited by a local community.***

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labeled as CBT. This distinction is crucial for ensuring that tourism development aligns with the principles of sustainability and local empowerment. For instance,

Certain cases highlight **potential misclassifications of CBT**, where initiatives are called CBT but lack essential community engagement in the basic CBT definition. For example, although *H'Mong Pavi Village in Ha Giang, Vietnam* may be advertised as a CBT destination, it comprises mostly external investors and does not meet the fundamental requirement of sufficient local community involvement and control necessary for true CBT classification.



Source: Facebook lang H mong Pavi

# What is a CBT regulatory framework?

Even when the level of local ownership is high, maximising tourism benefits and minimising negative tourism impacts to local community is still a significant challenge.

*A community-based tourism (CBT) regulatory framework thus refers to the set of laws, policies, guidelines, and standards that govern the development, management, and sustainability of tourism initiatives that are owned and/or operated by local communities.*

## Key components of a CBT regulatory framework

To effectively manage tourism activities and achieve sustainable tourism development, a Community-Based Tourism (CBT) regulatory framework must extend beyond standard regulations. It should encompass several key components that prioritize sustainability and community empowerment.

### 1. Legal Definitions and Standards

- **Definition of CBT:** CBT may be defined differently according to the context and perceptions of stakeholders.
- **National Standards:** Countries can establish specific standards for CBT services, such as Vietnam's National Standard TCVN 13259:2020, which outlines service quality requirements, including guidelines for accommodation, food services, and tour guiding.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Incentives and capacity building for effective local participation

- **Incentives for Participation:** Regulations often include provisions that encourage local individuals and households to engage in tourism by providing incentives for offering services like accommodation, food, and cultural experiences. This is crucial for fostering local involvement and ensuring that tourism profits are reinvested into the community.<sup>2</sup>
- **Capacity Building:** Effective CBT frameworks emphasize the need for training initiatives that empower local communities to manage tourism sustainably. This

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<sup>1</sup> Dan Thanh. (2022, October 28). *What is community-based tourism? Requirements on the quality of community-based tourism services in Vietnam*. Tin tức pháp luật. <https://lawnet.vn/thong-tin-phap-luat/en/khac/what-is-community-based-tourism-requirements-on-the-quality-of-community-based-tourism-services-in-vietnam-106623.html>

<sup>2</sup> Quang, T. D., Nguyen, Q. X., Nguyen, H. V., Dang, V. Q., & Tang, N. T. (2023). Toward sustainable community-based tourism development: Perspectives from local people in Nhon Ly coastal community, Binh Dinh province, Vietnam. *PLOS ONE*, 18(10). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0287522>

includes enhancing skills in hospitality, language, cultural presentation, and business management.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Sustainable development principles

A CBT regulatory framework typically incorporates principles of sustainability, ensuring that tourism development does not harm local ecosystems or cultural heritage. This includes guidelines and indicators for environmental protection and cultural preservation, along with economic sustainability.

### 4. Community Rights and CBT Governance

- **Rights of Communities:** Regulations must guarantee the rights of local communities to participate in decision-making processes regarding tourism development. This includes ensuring that community members have a voice in how tourism is managed, how local resources are used and that they benefit from its economic returns, often through the establishment of governance structures with sufficient local representation. Other legal rights such as land ownership should also be clearly specified.<sup>4</sup>

### 5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Performance Monitoring:** Effective frameworks include mechanisms for monitoring the performance of CBT initiatives. This involves assessing the economic, social, and environmental impacts of tourism on local communities and making necessary adjustments to policies and practices.<sup>5</sup>
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establishing channels for community feedback is essential for continuous improvement and ensuring that tourism practices align with local needs and aspirations.<sup>6</sup>

### 6. Collaboration and Partnerships

- **Multi-Stakeholder Engagement:** Successful CBT frameworks often involve meaningful collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, local communities, and the private sector. This collaborative

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<sup>3</sup> Vu, L. (2023, September 30). *Efforts made to increase attraction for community-based tourism*. Nhan Dan Online.

<sup>4</sup> Phi, G. T., & Pham, L. H. (2022). *7 Community-based Tourism: Challenges and Opportunities*. *Vietnam tourism: Policies and practice*, 103.

<sup>5</sup> Hamzah, A., & Khalifah, Z. (2009). Handbook on Community Based Tourism “How to Develop and Sustain CBT.” [https://www.apec.org/docs/default-source/Publications/2009/12/Handbook-on-Community-Based-Tourism-How-to-Develop-and-Sustain-CBT-December-2009/09\\_twg\\_developCBT.pdf](https://www.apec.org/docs/default-source/Publications/2009/12/Handbook-on-Community-Based-Tourism-How-to-Develop-and-Sustain-CBT-December-2009/09_twg_developCBT.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Phi, G. T., & Dredge, D. (2021). Collaborative tourism-making: An interdisciplinary review of co-creation and a future research agenda. *Critical Issues in Tourism Co-Creation*, 5-20.

approach helps to align interests and resources towards common goals in tourism development<sup>7</sup>

- **Facilitating Knowledge Exchange:** A critical component of collaboration is the facilitation of knowledge exchange among stakeholders. By sharing best practices, experiences, and lessons learned, communities can enhance their capacity to manage tourism effectively. Workshops, training sessions, and online platforms can be utilized to foster this exchange, ensuring that all parties are informed about sustainable practices and innovations in CBT.<sup>7</sup>

In summary, a CBT regulatory framework is a comprehensive set of guidelines and policies designed to empower local communities, ensure sustainable tourism practices, and promote the equitable distribution of tourism benefits. It is essential for fostering a tourism model that respects and enhances local cultures and environments while providing economic opportunities for community members.

## Rapid appraisal of existing regulation frameworks for CBT

To collect existing regulatory frameworks for community-based tourism (CBT), several methods were employed. First, thorough searches were conducted in open databases using targeted keywords such as "CBT regulation framework," "CBT standard" or "Toolkit for managing CBT".

The team scanned through initial results to remove those documents that focus mostly on operational aspects of CBT and do not have many relevant aspects to CBT regulations. Documents that focus on inclusive tourism development in general, without specific reference to CBT are also excluded.

In this report, we chose to evaluate the 7 most representative regulational frameworks developed by large international organisation such as ASEAN standard and national frameworks of CBT in developing countries such as Myanmar and Zibabwe, along with specific frameworks developed for Vietnam. These are:

- **Law on Tourism (2017):** This is the primary legislation governing tourism in Vietnam. It defines community-based tourism as a form of tourism that leverages local cultural values, managed and utilized by local communities. The law encourages local participation in tourism development and provides incentives for individuals and households involved in CBT activities, such as hospitality services and cultural experiences.
- **National Standard TCVN 13259:2020:** Issued in 2020 by Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam, this national standard outlines the quality requirements for community-based tourism services, including guidelines for tour guides, service

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<sup>7</sup> Phi, G. T., Whitford, M., & Dredge, D. (2017). Knowledge dynamics in the tourism-social entrepreneurship nexus. *Social entrepreneurship and tourism: Philosophy and practice*, 155-172.

quality, food and beverage provisions, and the overall management of community tourism activities. It emphasizes the need for local knowledge, cultural preservation, and environmental protection in tourism practices.

- **Toolkit for Monitoring and Managing Community-Based Tourism:** Developed by SNV and the University of Hawaii, this toolkit provides guidelines for local communities to effectively engage in tourism with a focus on indicators for monitoring and evaluation.
- **Zimbabwe CBT Guidelines**  
Developed by JICA, these guidelines define CBT, its benefits, and the roles of the community in CBT development. It covers the development process, monitoring and evaluation, and inclusive CBT development with relevant organizations
- **ASEAN CBT Standard**  
Most frequently used in Southeast Asia. The standard defines CBT as an alternative form of tourism that empowers communities to manage tourism growth and achieve community well-being. It focuses on sustainable and inclusive tourism, with criteria covering community ownership, management, accommodations, tour operators, safety, hygiene, and innovation
- **Handbook on Community-based tourism ‘How to develop and sustain CBT’**  
Developed by Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the handbook provides a comprehensive, step-by-step approach to developing and sustaining community-based tourism, emphasizing community participation, feasibility analysis, planning, organization, program design, guiding, marketing, and monitoring. It is intended to be adapted to the specific needs and contexts of different communities.
- **Myanmar Community-Based Tourism Standards**  
Developed based on GSTC criteria and ASEAN CBT standards, this document outlines specific quality criteria for tourism services, including guiding and food services, and stress the importance of training and capacity building for local communities. The standards serve as non-mandatory guidelines for local authorities and stakeholders, focusing on creating quality visitor experiences and fostering meaningful guest-community interactions. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation are also emphasized to ensure that CBT initiatives meet sustainability and community empowerment objectives.

## Key criteria for appraisal of CBT regulational frameworks

Based on the above general components, specific questions were developed to support the rapid appraisal of the above existing frameworks.

Criteria Headings	Questions
<b>Legal Definitions and Standards</b>	Does the framework clearly define CBT and its key principles?
	Are there national standards or guidelines for CBT services and operations?
	Is there a legal basis for CBT development in the country's tourism laws and regulations?
<b>Incentives and capacity building for local participation</b>	Does the framework provide incentives for local participation in tourism activities?
	Are there capacity building initiatives to empower communities to manage tourism sustainably?
<b>Sustainable development principles</b>	Does the framework incorporate principles of environmental, cultural, and social sustainability?
	Are there guidelines for minimizing negative impacts on local ecosystems and cultural heritage?
<b>Community Rights &amp; Governance</b>	Are the rights of local communities to manage and benefit from tourism clearly defined and protected?
	Does the framework ensure that diverse members in the local communities have a voice in tourism decision-making processes?

<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	Are there mechanisms in place for monitoring the performance and impacts of CBT initiatives?
	Does the framework include channels for community feedback and continuous improvement?
	Are there clear indicators and targets for measuring the success of CBT projects?
<b>Collaboration Partnerships</b> and	Does the framework encourage collaboration among various stakeholders, including government, NGOs, private sector, and local communities?
	Does the framework facilitate knowledge sharing and best practice exchange among CBT practitioners?

## Key findings from the rapid appraisal

The full analysis can be found in Appendix 1. There are 6 key findings based on the analysis:

1. **Inconsistent Legal Basis Across Documents**
  - a. Most documents provide clear definitions of CBT. However, definitions vary in detail and specificity across the frameworks.
  - b. Some documents, like the *Myanmar CBT Standards* and *Handbook on Community-based Tourism*, focus more on general guidelines rather than providing a legal foundation.
  - c. The emphasis on legal clarity is crucial as it sets the tone for how CBT is understood and implemented in each country/region.
  
2. **National Standards show commitment in formalising CBT practices**
  - a. National frameworks such as *Vietnam's TCVN 13259:2020*, *Myanmar's Standards*, and *ASEAN CBT Standard* include detailed guidelines. However, others, like the *Handbook on CBT*, provide less specificity, offering broader guidelines.
  - b. The presence of national standards in countries like Vietnam and Myanmar shows a commitment to formalizing CBT practices, but varying levels of detail across the documents highlight potential inconsistencies in application.
  
3. **Limited Incentives for Local Participation and Insufficient Capacity Building Guidance**

- a. Several documents, including the *ASEAN CBT Standard* and *Zimbabwe CBT Guidelines*, emphasize capacity building and incentives for local communities. These initiatives are key to empowering communities, improving participation, and ensuring CBT sustainability.
- b. However, frameworks like the *Vietnam Law on Tourism* and *Myanmar Standards* provide only partial or general guidance, reflecting a gap in specific incentive mechanisms or local empowerment strategies.

#### 4. **Strong focus on Sustainable development practices**

- a. This is the only component where all 7 documents consistently covered, showing strong alignment of CBT with sustainable development through its conception and definitions. Each document specifies slightly different practices, but the common theme can be found in managing waste, protect environment and enhancing cultural integrity, cultural traditions and local values.

#### 5. **Strong emphasis on Community rights and governance**

- a. In terms of community rights, *ASEAN CBT Standards*, and *Myanmar CBT Standards* (also develop based on ASEAN CBT Standards) offer detailed criteria which define the role and protect the rights of local communities in tourism activities. *Toolkit for Monitoring and Managing Community-Based Tourism* specify indicators for gender equity and social inclusion, especially in relation to land/tourism business ownership
- b. Local authority involvement is essential for ensuring that CBT practices are sustainable and properly regulated at the grassroots level.
- c. All documents touch on local governance aspects and offer very good guidelines to support policymakers, highlighting the importance of establishing local board of management or various community organizations to ensure diverse members of the local community have a voice in tourism making

#### 6. **Lack of Focus on Monitoring and Evaluation**

- a. Monitoring tools, when integrated into regulatory frameworks, ensure that CBT initiatives remain aligned with national goals and local community needs.
- b. While monitoring is critical for ensuring sustainable CBT, out of all the components, this is the part where most frameworks only partially or not touch on, indicating a gap in the current practices of CBT planning and management.
  - The *Toolkit for Monitoring and Managing CBT* is the only document out of the 7 that emphasizes monitoring but is more focused on performance tracking rather than regulatory clarity. This document however can still serve to inform policymakers, with various specific indicators and targets for CBT.
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## Ha Giang Community-based Tourism case studies

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*The team conducted field trips to CBT areas in Ha Giang in 2024 to help to provide firsthand insights into the regulatory frameworks in practice. During these visits, acquiring internal CBT documents from local community organizations, such as operational guidelines, community agreements, and sustainability plans, can offer a deeper understanding of how regulations are implemented at the grassroots level. Engaging with community leaders and stakeholders during these field trips can also facilitate discussions about their experiences with existing regulations and any challenges they face, enriching the overall data collection process. We also analyse strengths and weaknesses of each CBT governance model and implications for developing CBT regulations for the province.*

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## Case 1: Nam Dam Village



### Overview

Nam Dam village, located in Quan Ba District, Ha Giang province, has been developing community-based tourism since 2012. The town has seen significant tourism growth, with over 6,000 overnight stays recorded recently, showing a strong recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. Nam Dam is unique because it is home to 100% Dao Cham ethnic minority people, offering visitors an authentic cultural experience.

Out of 64 households in the village, 39 operate homestays, while the remaining focus on agriculture, providing food and resources for tourism activities. The village offers various experiences, including agricultural activities, traditional performances, guided tours with homeowners, sightseeing, and herbal baths. Nam Dam has two performance groups, one for older members and one for younger ones, each with over 10 members.

The village has established a community-based tourism management board under a tourism cooperative, overseen by the town and licensed by the commune. Nam Dam has achieved a 4-star OCOP (One Commune One Product) rating, indicating the high quality of its local products and services.

Nam Dam tourism offers a variety of services that enhance the visitor experience, including homestays, local cuisine, cultural performances, guided tours, sightseeing, and traditional herbal baths. While some homestays provide souvenirs, this offering is not consistent across the board. The range of experiences available contributes to a rich and diverse tourist offering, showcasing the unique cultural identity of the Dao people. However, the inconsistent availability of souvenirs and lack of F&B services outside homestay may represent a missed opportunity to further enrich the tourist experience and provide visitors with tangible memories of their stay.

## Analysis of Key Aspects in Nam Dam's Community-Based Tourism Framework

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<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Implementation Details</b>
<b>Legal Definitions and Standards</b>	CBT Individually & Locally-Owned, with strong local control. Tourism is operated according to Vietnam tourism law, some homestays are recognised by ASEAN CBT standard
<b>Incentives and capacity building for local participation</b>	The village has established a local policy (huong uoc) prohibiting outside investors and mandating the preservation of ethnic and cultural identity. Capacity building initiatives are lacking as new tourism entrepreneurs mostly self-learn Agricultural households supply food for homestays, creating a symbiotic relationship.
<b>Sustainable development principles</b>	However, during peak seasons, food supplies can be insufficient. A communal fund, where tourism households contribute a small portion of their income helps to distribute tourism benefits.
<b>Community Rights &amp; Governance</b>	A community-based tourism management board with 22 members operates under a tourism cooperative. The village oversees the board, which is licensed by the commune. The cooperative and village management boards make vital decisions. Pricing and infrastructure development are approached collectively.
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	The cooperative oversees pricing, and penalties are imposed for individual price increases. However, there is no clear strategy for overall development.
<b>Collaboration and Partnerships</b>	There are partnerships with local tour companies and some online booking platforms. In the initial stage of tourism development, Nam Dam also received support from several NGOs. However, current marketing efforts are limited.

## Key strengths and weaknesses of the regulatory framework in Nam Dam village

Strengths	Weaknesses
Preservation of Authenticity	Impact on Traditional Living Arrangements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local regulations ensure that tourism benefits the local community, fostering a sense of ownership among residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The rapid increase in private room rentals may disrupt traditional communal living, leading to social fragmentation and loss of cultural identity.</li> </ul>
Support for Sustainability	Developing Cooperative Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The balance between tourism and agriculture promotes sustainable practices, supporting both the local economy and traditional farming methods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The cooperative, established in 2019, is still developing its operational role, which may lead to inconsistencies in management and decision-making.</li> </ul>
Coordinated Management Structure	Challenges from Homestay Proliferation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An established management structure allows for coordinated tourism development, ensuring alignment with community goals and environmental conservation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The rapid increase in homestays could overwhelm the existing governance framework, leading to potential inconsistencies in service quality and regulatory oversight.</li> </ul>
Community Fund Contributions	Lack of Clear Development Strategy/Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A communal fund, where tourism households contribute a small portion of their income, supports cultural activities and enhances village security, reinforcing community ties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The absence of a clear long-term development strategy may hinder sustainable growth, risking over-tourism and resource depletion if not addressed proactively.</li> </ul>



Rapid growth of homestays in Nam Dam village

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**Key takeaways:**

***The local regulatory framework helps to retain strong local ownership and management of Nam Dam CBT, however there is a lack of overall development plan to ensure long-term sustainable development, especially with regards to the recent rapid growth of homestay number. There is also a lack of recent capacity building initiatives and effective collaboration with external partners.***

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## Case 2: Ha Thanh Village



### Overview

Ha Thanh village, located near Ha Giang city, is an emerging tourism destination. The village is home to the Tay ethnic group and boasts beautiful natural landscapes, including magnificent streams and waterfalls suitable for camping and outdoor activities. Out of 135 households in the village, 9 are currently operating homestays along with many restaurants, indicating a growing interest in tourism development.

The homestays in Ha Thanh Village operate independently, without clear coordination or collaboration among the households. One strength is that tourists, particularly Western visitors, can experience life with local hosts in a tranquil rural setting. However, residents primarily learn and apply styles from various online sources, without firsthand experience or site visits to successful models. This has led to a mix of architectural styles and spatial organization, where some households maintain stable businesses while others fail to meet basic functional needs, such as having adequate restroom facilities for the number of rooms. New homestays, like Mr. Toi's, have been upgraded and can now offer private rooms to groups when necessary.

Ha Thanh offers homestays with a basic experiential focus but lacks unique cultural products or organized tourism experiences beyond accommodation. Currently the village focuses more on offering F&B services for passing by groups (eg those stay in Ha Giang city).

## Analysis of Key Aspects in Ha Thanh’s Community-Based Tourism Framework

Criteria	Implementation Details
<b>Legal Definitions and standards</b>	There is no unified framework or policy guidance for tourism development. Homestays operate independently, with no established community management structure or inter-household coordination.
<b>Incentives and capacity building for local participation</b>	Residents rely on personal initiative and online sources for guidance, with no organized training or external support. There are no formal programs for heritage preservation or tourism training. Subsequently, levels of local involvement in tourism is low.
<b>Sustainable principles</b>	Homestay businesses are expanding, but agricultural households express concerns about environmental impacts and lack of benefit sharing. Current management lacks measures for sustainable practices.
<b>Community rights and governance</b>	There is no village-level governance or coordination mechanism for tourism. Decision-making is ad hoc, with a focus on individual business interests.
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	No formal monitoring or evaluation systems are in place, leading to inefficiencies in fee collection and resource management. Conflicts over shared spaces and resources have arisen among households.
<b>Collaboration and Partnerships</b>	The village lacks organized partnerships with external agencies or tourism professionals. Residents act independently without collaboration, leading to inconsistent service and missed economies of scale.

### Key Strengths and Weaknesses of the Regulatory Framework in Ha Thanh CBT Village

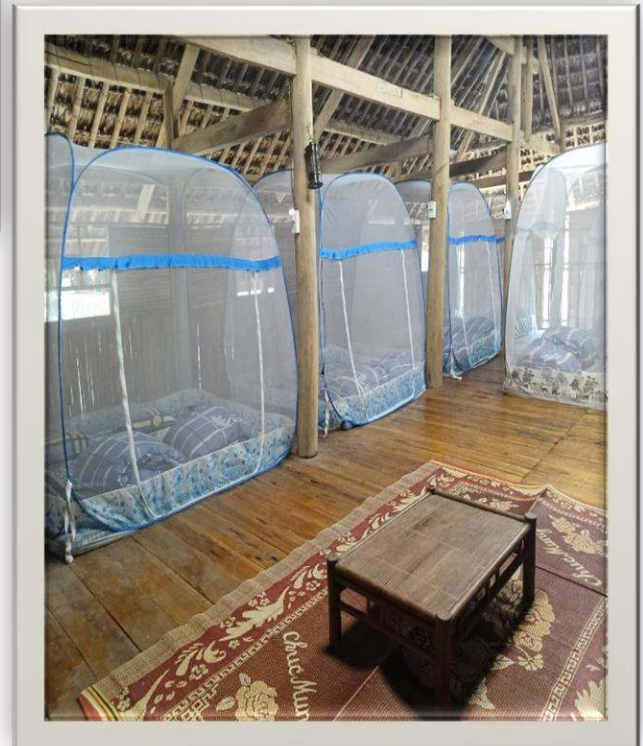
**Strengths:** While limited regulation and policy support currently exists, this opens up avenues for residents to innovate independently in tourism.

**Weaknesses:**

- **Lack of Formalized Management:** The absence of a structured management system may limit the long-term sustainability of tourism initiatives. Without clear guidelines, the village risks inconsistent development and missed opportunities.
- **Insufficient Monitoring and Accountability:** The lack of structured monitoring limits accountability and effective resource allocation, which could impede growth.
- **Limited Collaboration with External Entities:** The current lack of collaboration hampers service consistency and may weaken the village's competitive position in the tourism market.
- **Challenges in Coordinated Development:** Without centralized governance, achieving cohesive tourism development is challenging.

**Key takeaways:**

*Ha Thanh's regulatory framework is for the most part lacking. Establishing a formal governance structure such as local tourism board would help to enhance coordination, improve decision-making processes, and allow for structured planning that aligns with community interests. There is also potential to enhance partnerships with other partners such as local businesses, tourism agencies, NGOs to provide essential bussiness management and product development training, marketing support, and access to a broader range of tourists. With proper external support and training, there is significant potential to improve service quality and enhance cultural preservation.*



A basic homestay in Ha Thanh village

### Case 3 Thon Tha village



#### Overview

Thon Tha Village, located in Phuong Do commune, right next to Ha Giang city, consists of 597 residents of 133 households, with 122 being indigenous and a few seasonal residents. The village began developing community-based tourism (CBT) in 2005 with two community clubs that enhance its tourism offerings: the Intergenerational Self-Help Club with over 30 members, and the Then Singing Club, led by the Women's Union head, with approximately 20 members. The village management team includes representatives from various community groups, such as the village chief, police officers, and heads of local unions.

Thon Tha primarily attracts Western tourists who engage in homestay experiences and outdoor activities such as trekking. Many residents work as tour guides for trekking tours, and the village hopes to attract more Vietnamese tourists in the future. Dining options are limited, with most tourists self-catering or eating within homestays. Previously, Thon Tha relied on booking.com services but has stopped due to high commission fees, which often exceeded 20%. The village now partners with domestic tourism companies, like Amik, with commission fees of around 10%.

Thon Tha's tourism development is gradual, prioritizing sustainability over rapid expansion. Although homestays are common, other tourism roles exist, and benefits are shared via diverse local participation in tourism and the local communal tourism fund. The community maintains sustainable practices, such as using palm leaves for roofing and reducing/moving locations of livestock to improve the living environment for tourists. Last year, the village welcomed around 3,000 tourists, typically staying for one or two nights, with homestay operators contributing a portion of their revenue to the management board.

## Analysis of Key Aspects in Thon Tha’s Regulatory Framework

Criteria	Implementation Details
<b>Legal Definitions and Standards</b>	The village follows several CBT policies: C05 (community tourism development), Resolution 11 (provincial), and C07 (commune-level). It also has a community charter for tourism management.
<b>Incentives and capacity building for local participation</b>	Thon Tha benefits from local and provincial tourism support, which includes traditional house roofing subsidies and communal funds from homestay contributions.
<b>Sustainability practices</b>	The community uses locally sourced materials like palm leaves for roofing (with partial financial support from the central government), and the tourism management board organizes resources for environmental maintenance.
<b>Governance and Community Rights</b>	A local tourism management board, comprising community leaders and various organization heads, oversees tourism activities. Community meetings help allocate roles and manage benefits.
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	Informal monitoring occurs through community meetings, while homestays contribute a small fee per guest to a communal fund used for tourism-related needs.
<b>Collaboration and Partnerships</b>	Thon Tha has received support from YESD, V4D, and local authorities, which have contributed to sustainable tourism initiatives and training.



*Codes of conduct for tourism is shown on the red board at the cultural house of the village*

**Key strengths and weaknesses of the regulatory framework in Thon Tha village:**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p><i>Community Control and Alignment with Local Values:</i> Various Policies maintain community control over tourism, ensuring development aligns with local cultural values. Regular village meetings facilitate discussions on tourism plans.</p>	<p><i>Lack of Specific Legal Definitions for CBT</i> Absence of well-defined legal frameworks for Community-Based Tourism (CBT) may limit standardized practices across the region, leading to inconsistencies.</p>
<p><i>Promotion of Cohesion and Economic Participation:</i> Policies encourage community cohesion and economic participation, fostering a sense of ownership and collective benefit among residents.</p>	<p><i>Limited Financial Support and Training</i> Insufficient financial backing and training in tourism management suggest a need for more structured external support to enhance professional services.</p>
<p><i>Commitment to Sustainability and Cultural Preservation:</i> Strong commitment to sustainable practices, utilizing local materials and promoting cultural heritage through activities like <i>Then</i> singing performances.</p>	<p><i>Governance Structure Limitations:</i> Local participation is encouraged; however, more inclusive decision-making processes are necessary to manage conflicts effectively.</p>
<p><i>Partnership Development:</i> Existing partnerships with organizations like YESD and V4D enhance community skills and awareness, providing valuable support for training and marketing efforts.</p>	<p><i>Inadequate Monitoring and Evaluation Practices:</i> A basic monitoring system exists, but more formalized evaluation practices are needed to strengthen accountability and ensure equitable distribution of benefits.</p>

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**Key takeaways**

***Thon Tha CBT effectively maintains community control over tourism, aligning development with local cultural values and fostering economic participation. Its commitment to sustainability and partnerships with organizations like YESD and V4D enhance community skills and awareness. However, the lack of specific legal frameworks for Community-Based Tourism, limited financial support, and a narrow range of tourism offerings pose challenges. Additionally, inadequate monitoring systems and the need for broader collaboration with external stakeholders hinder growth. Strengthening inclusive decision-making processes and practical training for tourism product development will be essential for adapting to the evolving needs of the community as tourism continues to develop.***

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## Case 4 Lo Lo Chai village



### Overview

Lo Lo Chai, located in the Dong Van district of Ha Giang province, Vietnam, has emerged as a notable community-based tourism (CBT) destination since it began homestay operations in 2011. With the support of Yasushi Ogura, a Japanese national, the village developed its first homestay, laying the groundwork for sustainable tourism that allows visitors to engage with the local Lo Lo ethnic community. The village's strengths lie in its ancient architecture, beautiful landscapes, and rich cuisine.

Currently, there are around 40 homestays and 3-4 coffee shops, and many local families have transitioned from traditional agriculture to tourism-related activities, significantly improving their livelihoods. Some households report annual incomes ranging from 200 to 300 million VND annually through tourism.

The village primarily caters to domestic tourists. Its tourism model targets individual Vietnamese travelers willing to pay premium prices, often booking through platforms like Agoda and Booking, along with the occasional groups from tour companies. Western visitors mostly stop by for short visits only due to high accommodation pricing and additional taxes for border security service.

Lo Lo Chai offers a limited range of tourism products and services, primarily focusing on homestays and beverage (coffee/tea houses). Traditional embroidery is a notable potential product, reflecting the village's rich heritage; however, challenges arise in balancing these traditions with the evolving demands of tourists and the cheap Chinese products from the nearby border. To enhance its appeal and ensure long-term sustainability, Lo Lo Chai could benefit from diversifying its offerings beyond homestays, possibly by introducing additional cultural experience or crafts that attract a wider range of visitors.

## Analysis of Key Aspects in Lo Lo Chai's Regulatory Framework

Criteria	Implementation Details
<b>Legal Definitions and Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific mention of legal definitions for CBT in Lo Lo Chai but follow border tourism laws</li> <li>• Architectural preservation policy in place</li> <li>• Licensing system for homestay operations</li> <li>• Some businesses follow OCOP and Unesco Geopark standards</li> </ul>
<b>Incentives and capacity building for local participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial government support for human resource training</li> <li>• Proposed entrance fees for village development</li> <li>• Informal support system through Zalo groups</li> <li>• Village head's experience from Sapa fieldtrip</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable principles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on preserving traditional architecture and culture</li> <li>• Local ownership of homestays encouraged</li> <li>• Risk of locals renting houses to outsiders</li> <li>• Benefit distribution within homestay value chain</li> </ul>
<b>Governance and Community Rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Village head plays a central role but need more inclusive decision-making process</li> <li>• Lack of specific rules for business coordination</li> <li>• Proposal for common fund usage, currently without clear guidelines</li> <li>• Community involvement in some decisions but can be overrode by official authority such as from the district or provincial level</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal monitoring through Zalo groups</li> <li>• Lack of formal monitoring and evaluation systems</li> <li>• Proposal for visitor fees and common fund</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration and Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial support from Japanese national</li> <li>• Collaboration among villagers</li> <li>• Limited external partnerships mentioned</li> <li>• Support from provincial government</li> </ul>

## Key strengths and weaknesses of the regulatory framework in Lo Lo Chai:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Transparency in pricing and quality assurance: phone numbers of village management team clearly displayed at the tourism attractions	Lack of Specific Regulations: There are no specific rules for managing and coordinating between independent business households, leading to inconsistencies in service quality and decision-making.
Cultural Authenticity: Emphasis on high-quality products rooted in cultural authenticity attracts visitors seeking genuine experiences. Local contract requires all constructions to follow H'mong methods ( <i>earthen wall houses</i> )	Risk of Outsider Control: The trend of locals renting houses to outsiders under long-term contracts risks losing local control over tourism development. In addition, significant decisions can be made without local input and involve higher levels of authority
Increased Local Participation: Potential for increased local participation can strengthen community ties and enhance the overall visitor experience.	Challenges in Balancing Tradition and Modernization: Striking a balance between preserving traditional practices and meeting evolving tourist expectations presents ongoing challenges for the community.

### **Key Takeways:**

*Lo Lo Chai has experienced significant growth through CBT, contributing significantly to diversify local livelihoods and improve local quality of life.*

*Local contracts require all constructions to follow traditional H'mong methods, such as the *nhà trình tường* (earthen wall houses), which helps maintain cultural authenticity. However, significant decisions regarding external tourism investments can still be made entirely without local input, often involving higher levels of authority, which risks undermining community control. While the model can thrive with increased local participation and high-quality services, the village currently lacks specific rules for managing and coordinating between independent business households. Currently, the trend of locals renting houses to outsiders under long-term contracts also poses risk to local tourism sustainability.*



# Recommendations for CBT Regulatory Framework at the Provincial Level

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***Vietnam has already established tourism laws (Law no. 09/2017/QH14) and national standards for CBT (National Standard TCVN 13259:2020). Efforts to create CBT regulations at the provincial level ideally should align with these existing documents. In addition, incorporating ASEAN Community-Based Tourism (CBT) standards and Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) sustainable principles and indicators can help the province to better align with international practices and support potential future international recognition.***

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## 1. Clear definitions of key concepts.

According to Vietnam Law on Tourism, Article 3, some of the key definitions related to CBT are:

- Community-Based Tourism (CBT): A form of tourism that is developed based on the cultural values of a community; managed, used, and benefited from by the local community.
- Local Community/Local residents: Residents of a specific area who engage in tourism activities and benefit from tourism development.
- Sustainable tourism development: means the tourism development that meets the socioeconomic and environmental requirements, defending the interests of the participants in tourism activities without having a negative effect on the ability to meet tourism needs in the future.

In addition, it is recommended that clear indicators are discussed among relevant provincial stakeholders regarding what constitute sufficient level of local community control in a CBT. The 'Toolkit for Monitoring and Managing Community-Based Tourism', for example, suggest the following indicators:

- Proportion of local to outside entrepreneurs
- Amount of investment provided by local compared to outside sources
- Proportion of businesses run by local residents
- Proportion of tourism employees that are from the local area

## **2. The objectives of the framework should focus on sustainable development for CBT**

Given the definition of CBT, which focuses on key sustainable principles of development. The framework should include clear objectives in relation to the triple bottom line of economic, social-cultural and environmental sustainability. For example:

- Promote sustainable tourism that respects local cultures and environments.
- Enhance the economic benefits of tourism for local communities.
- Ensure community participation in short, mid-term and long-term tourism planning and management.

## **3. Clear incentives for local participation**

While the Vietnam Law on Tourism does not clearly specify what the incentives for local participation are, the *National Standard TCVN 13259:2020* specify that local people directly benefit from employment and skills development. Also, tourism activities are required to have contents related to cultural and natural preservation. Furthermore, it is required to have activities that foster interactions between tourists and locals, thus, provide locals opportunity to participate in the tourism operations. For example,

- Section 3.9, 4.7 Traditional art performance is conducted by local residents, emphasizing authenticity and highlight unique traditions to share their cultural heritage with visitors
- Section 4.2 Hire local staff for tourism information office,
- Section 4.3 Organise tourism activities that create positive atmosphere, encourage interactions between local residents and tourists
- Section 4.3 Develop tourism activities so that tourists can join locals in their daily work/life and communal services.
- Section 4.8 Shops should sell souvenirs produced and made locally, linking to traditional practices of the local community

In addition, the Myanmar CBT Standards (developed based on both Asean CBT standards and GSTC) suggests that the regulatory framework should also promote job opportunities for local residents, especially for underrepresented groups, such as women, youth, and disabled individuals, enhancing their participation in tourism.

This is in clear alignment with GSTC for destination, Criterion D2:

*“Support for Local Livelihoods (D2): Tourism should directly benefit local residents, providing economic opportunities like jobs and support for local businesses. These benefits should be fairly distributed, ensuring access for all community members, especially marginalized groups.”*

In the case studies of Ha Giang CBTs, the establishment of provincial government subsidies/ government funds for housing maintenance (Eg in the case of Thon Tha) or as seed fund local tourism entrepreneurs can further encourage local participation and reduce the risk with investment in tourism.

#### **4. Clear Governance Structures to ensure Community Rights and Participation in decision-making**

The GSTC standards clearly stated in *Community Participation (D1)* that:

“Local communities, including indigenous peoples, must be actively involved in the planning, decision-making, and management of tourism within their areas. Their voices and rights should be respected in tourism developments.”

Zimbabwe CBT guidelines, section 2.1 further stated that:

“Responsibility and decision making resides with the respective communities. This means that the community is not only involved in every stage of development and management of the tourism project but is also empowered with decision-making. Even if the tourism development project is operated by the external resource, participants from the community are involved in planning, decision-making and operations.”

Given the broader scope of the *Vietnam Law on Tourism 2017*, the Provincial People's Committee is viewed as representative of local governance, responsible for overseeing CBT initiatives, ensuring compliance with national laws and local regulations. However, as shown in the case studies of Ha Giang CBTs and international standards, there is a need to set up clear local governance structures to ensure local community rights and participation in decision-making of CBT-related matters.

The National Standard TCVN 13259:2020, section 3.11 specify the structure of CBT community committees formed within each locality:

“Board of Management of Community-Based Tourism: The management and operation unit for CBT includes representatives from the government, local organizations, and community members; it has the functions, tasks, and rights to organize and manage tourism activities at the community tourism site(s) in accordance with legal regulations.”

In the ‘Handbook on CBT: How to develop and sustain CBT’, there is a full guide to develop Community Committee from solely the talents within the community to manage CBT. The community organisation should include every section of the community especially the women and youths to ensure 'buy-in'.

Furthermore, the ASEAN CBT standards, Section 5 (Part 1), stated:

- The CBT initiative is managed by community members through a Committee elected for a maximum 5-year term.
- A community decision-making process exists that identifies what cultural assets and traditions will be shared with visitors.

GSTC standards further added that community rights, supported by governance structures, should also include:

- Access to Natural Resources (D6): Local communities should have guaranteed access to essential resources, such as water, land, and energy. Tourism activities should not deprive communities of these resources, and any restrictions or changes in access due to tourism should be managed in consultation with the affected communities.

- Protection of Land and Resource Rights (D7): The rights of local communities to their land and natural resources must be protected. This includes safeguarding traditional access to natural areas and preventing exploitation or displacement due to tourism development.

Ideally, regular consultations should be held to gather input from community members and local residents should have a say in decision-making, especially with major investments/projects concerning external stakeholders in their local area.

## 5. Incorporating sustainable practices for different stakeholders

The regulation should incorporate principles of environmental, cultural, and social sustainability for different tourism stakeholders. For example, according to *Vietnam Law on tourism 2017*:

Article 19. Development of community-based tourism:

- The People's Committees of communes where community-based tourism is developed shall propagate, disseminate and raise community's awareness; take responsibility for demonstration of the community's commitment to preservation of cultural identity, protection of environment, civilized behaviors towards tourists.
- Organizations and individuals developing community-based tourism shall be responsible for respecting culture and lifestyle, and share benefits obtained from tourism with communities.

Article 20. Rules for formulation of master plan for tourism development

- Minimize negative impacts of tourism development on economy, society and environment.
- Ensure the participation of organizations, local communities and individuals during formulation of master plans; protect both interests of the State and those of communities, interests of regions with those of areas therein.

The *Standard TCVN 13259:2020* also specify in details guidelines for service providers, tour operators and travel agencies according to sustainable principles:

- Section 3.6 The business is legally qualified to operate travel services, as regulated by law, and is responsible for bringing tourists to CBT areas while performing two specific functions: (1) protecting the natural and cultural sustainability of the community-based tourism area; (2) supporting the economic and social development of the community and local region. The business has committed to adhering to the Code of Conduct for businesses operating in CBT areas.
- Section 5.1 Environmental protection and sanitation  
Clear regulations and effective management are in place to enforce guidelines on noise reduction, limiting emissions, and the collection and treatment of waste and wastewater. Natural lighting is used in certain areas. *Waste and wastewater are managed according to established principles, and biodegradable packaging is used*

In term of economic sustainability and benefit distributions, *GSTC standards* state:

“Fair and Equitable Benefit Sharing (D3): The economic benefits from tourism must be shared equitably, ensuring that communities retain a fair portion of the profits derived from tourism activities in their region.”

This is in line with current practices in the case studies of Ha Giang CBTs, where a small part of the profit from operating tourism services is contributed to a local community development fund. However, based on the cases, there should also be transparency and guidelines on what the % of contribution should be depending on local context (eg in early stage of tourism development, local tourism entrepreneurs tend to struggle with finance and hence this fee could potentially be reduced or waived) and procedures for locals to participate in decision-making of how such fund should be used.

Furthermore, the *Standard TCVN 13259:2020, Appendix A.2 details ‘Codes of conduct for economic benefit distribution’*:

- **Community Support:** Businesses actively support initiatives for local infrastructure development and community well-being, such as education, training, healthcare, sanitation, and projects aimed at mitigating the impacts of climate change.
- **Local Labor Use:** Local residents must have equal opportunities for employment and career development, including management positions.
- **Local Procurement:** When sourcing and supplying goods and services, businesses should prioritize local suppliers and engage in fair trade when available and in sufficient quantities.
- **Local Business Support:** Businesses need to support local enterprises in developing and selling sustainable products and services based on the area's natural characteristics, history, and culture.
- **Exploitation and Abuse:** Businesses implement policies against exploitation or abuse in trade, sexual exploitation, or other forms, particularly concerning children, adolescents, women, ethnic minorities, or other vulnerable groups.

## **6. Training and Capacity Building for Local Community**

The National Law on Tourism, Article 19 attributes the role of training and capacity building to the People’s Committees of provinces:

“The People’s Committees of provinces shall research into and select places that have the potential for development of community-based tourism; introduce assistance policies on initial necessary equipment and provide training in tourism services for individuals and households in the community participating in the provision of tourism services; assist in promotion of community-based tourism products.”

However, given the narrower scope of local CBT, training and capacity building can be better supported by the Provincial Tourism Authority and other relevant stakeholders (such as training institutions, tourism businesses and non-governmental organisations).

The Asean CBT Standards stated that “Tour guides, food and beverage providers, accommodation providers should have access to ongoing capacity building and training

opportunities to increase their skills and knowledge”. In particular, capacity-building initiatives include training for community members on sustainable tourism practices, environmental management, and hospitality services along with awareness campaigns aimed at educating both residents and visitors about the importance of conserving local culture and natural resources

Similarly, the GSTC standards, *Criterion A5: Resident Engagement and Feedback* encourages destinations to build the capacity of local communities by enhancing their understanding of sustainable tourism opportunities and challenges. Training programs aimed at local residents can help them engage more effectively in sustainable destination planning and management.

In the Handbook on CBT: How to develop and sustain CBT, there is also focus on building local leadership, with a specific section on 'Identify and Establish Leadership / Local Champion'.

## **7. Clear guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation, including community feedback channel**

It is important to note that governance structures alone do not guarantee participation of local community in decision-making. In fact, the rapid appraisal review that most of the existing frameworks (including the *National standard TCVN 13259:2020*) only have channels for feedback from visitors, and do not mention channels for feedback from community to ensure continuous improvement.

There is thus a need to set up clear channels and guidelines for frequent community feedback (eg can be both online and offline, formal and informal such as community meetings or via Zalo groups as in the Ha Giang CBT case).

*In Law on tourism 2017*, local community may have input in the initial development of master tourism plan, but not clearly specify continuous feedback mechanisms, unless through higher level of People's committees. While there are roles and responsibilities provided for the stakeholders, clear indicators and targets are also not mentioned.

*Toolkit for Monitoring and Managing CBT* encourages organizing community meetings to discuss and plan monitoring programs, with objectives set in collaboration with stakeholders. A small working group, made up of elected community representatives and related agencies, leads the process, while all other community members can participate, provide input, and assist with data collection. The toolkit also offer diverse sets of indicators to support monitoring and evaluating CBT.

Regular assessments should be conducted to evaluate the impact of CBT on local communities and environments. Ideally, environmental assesment should be conducted even before a new tourism development project starts, to ensure there will be no significant damage to the local environment. Indicators for monitoring and evaluation should be jointly developed with local community. Feedback mechanisms should be established to allow communities to report issues or suggest improvements frequently.
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## 8. Collaborations and partnership

The Vietnam Law on tourism 2017 specifies the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, however given its broad scope, focus mostly on state and provincial levels instead of CBT commune levels. While all collaboration and partnership should comply with this broader legal framework, the National Standard TCVN 13259:2020 offers more details on how this should be carried out at local level:

“The board of management for CBT consists of local government representatives, community organizations, and community members. They collaborate to manage and operate tourism activities in compliance with legal regulations. This structure ensures close coordination between locals and service providers, utilizing local labor and fostering strong relationships with the community to maintain effective tourism management”

The ASEAN CBT standards also proposes code of conduct for tour operators operating in CBT areas:

- Through agreement with the CBT committee, I will limit group size based on carrying capacity of the site and the objective of delivering quality experience to clients that minimise impact on the community
- I will support the CBT Committee in training local guides and wildlife rangers from indigenous and/or local people.

*Toolkit for monitoring and managing CBT* framework further highlights stakeholder involvement, especially between government and non-government agencies and community groups to ensure a mutually beneficial approach for all involved. It also suggests different stakeholder involvement through different phases of planning and monitoring of CBT.

## 9. Recommendations for Enforcement

To ensure compliance with regulations, enforcement terms should be clearly stated in the regulation or via subsequent amendment. It is crucial for stakeholders to understand that violations may lead to penalties, which can include the revocation of licenses or financial fines imposed by the Provincial Tourism Authority.

According to Decree No. 45/2019/ND-CP and Decree 129/2021/ND-CP amendments of Vietnamese government, penalties for violations with tourism law can include:

1. Fines: Monetary penalties for breaches of specific regulations, which can vary in amount based on the severity of the violation.
2. Revocation of Licenses: The Provincial Tourism Authority or other relevant authorities may revoke licenses or permits of tourism businesses that fail to comply with the law.
3. Suspension of Operations: In some cases, businesses may be temporarily suspended from operating until they address the violations.
4. Civil Liability: Businesses may also be held liable for damages caused by their violations.

## 10. Recommendations for Amendment

It is advisable to discuss specific timeline for review and, if necessary, amend the regulations to respond to evolving circumstances and incorporate on-going feedback from the community, ensuring they remain relevant, effective and serves community’s benefits.

# Training needs of Ha Giang tourism stakeholders

## Key stakeholders that are relevant for training plan:

- Ha Giang government leaders at all levels (province, district, commune)
- Ha Giang government officers at provincial level and sub-destination levels (eg Dong Van geopark, Office of culture and information)
- Local entrepreneurs at destinations, who are owners of tourism-related services
- Local residents, who participate directly or in-directly in tourism
- External investors/entrepreneurs who may not have local knowledge

The table below includes a summary of qualitative data collected during the fieldtrip

Stakeholder	Training Needs
<b>Thôn Tha</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training to connect residents with access to funding sources</li> <li>- Market access and customer connection training</li> <li>- Effective use of sales platforms</li> <li>- Support for homestay operators in customer outreach</li> <li>- Training in hospitality skills</li> </ul>
<b>Thôn Hạ Thành</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advanced English language training</li> <li>- Sales techniques through technology channels</li> <li>- Utilization of translation tools like Google Translate</li> </ul>
<b>Lô Lô Chải</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of tour guide services</li> <li>- Enhanced English language skills</li> <li>- Creation of diverse local experience products and souvenirs</li> <li>- Comprehensive tourism product development training</li> </ul>
<b>Đồng Văn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basic tourism knowledge (3 sessions per week)</li> <li>- Training for low-level staff and management skills in tourism operations</li> </ul>
<b>Nậm Đăm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training for tour guides, local cooking, and communication skills</li> <li>- Marketing strategies and English language support</li> <li>- Revitalization of traditional crafts (e.g., Dao weaving) to create experiential products</li> <li>- Assistance in communication strategies during low seasons</li> </ul>

The table belows summarise key training needs of different key stakeholders, based on both the qualitative interviews above and the team of experts' observations during the Ha Giang fieldtrips.

Stakeholder	Training Needs
<b>Ha Giang Government Leaders (All Levels)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Destination planning, branding and marketing processes (in alignment with international best practices)</li> <li>- Sustainable tourism development, in alignment with international standards such as GSTC</li> <li>- How to collect and use diverse tourism data (beyond simple numbers of visitor numbers and spending) to create destination insights for strategic planning and management</li> </ul>
<b>Ha Giang Government Officers (Provincial and Sub-destination)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism management, operations and marketing</li> <li>- Training on comprehensive tourism experience development (eg how to create transformative tourism experience)</li> <li>- Information technology and data management</li> </ul>
<b>Local Entrepreneurs (Tourism-related Services)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basic business management skills (eg financial literacy, human resource, marketing etc)</li> <li>- Market access and sale channels (eg via tour company, Effective use of online sales platforms), especially during off-peak season</li> <li>- Creation of diverse local experience products and souvenirs</li> <li>- Sustainable tourism practices</li> </ul>
<b>Local Residents (Involved in Tourism)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitality skills (eg cooking for diversity, receiving guests)</li> <li>- Tour guide services and interpretation of local cultures</li> <li>- Basic to Advanced English language training depending on current capabilities</li> <li>- Utilization of new technology for services (eg translation tools like Google Translate)</li> </ul>
<b>External Investors/Entrepreneurs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local market analysis and investment opportunities</li> <li>- Understanding local culture and regulations</li> <li>- Sustainable tourism practices</li> </ul>

**Five key findings regarding training needs**

1. **Significant overlap in training needs:** There is considerable overlap in the training requirements of different stakeholders across Ha Giang, as well as the same stakeholders in multiple locations. This presents an opportunity for more unified training approaches.
2. **Lack of centralized or coordinated training:** Despite the overlap in training needs, current training is often conducted separately in specific locations rather than being centralized or offered online. This ad-hoc approach results in inefficient use of resources and limits accessibility for a wider range of participants.
3. **Absence of specialized higher education institutes:** Ha Giang lacks higher education institutions that cater specifically to the training needs of tourism and

hospitality professionals, entrepreneurs, and destination management leaders. This gap hinders long-term development and professionalism in the industry.

4. **Focus on vocational skills:** Most current training efforts are centered on vocational skills, such as cooking and guest reception. However, essential skills like business management, sustainable development, and destination management remain largely unaddressed, leaving critical gaps in comprehensive tourism training for Ha Giang tourism.
5. **Under-utilization of technology and online modes:** Despite the advancements in digital tools and platforms, particularly in English and foreign language training, many training programs still rely heavily on traditional, in-person methods. This reliance limits accessibility and flexibility for learners, especially in regions where resources may be constrained.

## **Recommendations for tourism training plans in Ha Giang**

### **1. Organise both Centralized Training and Localised training**

Based on the table, it is clear that certain training sessions, such as general tourism business management, financial management, and customer service excellence, can be conducted in a central location by inviting all relevant stakeholders from various villages. This approach allows for shared learning and resource efficiency. However, more specialized training, such as cooking and hospitality, should be localized to specific areas where the skills are directly applicable. For example, culinary training is best provided in villages like Nậm Dăm, where local cuisine is a key component of their tourism offering. This combination of centralized and localized training ensures that both broad and specific needs are effectively addressed.

### **2. Keep the training content practical and involve real industry practitioners:**

To ensure effective training, it is essential to keep the content practical by incorporating real assignments grounded in authentic contexts. Aligning the learning and practice time enhances the relevance of the training experience. Many past training sessions occurred before the launch of the CBT services (pre-opening) and were predominantly theoretical, limiting their applicability in real-world scenarios.

Furthermore, training initiatives focused on market connections should actively involve real practitioners from the tourism industry. Collaborating with professionals from tour companies can provide invaluable insights and experiences. For instance, platforms like Airbnb have dedicated staff who support local hosts and can play a significant role in the training process. Their involvement ensures that training is relevant and directly applicable to the needs of the community.

### **3. On-going curriculum for language training**

For language training, such as English, an ongoing curriculum is ideal. This curriculum should clearly map the progress of specific communities, providing measurable outcomes and tailored support for learners. Continuous language development fosters greater proficiency and confidence among participants, making them more adept in practical situations.

### **4. Incorporate technology, online and hybrid training materials**

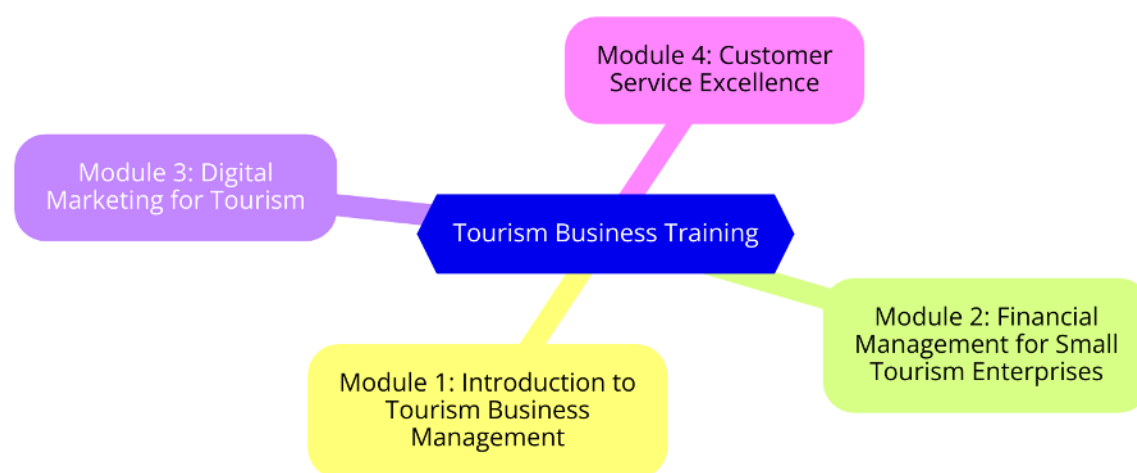
To enhance the effectiveness and accessibility of training programs, it is essential to integrate technology through a hybrid training model that combines online learning with face-to-face instruction. This approach allows participants to engage with interactive online modules at their own pace while benefiting from practical, hands-on experiences during in-person sessions. Australia, for example, developed specific youtube channels with 24/7 access videos to train tourism and service providers how to develop memorable experiences.

## Suggestions for training content

These are very basic and should be discussed further with the stakeholders involved.

### 1. General Training on Basic Tourism & Hospitality Business Management Skills

*Applicable to all villages (and relevant local offers), with both online and offline modes.*



### 2. Specific Training on Tourism and Hospitality Skills for Each Village

*Tailored for each village, addressing their unique needs and available resources. Offline mode with some online supplementary resources.*

- **Foreign Language (usually English):** Provide English language training tailored for the current level of local residents to improve communication with international visitors and enhance service quality.
- **Creating High-Value and Authentic Tourism Experiences:** Focus on developing interactive, culturally rich souvenirs and tourism experiences that reflect the village's heritage, traditions, and natural surroundings
- **Tour Guide Services and Cultural Interpretation:** Train locals in tour guiding and interpreting their culture for visitors, enabling them to share stories, traditions, and local knowledge in a way that enhances the tourist experience.
- **Health and Safety in Local Conditions:** Educate stakeholders on maintaining health and safety standards tailored to the specific local environment, ensuring both tourist and resident well-being during tourism activities.

### 3. General Training on Sustainable tourism principles and practices

*Applicable to all stakeholders*

This training will introduce core principles and practices of sustainable tourism, emphasizing the balance between environmental, socio-cultural, and economic impacts. Stakeholders will learn to adopt sustainable methods that protect natural resources, support local communities, and ensure long-term profitability. Key topics include:

- **Environmental Responsibility:** Training will cover eco-friendly practices such as waste reduction, energy efficiency, water conservation, and minimizing carbon footprints, aligning with GSTC environmental standards.
- **Community Engagement and Cultural Preservation:** Focus on supporting local economies, respecting indigenous cultures, and preserving heritage. Participants will learn to promote responsible tourism that benefits the community while protecting its cultural integrity.
- **Economic Viability:** Strategies for developing financially sustainable tourism ventures that offer long-term benefits for local businesses and residents, fostering economic resilience in tourism-dependent communities.
- **Visitor Management and Impact Monitoring:** Training on how to manage tourist flows to avoid over-tourism and negative environmental or cultural impacts. This includes monitoring tourism activities and implementing practices to protect destinations for future generations.

By aligning with the GSTC standards, this general training ensures all stakeholders are equipped to contribute to a more sustainable, responsible tourism sector in Ha Giang.

#### **4. Specific destination management training**

*Applicable for governmental leaders*

This module equips governmental leaders with essential skills for sustainable destination management through two key areas:

- **Sustainable Tourism Destination Management Frameworks:**
  - Introduces the Destination Management Organization (DMO) model to integrate planning, marketing, and management.
  - Focuses on stakeholder coordination and balancing community, business, and environmental interests for long-term sustainability.
- **Using Big Data for Decision-Making:**
  - Train leaders on how to collect and analyze data (e.g., not just tourist demographics but behaviours and trends etc) to guide planning and optimize resources.
  - Emphasizes data-driven decision-making for predicting trends, managing visitor flows, and enhancing tourist experiences.

## Appendix 1: Summary of existing CBT regulatory framework rapid appraisal

Criteria Headings	Questions	National Standard TCVN 13259:2020 about CBT	Law on Tourism (2017) Vietnam	Toolkit for Monitoring and Managing Community-Based Tourism	ASEAN CBT Standard	Myanmar Community-Based Tourism Standards	Zimbabwe CBT Guidelines	Handbook on Community-based tourism How to develop and sustain CBT
Legal Definitions and Standards	Does the framework clearly define CBT and its key principles?	Yes. Section 3.2	Yes. Article 3	Yes. Box 5. Especially, it offers clear indicator for local control: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of local to outside entrepreneurs</li> <li>• Amount of investment provided by local compared to outside sources</li> <li>• Proportion of businesses run by local residents</li> <li>• Proportion of tourism employees that are from the local area</li> </ul>	Yes. Section 3.2 and 3.3	No. The document only defines the "Community Based Tourism (CBT) Standards".	Yes. The framework clearly states the definition and key principles of CBT.	Yes. Clear definition and general characteristics of CBT have been highlighted.

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Legal Definitions and Standards	Are there national standards or guidelines for CBT services and operations?	Yes. The whole document serves as national standards for Vietnam CBT services and operations.	<a href="#">Does not mention any national standards or guidelines for CBT. However, according to the Vietnam Tourism website, Vietnam is following ASEAN CBT Standards.</a>	Not relevant, as it focuses more on monitoring and managing CBT projects.	Yes, for all ASEAN countries	Yes. The document serves as the national standards for CBT services and operations in Myanmar. There are 200 criteria in the Myanmar CBT Standards. This is developed based on the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC) for Destinations and the ASEAN CBT Standard;	Yes. The document serves as the national standards for CBT development in Zimbabwe.	No. As this handbook is “designed to provide guidance for tourism/rural planners, NGOs, industry players and CBT organisations in deciding whether tourism could work for a particular community and if it is feasible, how to participate in the tourism industry and sustain it over the long term”, national standards or guidelines are not provided. However, overall guidelines are presented to all readers of this handbook.

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<b>Legal Definitions and Standards</b>	<b>Is there a legal basis for CBT development in the country's tourism laws and regulations?</b>	Yes. Section 3.6, 3.8, 3.11 and 4 specify that CBT-related businesses, tour guides and other CBT conducts must follow current national laws	Yes. Article 4 emphasizes tourism development that protects the environment, preserves national culture, and improves the lives of local people. It highlights community participation as a critical component of sustainable tourism development. Article 19 highlights the government support, provincial government role, community responsibilities, and cultural and environmental protection in CBT, which serves as the legal foundation that supports, encourages, and regulates the development of CBT.	Not relevant.	Not relevant	Yes. Apart from the necessitation of the review of the standard to ensure that all criteria abide with the law, the laws are also cited in the criteria groups.	Yes. This guideline aligns with Zimbabwe's national laws.	Not relevant.

<p><b>Incentives and capacity building for local participation</b></p>	<p><b>Does the framework provide incentives for local participation in tourism activities?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> Local people directly benefit from employment and skills development. Also, tourism activities are required to have contents related to cultural and natural preservation. Furthermore, it is required to have activities that integrate local cultural and traditional experiences, thus, provide locals opportunity to participate in the tourism operation.</p>	<p><b>Partially, does not specify clearly what the incentives are.</b></p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> The whole document focuses on empowering locals to participate in tourism</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> Mentioned throughout the CBT definitions, section 5. standards for contribution to social well-being, Appendix 4 - using locally produced craft/food. Appendix 5 - require tour operator to train and use local guides or wildlife rangers.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> The framework establishes financial incentives for local communities by mandating that at least 10% of profits from tourism services, including homestays, contribute to a CBT Community Fund for community development. It also ensures job opportunities for underrepresented groups, such as women, youth, and disabled individuals, enhancing their participation in tourism. Furthermore, the framework emphasizes cultural promotion and intergenerational knowledge transfer, encouraging communities to share their cultural heritage with visitors and their next generations.</p>	<p><b>Partially</b> They are overall benefits of a successful CBT enterprises or a guideline to set up the incentive system. In other words, they are not specific.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> While not specifically state the incentives to be provided, there are guides to explore the expectations of local communities in terms of what they want to gain (in the situational analysis). Also, the guideline emphasize the incentive of employment and training for local communities.</p>
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Incentives and capacity building for local participation	Are there capacity building initiatives to empower communities to manage tourism sustainably?	Partially, not specific	Yes, the role of the People's Committees of provinces is to assist individuals and households on initial necessary equipment, provide training, and assist in promotion for CBT products. However as this is national law, the scope is very broad	Yes, especially under THEME 4: Local Capacity Development, focusing on raising tourism awareness and tourism business training	Yes. Capacity-building initiatives include training for community members on sustainable tourism practices, environmental management, and hospitality services along with awareness campaigns aimed at educating both residents and visitors about the importance of conserving local culture and natural resources, along with best practices in resource management	Yes. The documents clearly outlines standards aim at capacity building and empowerment for local community, including specific roles within CBT operations, awareness of cultural sensitivities, understanding tourism impacts, inclusivity in participation opportunities, safety preparedness, hospitality skills development, and marketing strategies.	Yes. The guideline specifically and clearly list out specific steps and elements to successfully conduct capacity building initiatives, from program design, training topics, lectures, to certificate.	Yes. There are clear guidelines on how to identify training needs and train communities so that they can be empowered regarding the tourism activities & deliver high quality products and services in almost every steps. There is also focus on building local leadership, with a specific section on 'Identify and Establish Leadership / Local Champion'
	Does the framework incorporate principles of environmental, cultural, and social sustainability?	Yes. Environmental (Section 5.1; 4.3.1); cultural (3.2, 4.7); social sustainability (3.6; 4.1.1)	Yes, not only for CBT but also for all tourism stakeholders.	Yes, these principles are included in Working group meeting to determine key issues of tourism development and Indicator developmnet for monitoring	Yes. Throughout section 5, comprehensive principles across sustainability pillars, for both community in general and for tour operators.	Yes. The standards provide clear criteria that promote the protection and preservation of sensitive sites, cultural heritage, and community rights.	Yes. Sections 3.5, 4.3, 5.3 specify the use of local resource sustainably, key objectives/indicators to achieve sustainable development and inclusive tourism	Yes. Not only in the implementation part of CBT, the importance of environmental, cultural, and social sustainability is emphasize in the situational analysis.

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<b>Incentives and capacity building for local participation</b>	<b>Are there guidelines for minimizing negative impacts on local ecosystems and cultural heritage?</b>	<b>Yes.</b> Sections 4.3, 4.7, 5 emphasize protecting local culture and the natural environment through educational activities and eco-friendly practices. They also require proper waste management, clean service areas, and authentic cultural performances by the community	<b>Yes.</b> Article 8. Protection of tourism environment. Article 9. Prohibited acts in tourism activities	<b>Yes</b> There are examples in Step 5 and the list of 190 indicators	<b>Yes.</b> 5.2.4. Standards for maintaining cultural integrity and enriching valued cultural traditions. 5.3. Standards for conserving and improving the environment	<b>Yes.</b> Several criteria are outlined to act as guidelines to not only minimize negative impacts on local ecosystems and cultural heritage but also promote sustainable practices.	<b>Yes.</b> Section 2.1 and 5.3, Respect and Conservation of local values and resources, protect traditional culture and living practices, along with solid waste management	<b>Yes.</b> There are guidelines to measure, identify and prioritize impacts.
	<b>Are the rights of local communities to manage and benefit from tourism clearly defined and protected?</b>	<b>Yes.</b> In the definition of CBT and section 3.6, 3.11	<b>Yes.</b> Article 6. Participation of local communities in tourism development	<b>Yes.</b> Under indicators for gender equity and social inclusion, especially in relation to land/tourism business ownership	<b>Yes.</b> Clearly defines and protects the rights of local communities by emphasizing community ownership, equitable benefit-sharing, legal compliance, empowerment through participation, cultural preservation, and sustainability monitoring.	<b>Yes.</b> Several criteria clearly define the role and protect the rights of local communities in tourism activities.	<b>Yes.</b> The definition of CBT explicitly states that local communities have the right to manage and benefit from tourism.	<b>Yes.</b>

<p><b>Incentives and capacity building for local participation</b></p>	<p><b>Does the framework ensure that local communities have a voice in tourism decision-making processes?</b></p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> Section 3.11 specify the establishment of board of management of community based tourism, comprised of key representatives from local community</p>	<p><b>Partially,</b> the fact that individuals and households are encouraged to provide tourism-related services ensures that they are not the participants but the providers (decision-makers) in CBT operations. However given the broader scope of the national law, the People's Committee is viewed as representative of local governace. Article 20. Rules for formulation of master plan for tourism development 5. Ensure the participation of organizations, local communities and individuals during formulation of master plans; protect both interests of the State and those of communities, interests of regions with those of areas therein.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> It sets out governance areas including: Diversity of stakeholders in tourism decision-making bodies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of tourism plan</li> <li>• Local input into tourism planning process</li> <li>• Community members satisfied with their local tourism representatives</li> <li>• Community members who feel their community has an effective voice in local governance.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Yes.</b>Section 5 (Part 1), including: Standards for community ownership and management: 5.1.1.1 The CBT initiative is managed by community members through a Committee elected for a maximum 5-year term. Standards for contribution to social well-being: 5.2.4.6 A community decision-making process exists that identifies what cultural assets and traditions will be shared with visitors.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> The standards highly emphasize the voice of the local communities in tourism.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> It is clearly specified in the definition of CBT. Section 2.1 Responsibility and decision making resides with the respective communities. This means that the community is not only involved in every stage of development and management of the tourism project but is also empowered with decision making</p> <p>Even if the tourism development project is operated by the external resource, participants from the community are involved in planning, decision making and/or operation,</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> There is a guide to develop Community Organization from solely the talents within the community to manage CBT. The community organisation should include every section of the community especially the women and youths to ensure 'buy-in'</p>
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	Are there mechanisms in place for monitoring the performance and impacts of CBT initiatives?	Partially, only from the tourist point of view	No. While the roles of local authorities and communities are highlighted, the specific mechanisms and indicators are not outlined.	Yes. It outlines 8 clear steps for monitoring CBT projects.	Yes. Part 2, Section 5 outlines a structured approach to assessing performance through evidence-based evaluations, diverse forms of evidence, compliance with specific indicators, a scoring system for quantifying results, regular reporting for transparency, and mechanisms for recognizing achievements to promote continuous improvement in CBT initiatives.	Yes. There are standards in place to measure the performance and impacts of CBT initiatives in terms of sustainability (environmental, socio-cultural and economic) and human rights; number of visitors, income from CBT, and income to the CBT Community Fund; visitor satisfaction. However, there are spaces for improvements.	Partially as it is not specific (only act as an guideline). The document includes guides to develop a comprehensive CBT monitoring system, including the process, monitoring elements, person-in-charge, indicators, methods, monitoring plan and improvements.	Yes. There are clear steps listed out to develop a monitoring plan to measure the performance and impacts of CBT initiatives.

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Incentives and capacity building for local participation	Does the framework include channels for community feedback and continuous improvement?	Partially, there are only clear channels for tourists' feedback but not the local community	Partially. Community may have input in the initial development of master tourism plan, but not clearly specify continuous feedback mechanisms, unless through higher level of People's committees	Yes, it is included in Step 1- 8 of the toolkit. It encourages organizing community meetings to discuss and plan monitoring programs, with objectives set in collaboration with stakeholders. A small working group, made up of elected community representatives and related agencies, leads the process, while all other community members can participate, provide input, and assist with data collection.	Partially, only focus on visitors.	Yes. The CBT Committee holds meetings with the community at least twice a year to share progress and gather feedback. They systematically collect guest feedback on key services and sustainability performance. Additionally, they meet every two months to review feedback and solve issues. Feedback from tour operators (FTOs) is also considered to address potential social or environmental impacts and improve community-based tourism products and services.	Yes. There are channels for feedback from the tourists and local community for continuous improvements through various means. The CBT Enterprise management body is in charge of collecting the feedback.	Yes. Feedback channels are through the various CBT community organisations/as sociations. These associations will give voice to the community, and ensure that their views and ideas are being considered in the planning and operation of CBT.

	<p><b>Are there clear indicators and targets for measuring the success of CBT projects?</b></p>	<p>Partially, only states qualitative indicators and requirements.</p>	<p><b>No.</b> While there are roles and responsibilities provided for the stakeholders, clear indicators and targets are not mentioned.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b>The toolkit provided a list of 190 indicators, covering multiple issues regarding: Environmental (Marine environment; Waste; Water), Economic Gender equity &amp; social inclusion, Poverty, Social &amp; cultural Tourism management, Tourism business Clear monitoring scheme performance.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> Part 2 Section 6 establishes indicators for success based on eight criteria: community ownership and management, social well-being contributions, environmental conservation efforts, interaction between locals and guests, quality of tour and guiding services, food and beverage services, accommodations, and the performance of CBT-Friendly Tour Operators, all aimed at ensuring sustainable and equitable tourism benefits for communities and visitors.</p>	<p><b>No.</b> While there are mechanism in place to measure the performance of CBT projects, clear indicators and targets are not found.</p>	<p><b>No.</b> The document only explains what is indicator and how to set them.</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> There is a list of specific indicators to measure the success of CBT projects. Section 4.2 offer guidelines on how to formulate A Common Vision But Realistic Targets. However, specific targets are not provided as this is just a guideline.</p>
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Collaboration and Partnerships	Does the framework encourage collaboration among various stakeholders, including government, NGOs, private sector, and local communities?	Yes. The board of management for community-based tourism consists of local government representatives, community organizations, and community members. They collaborate to manage and operate tourism activities in compliance with legal regulations. This structure ensures close coordination between locals and service providers, utilizing local labor and fostering strong relationships with the community to maintain effective tourism management.	Yes. It specifies the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, especially state management	Yes. The framework highlights stakeholder involvement, especially between government and non-government agencies and community groups to ensure a mutually beneficial approach for all involved. It also suggests different stakeholder involvement through different phases of planning and monitoring of CBT	Yes. Section 6.1.4 offers indicators and checklist to foster effective partnerships with tour operators, neighboring communities and other relevant CBT stakeholders	Yes. It is specifically states that “Standards would be developed through a rigorous consultation process, including all key stakeholders, to optimise buy-in and ownership among stakeholders for the standards.”	Yes. The guidelines promote partnerships among stakeholders by outlining collaborative frameworks that engage government entities, NGOs, private sector actors, and local communities in tourism development efforts.	Yes. The guideline encourages the partnership between local communities and NGOs, universities, government agencies and tourism industry.

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Collaboration and Partnerships	Does the framework facilitate knowledge sharing and best practice exchange among CBT practitioners?	Yes. Under section 4.1 and 4.2, required tourism employees to receive proper training and have good local knowledge as well as knowledge on CBT operations	Partially, given its broad scope, focus mostly on state and provincial levels instead of CBT commune levels	Yes, knowledge exchange between stakeholders is shown in step 1 -3 of planning/monitoring, scoping key issues and develop indicators	Yes. Section 5.1 It promotes transparency and collaboration through regular consultations and feedback mechanisms, enabling communities to learn from each other's experiences and improve their tourism practices collectively. Additionally, the standard includes guidelines for effective governance and management, which further support the sharing of successful strategies and innovations within the CBT network across ASEAN member states.	Yes. It includes training CBT members to understand guest cultures, encouraging intergenerational knowledge transfer, and managing expectations by sharing accurate information about local customs. Friendly Tour Operators (FTOs) also collaborate with conservation organizations, authorities, NGOs, and local guides, promoting the exchange of sustainable practices and enhancing the quality of cultural and nature interpretation.	Yes. The framework facilitate knowledge sharing and best practice exchange via a structured training guideline and collaborate with organization to create a supportive learning environment.	Yes. It is clearly shown through case studies that knowledge sharing and best practice exchange is encouraged and proved success in CBT operations.