



DEVELOPING COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN VIETNAM



PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The project ran from 2004 to 2009 with the objective of developing a community-driven, sustainable tourism product in Kim Bong Village, that would in turn generate employment and increase the income of the community's 84 households, totaling 400 people, of which 54% were women. The project was part of International Trade Centre's (ITC) Export-led Poverty Reduction Programme (EPRP) which aimed to help poor community producers by enhancing their entrepreneurial capacity and to understand and meet market requirements. EPRP furthermore created and enhanced sustainable and fair market linkages between local producers and tourism markets.

THE CONTEXT

Located close to Hoi An, an increasingly successful tourism destination in Viet Nam, Kim Bong Village has a rich cultural and natural heritage. There were already a number of tourists who were visiting the village, to experience the traditional carpentry workshops and a scenic riverside landscape. However, poor presentation and quality had limited the sales volume of local products and services, thus resulting in the sustained poverty majority of the inhabitants of Kim Bong.



ACTIVITIES

Based on an extensive analysis of the local cultural attractions and tourist markets, an inclusive tourism strategy was designed in collaboration with the Hoi An tourism authorities. ITC delivered tailor-made technical assistance to the newly founded local tourism cooperative, tourism product development and marketing, while the local government financed the construction of a tourism information centre and showroom in Kim Bong. In March 2007, the Cooperative opened a promotion desk in the center of Hoi An to further market its tours. ITC also supported the upgrading of the village walks and tours by providing direction signs and information boards.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

The tourism offer has been upgraded by new attractions such as a village walk and a bicycle trail and bicycle tour. The visitor centre now serves as a focal point for incoming tours. Supported by ITC's on-the-job training, more than 30 villagers have joined the local tourism cooperative and have actively participated in the project. These villagers have for example been trained in office administration, English and as tour guides. Market linkages have been established with five tour operators and two hotels in Hoi An. In addition, Kim Bong Village was included in the Quang Nam Tourism Festivals 2005 and 2006 by local and provincial tourism authorities. The project approach served as an example for three similar tourist villages near Hoi An and was featured as a good practice in sustainable tourism at the APEC Tourism Working Group Meeting in September 2006 supported by the Viet Nam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT). More replication initiatives have been triggered through the training of trainers from other provinces in Vietnam in the Inclusive Tourism concept and process that took place in November 2007 and March 2008. Through the Hue Tourism School, the methodology has been used in regular tourism training courses.

IMPACT ON THE POOR

Several thousand visitors have come to Kim Bong since the inception of the project. The additional revenue for the tourism cooperative generated from entrance fees and different walks and trails was around US\$ 16,000 in the first year. Part of this income is distributed through a Community Fund that benefits all 400 inhabitants of Kim Bong. The new sustainable tourism flows have also triggered more sales of local products and generate new employment opportunities for guides and hospitality service providers in the village.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE INTERVENTION

Linkages were made with the new Vietnam-wide Sustainable Tourism Network, linking government bodies, trade support institutions, enterprises and international organizations. At a local level, institutional partners, such as WWF and SNV, are boosting future development of local craft and tourism products and further replication of the Kim Bong experience.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT



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