Community-Based Tourism in Myaing and Thandaunggyi: Assessing Community Participation and the Impact of CBT Initiatives on Host Communities
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Last but not least, heartfelt thanks also go to participants from both communities involved in this research and the East Asia Institute (EAI) for technical support. This research could not have been done without their time and support.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAM</td>
<td>ActionAid Myanmar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>Another Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B&amp;B</td>
<td>Bed and Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBT</td>
<td>Community-Based Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIT</td>
<td>Community Involvement Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDI</td>
<td>In-depth Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key Informant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNU</td>
<td>Karen National Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOHT</td>
<td>Ministry of Hotel and Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for Social Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Community-based tourism (CBT) is a form of tourism that seeks to empower communities to manage tourism growth and achieve community aspirations relating to their well-being, and includes economic, social and environmental sustainable development.”
1. Introduction

In 2011, Myanmar ended a long period of isolation, resulting in a significant increase in the number of international visitors for the country’s tourism industry. Since 2014, community-based tourism and eco-tourism have begun to emerge in the country alongside mainstream tourism. In addition, the incoming government encouraged community-based tourism initiatives in their 100-Day Plan and as a result, many new potential CBT opportunities have been identified.

This research aims to explore the community’s participation in CBT initiatives and the impact of CBT on host communities including how CBT could be seen as an engine of household income and therefore local economic development. This study specifically focuses on the community-based tourism of Myaing, Magway Region and Thandaunggyi, Kayin State which were both initiated under the previous government.

We outline the methodology of the research while the backgrounds of the two community-based tourism initiatives of Myaing and Thandaunggyi are mentioned prior to presenting the results of the study in the latter part of this paper. Findings of the community’s participation in CBT initiatives and the impact of CBT initiatives on host communities are presented and conclusions are drawn. Through this research, we hope to clearly capture key factors which may prove useful in future comparative research.

In the course of the study, AD has realized that, while CBT in and of itself, may not be the focus of our broader work it has proved to be a vehicle to access a number of our cross-cutting thematic concerns such as youth, women’s empowerment, rural economic development and social enterprises. AD has identified links to a number of the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which we are working towards in Myanmar.

2. Overview

Firstly, this section discusses the concepts, definition and principles of CBT briefly to understand general views on CBT as perceived by different professionals, practitioners and academics. Secondly, tourism policy frameworks in Myanmar developed for the tourism industry during the previous government are discussed. Thirdly, the landscape of the tourism industry in Myanmar and community-based tourism initiatives in Myanmar are briefly reviewed in order to capture current tourism industry trends and CBT operations across the country.

Concept, Definition and Principles of Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

Different ideas and concepts are found in much of the literature regarding CBT. According to Goodwin and Santilli, the participatory approach or so-called “bottom up” method has emerged for community-based projects along with the failure of “top-down” approaches as recognized by both conservation and development organizations. While CBT is developed as a community-based project particularly for the tourism industry, the concept of CBT is a product of the participatory approach derived from NGOs. The concept is also found to be consistent with grassroots development: promoting community participation, equity and empowerment. However, the concept of CBT is used flexibly and there is no consensus as different practitioners hold different views. Regarding the concept of CBT, the Thailand Community-Based Tourism Institute holds as follows:

“Tourism that takes environmental, social and cultural sustainability into account. It is managed and owned by the community, for the community, with the purpose of enabling visitors to increase their awareness and learn about the community and local ways of life.”

---

1 Community-Based Tourism: a success? 2009
2 www.cbt-i.org
According to the ASEAN CBT standard, the concept of Community-based Tourism is presented as follows.

“Community-based tourism (CBT) is a form of tourism that seeks to empower communities to manage tourism growth and achieve community aspirations relating to their well-being, and includes economic, social and environmental sustainable development.”\(^3\)

Based on the concepts held by different institutions, it can be seen that the participation of the community is key and the impact of CBT is also well considered in terms of social, environmental and cultural conservation. Meanwhile, WWF International suggests that a major proportion of the benefits from the CBT needs to remain within the community which thereby becomes the core beneficiary of CBT. With regards to a definition of CBT, there is a variety from different practitioners and no consensus on a specific definition is found. The following is the standardized definition of Community-based Tourism for ASEAN countries.

“Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is tourism activity, community owned and operated, and managed or coordinated at the community level that contributes to the well-being of communities through supporting sustainable livelihoods and protecting valued socio-cultural traditions and natural and cultural heritage resources.”\(^4\)

Principles for CBT are discovered in much of literature and many of the principles are more or less the same as the ASEAN Community-Based Tourism Standard which are as follows:

1. Involve and empower the community to ensure ownership and transparent management;
2. Establish partnerships with relevant stakeholders;
3. Gain recognized standing with relevant authorities;
4. Improve social well-being and maintenance of human dignity;
5. Include a fair and transparent benefit-sharing mechanism;
6. Enhance linkages to local and regional economies;
7. Respect local culture and tradition;
8. Contribute to natural resource conservation;
9. Improve the quality of visitor experiences by strengthening meaningful host and guest interaction, and
10. Work towards financial self-sufficiency.\(^5\)

**Tourism Policy Frameworks in Myanmar**

The tourism industry is set as a national priority sector for the country’s economic development and a number of policies have been developed for the tourism sector. The most significant policies are the 2012 Responsible Tourism Policy; the 2013 Policy on Community Involvement in Tourism (CIT), and the Tourism Master Plan 2012-2020 set out by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in line with guidance from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council criteria.

The 2012 Responsible Tourism Policy encourages local communities to engage in tourism development and to be aware of the impact of tourism on their environment, culture and local economy. The role of women is also taken into account in the policy outline while CSOs and NGOs are encouraged to take a role in assisting in the development and implementation of tourism-related projects.

The policy on Community Involvement in Tourism clearly sets out a way to achieve a medium level of community participation in the development of the tourism sector.

“This means that communities must be consulted and involved in decision-making processes on tourism planning and management, which directly affect their livelihoods. However, final decisions shall be made in coordination with the private sector and with the approval of the public administration.”\(^6\)

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\(^3\) ASEAN Community-Based Tourism Standard. 2013  
\(^4\) Ibid  
\(^5\) Ibid  
\(^6\) Policy on Community Involvement in Tourism. 2013
Another way that the CIT policy encourages community members is to start their own small and medium businesses. They are also welcome to act as investors or joint venture partners with the public or private sector. The core principles of CIT policy include local community participation in tourism development, willingness of the local community, respecting local culture, traditions and beliefs, sound business planning of CBT enterprises, rights over tourism resources and respect for land and land ownership.

The Tourism Master Plan 2013-2020 serves as a roadmap for the future development of the tourism industry in Myanmar to be implemented in line with the principles of the responsible tourism policy. Maximizing the contribution of tourism to national GDP, employment and income generation is the goal of the Master Plan through increasing the number of international visitors to seven million annually by 2020.

Landscape of Tourism and Community-Based Tourism Initiatives in Myanmar

After decades of limited contact with the outside world, with the political reforms started in 2011, the arrival of international tourists has soared from 762,547 in 2009 to 4,681,020 in 2015 and the contribution of the tourism sector to Myanmar’s GDP for 2017 is forecast to be 7.8 percent annually until 2026. Meanwhile, the global tourism trend has shifted to more nature conservation and responsible tourism and away from conventional mass tourism industry, while community-based tourism has been widely adopted as an alternative means for economic development as well as for the protection and conservation of the natural environment.

The government of Myanmar has also identified and encouraged the development of community-based tourism across the country, not only to attract incoming international visitors, but also to promote the involvement of communities in the tourism industry even though community-based tourism is a relatively new concept in Myanmar. There are at least six CBT initiatives operating in Myanmar at the time of this study. These include the Pa-O Self-Administered Zone in Shan State; Indawgyi Lake in Kachin State; Thandaunggyi in Kayin State; the Ayeyawady dolphin sanctuary in Mandalay Region, and Demawso in Kayah State. In addition, ActionAid Myanmar has established a CBT initiative in Myaing Township near Bagan which has been well-received. Community Environment Tourism in Pa-O Region and Indawgyi Lake in Kachin State were developed by Fauna and Flora International. Peace Nexus, the World Conservation Society and the International Trade Centre initiated the Thandaunggyi, Ayeyawady dolphin sanctuary and Demawso projects, respectively. Another seven community-based tourism projects are also planned for coming years.

The main rationale for choosing Myaing and Thandaunggyi among the six CBT initiatives is their good reputation from the outset. Secondly, involvement of international non-governmental organizations is seen in both Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT initiatives. Thirdly, although these two community-based tourism initiatives are in the early stages of operation, AD was aware that there were a number of significant differences between the two operations.

3. Scope and limitations of the study

This study specifically focuses on community participation in CBT initiatives and the impact of CBT on host communities. In this research, community participation mainly refers to the involvement of local people in tourism development through providing services and products to visitors; attending meetings regarding tourism development; presenting their perspectives and ideas for CBT initiatives and involvement in decision-making processes. Aspects of economic, environmental, social and cultural life

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7 Tourism statistic 2015
9 Eleven Myanmar (17.2.2016). Five community-based tourism projects underway
are emphasized as impacts on CBT host communities. Creation of jobs in the community, the well-being of community members; profit distribution among the local people; additional commercial opportunities and services for community members, household income and selling local products are main outcomes of the economic aspects of CBT. Deforestation in the community, water and waste management due to CBT initiatives, awareness of natural resources and a sense of care for the environment are covered under the environmental impacts. Road conditions, access to electricity, and interaction with visitors including foreigners are focused on as social impacts. Cultural preservation, the ways local people live, and the behavior of teenagers due to CBT initiatives in communities are studied as cultural aspects.

Apart from emphasizing the participation of the community in CBT development and the impact of CBT on host communities, the principles of ASEAN CBT standards discussed in the literature review section are also applied as a tool of analysis in order to see whether Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT initiatives fit in those standards since Myanmar is a member of ASEAN.

This research is a small scale study of CBT initiatives with a focus on community participation and impact of CBT initiatives on two host communities only and thus it needs further research on other aspects of CBT initiatives in order to be more comprehensive. We cannot make generalizations about Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT cases for CBT initiatives across the country. We must also highlight a gap in our current understanding of the environmental impact on our two target communities. There has been no access to baseline data or an opportunity to explore details such as tree-felling or increased plastic waste within the interviews and survey questions and this will need to be considered more carefully.

4. A Brief Introduction to Myaing, Magway Region

Myaing is located in the dry zone of Myanmar, Magway Region and the location of community-based tourism initiatives is just a few minutes’ drive from Myaing. The CBT site is also close to the famous ancient city of Bagan and the Nyaung Oo location in Mandalay division. People living across Myaing Township are traditional farmers and their main livelihood is agriculture. The population of Myaing is 225,771 in total. The urban population is 7,706 while the rural population is 218,065 according to the Magway regional census of 2014. The majority of the population in the Myaing area is Burmese and practise Buddhism. Not many attractive tourist spots can be found in the Myaing area, but the lifestyle of the rural people, their culture, traditional dances, and their friendliness are what the foreign visitors find fascinating. Thus, ActionAid Myanmar initiated a community-based tourism project in collaboration with the four villages in Myaing Township.

Background to Community-Based Tourism Development in Myaing

Prior to developing community-based tourism initiatives with the four villages in Myaing Township, ActionAid Myanmar first engaged with the local community through the Yinn Daing Taung Dam implementation project. For local farmers, access to
water for irrigation is crucial for producing rice as the rainfall in the region is not enough for agricultural production. Thus, the main source of water for the farms comes from the dam. Apart from helping the community with agriculture, ActionAid Myanmar wanted to help the local people to generate extra income as they have no income after the agricultural season. Meanwhile, the community has experienced a migration of young people to foreign countries for the purpose of job hunting and to support their families. So, ActionAid Myanmar decided to introduce community-based tourism initiatives for the community.

A prerequisite for the community development projects is that women’s participation is fully integrated. Four villages, namely: KanGyi Taw village 1 and 2, SuLaE Pan village and Inn Yaung village, were finally identified for community-based tourism development and series of consultations with the village leaders and villagers took place. After reaching a consensus with the local people, ActionAid Myanmar collaborated with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. When the Minister paid a visit to the CBT site, he was convinced and agreed to the development of the CBT project. In November 2015, CBT started operations near Yinn Daing Taung Dam.

Myaing’s CBT initiatives target only foreign visitors and have a two-year exclusive contract with PEAK/Journey Adventure Tour Agency. 1,000 visitors were to be sent to the CBT site in 2016 and it is intended to expand in the coming years. The four villages rotate the hosting duty one after another and they are well informed in advance regarding the date of hosting duties before the foreign visitors arrive at the CBT site. For each visitor, 55 USD is charged for visiting the CBT site and it is distributed according to the services provided to the tourists. 10 dollars out of the 55 goes to a community fund spent on community development projects for the villages. The activities that the visitors can do during their stay at the CBT site are biking around this community, planting trees, dancing, wearing thanaka, and singing with a traditional musical instrument. In addition, local and traditional food is served to the tourists.

5. A Brief Introduction to Thandaunggyi, Kayin State

Geographically, Thandaunggyi is located in the northern part of Kayin state, about five hours drive from Yangon and it is covered by many mountains and diverse landscapes. The ecosystems of the town have been well preserved up to now and its cool climate is a big draw. Many attractive places and historic buildings can be found around the Thandaunggyi area, such as the Old British Fort built 100 years ago on a small hilltop and with a unique spiral staircase, the Tea Factory also built 100 years ago to produce tea, the Karen New Year Mountain, and a Hindu temple. The inhabitants of the town are mainly Karen people and the population living in the town totals 6,798. During the colonial era, the town was used as a resort for soldiers and administrators for the purpose of recreational activities. In addition, the town is famous for its folktale about Dawparkho, also known as Nawbubaw, which is now a prayer mountain and is always occupied by pilgrims from different parts of the country regardless of religion. Due to the outbreak of fighting between the Karen National Union and the government in 1989, Thandaunggyi was a forgotten

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10 Mizzima-Community-Based Tourism - A semi-home stay in a dry zone. Aung Thura. 2016
11 Ibid
town for many years. The tension continued until the signing of the bilateral ceasefire agreement between KNU and the previous government led by U Thein Sein in January 2012. The town is now regarded as safe and open to all again.

Background to Community-Based Tourism in Thandaunggyi

Community-based tourism in Thandaunggyi was implemented by the local community with technical support from international organizations the Hans Seidel Foundation and Peace Nexus. The backdrop to community-based tourism of Thandaunggyi derives from the bilateral agreement between the Karen National Union (KNU) and the government led by former President Thein Sein for the sake of keeping sustainable peace. The initiative was also realized as a means for building confidence in the peace process between the KNU and the government while improving the livelihood of the people living in the conflict-affected area in Kayin State.

The very first meeting of Thandaunggyi’s tourism working groups was held in December 2014 after a series of consultations with all stakeholders from both KNU and the government had been held. From the working groups meeting, the structure of the Thandaunggyi Tourism Development Working Groups was set up and preparations for tourism development were carried out (see appendix). Last year, the state government officially issued eight B&B licences to community members to operate and host guests, both foreign and local visitors.

6. Research Findings

This section presents the findings of CBT on firstly Myaing and then Thandaunggyi’s communities. We specifically focus on:-

- Community participation;
- Economic impact;
- Environmental impact;
- Social impact, and
- Cultural impact

Community Participation

Community participation here includes services and products provided by local people to the visitors, involvement of local people in meetings for CBT development, voices and opinions of community members in decision-making processes and whether local people are informed or not when it comes to CBT development.
Community Participation in Myaing

Figure 1: Do you, in any way, provide services or products to visitors?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myaing</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Have you been involved in any type of meeting where you discussed tourism development in your community?

- Many times: 74%
- Once or twice: 17%
- Never: 9%

Figure 3: Have you been asked about your opinion on tourism by those who plan tourism development?

- Many Times: 58%
- Once or Twice: 20%
- Never: 22%

Figure 4: When major decisions concerning tourism development in your community were made, were you informed?

- Many times: 78%
- Sometimes: 19%
- Never: 3%

Figure 5: Do you think that major decisions concerning tourism development in your community are made primarily by?

- The Whole Community: 66.7%
- A Group of People in the Community: 33.3%
The interviews with the KII and IDI also mentioned the participation of the community. The following are quotes taken from KII and IDI interviews.

“Everyone in the community knows about the project and almost all of them are involved in the project.”

“As CBT is a community-based project for the community members, most of the decision making is done by the majority of the members.”

Regarding the participation of women, one of the KII interviewees commented as follows.

“In the past, women were left behind whenever it came to development projects for the community. But now they become independent, run their own businesses and can work with dignity. Besides, their opinions, leadership and cooperation are appreciated.”

**Impact of Myaing’s CBT initiatives:**

**Economic Impact**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Household income has increased because of tourism</td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Younger generations are able to earn additional income from doing tourism-related jobs</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tourism creates many new jobs in the community</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Community members have better well-being because of tourism</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tourism encourages wide profit distribution in the community</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>There are additional commercial opportunities and services related to tourism available for local people</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Local products can be sold at higher prices</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the KII participants also talked about the creation of jobs from CBT projects and increases in income, saying “The job opportunities and income are increased. For the whole year, we had only five months to work in the past but now we can work the entire year.”
## Environmental Impact

### Table 2: Environmental Impact on Myaing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CBT creates a sense of love and care for natural resources and the environment among community members</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CBT increases an awareness of natural resources among community members</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Systematic waste management has been developed because of CBT</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Systematic wastewater management has been developed because of CBT</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CBT creates a waste problem</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CBT creates a water shortage</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CBT creates a wastewater problem</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Deforestation is increasing because of CBT</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Natural scenery is damaged by many constructions related to CBT</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hardly any of the respondents thought that natural scenery would be damaged by the large amount of construction related to CBT. A no-plastic zone is to be found in the community. One of the KII participants said:

“Visitors are encouraged to plant a tree and doing this aims to raise awareness for environmental conservation. We also have special talks by experts like U Tun Lwin, weather forecast expert on natural disaster risk reduction. We have come to have more knowledge on environmental protection through participating in the talks. We did not have this kind of opportunity before.”
# Social Impact

Table 3: Social Impact on Myaing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CBT improved the electricity in the community</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local roads have been developed to a good condition to facilitate CBT</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The water supply system has been improved to facilitate CBT, which also can reduce the problem of drought in dry season</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CBT creates the problem of land sales</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The number of immigrants in the community has increased because of CBT</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The number of emigrants has increased because of CBT</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Drug problems have increased because of CBT</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Conflicts between tourists and community members have increased</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the KII participants also discussed the social impact of the CBT projects as follows.

“Along with the CBT initiatives, healthcare is given priority for the community and we can now access a clinic for both visitors and community members. Starting from this year, education has also been getting better.”
Cultural Impact

Table 4: Cultural Impact on Myaing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Community members have improved their language skills from communicating with foreign tourists</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Community members acquire new knowledge from communicating and discussing with tourists</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CBT helps preserve local culture, traditions, customs and wisdom</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Local people change their way of life due to CBT</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Teenagers are exposed to modern fashion (e.g. short pants, spaghetti straps, strapless) because of the increasing number of tourists</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the KIIIs also mentioned that “the traditional culture was almost fading away, but now it has come alive and we are even able to promote it as we present to the visitors.”
Community Participation in Thandaunggyi

Figure 6: Do you, in any way, provide services or products to visitors?

Figure 7: Have you been involved in any type of meeting where you discussed tourism development in your community?

Figure 8: Have you been asked about your opinion on tourism by those who plan tourism development?

Figure 9: When major decisions concerning tourism development in your community were made, were you informed?

Figure 10: Do you think that major decisions concerning tourism development in your community are made primarily by?
The key informant interviewees also mentioned that a CBT working committee took on the decision-making role. The interview with the key informant interviewee stated that the participation of the community in the CBT initiatives was low in terms of percentage. In addition, IDI participants described community involvement in the tourism development process as follows.

“Only church leaders, B&B owners and some youth interested in these projects are involved. More participation from the community members are needed.”

“The involvement of community members is weak although working groups and B&B committee meet from time to time for the project.”

The level of participation of women and youth was hard to gauge according to one of the key informant interviewees.

**Impact of Thandaunggyi’s CBT initiatives:**

**Economic Impact**

**Table 5: Economic Impact on Thandaunggyi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Household income has increased because of tourism</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Younger generations are able to earn additional income from doing tourism-related jobs</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tourism creates many new jobs in the community</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Community members have better well-being because of tourism</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tourism encourages wide profit distribution in the community</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>There are additional commercial opportunities and services related to tourism available for local people</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Local products can be sold at higher prices</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The KII participants did not seem very satisfied regarding the creation of jobs. One of the participants commented that “Not many job opportunities have been created yet, but it is expected to create more employment as the project is intended to expand after tourism-related training is provided to the community members.” One of the KII participants also said that “the volume of sales for honey, tea and coffee has increased along with the initiation of CBT in the community.”
### Environmental Impact

**Table 6: Environmental Impact on Thandaunggyi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CBT creates a sense of love and care for natural resources and the environment among community members</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CBT increases an awareness of natural resources among community members</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Systematic waste management has been developed because of CBT</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Systematic wastewater management has been developed because of CBT</td>
<td>10.75%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CBT creates a waste problem</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>CBT creates a water shortage</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CBT creates a wastewater problem</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Deforestation is increasing because of CBT</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Natural scenery is damaged by many construction projects related to CBT</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Social Impact

**Table 7: Social Impact on Thandaunggyi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CBT improved the electricity in the community</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Local roads have been developed to a good condition to facilitate CBT</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The water supply system has been improved to facilitate CBT, which also can reduce the problem of drought in dry season</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CBT creates the problem of land sales</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The number of immigrants in the community has increased because of CBT</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The number of emigrants has increased because of CBT</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Drug problems have increased because of CBT</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Conflicts between tourists and community members have increased</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Cultural Impact

#### Table 8: Cultural Impact on Thandaunggyi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Community members have improved their language skills from communicating with foreign tourists</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Community members acquire new knowledge from communicating and discussing with tourists</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Meeting outsiders provides valuable experience for local people as they can learn about different cultures and knowledge from tourists</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CBT helps preserve local culture, traditions, customs and wisdom</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Because of CBT, local people of all ages are proud of their unique culture</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Local people change their way of life due to CBT</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Teenagers are exposed to modern fashion (e.g. short pants, spaghetti straps, strapless) because of the increasing number of tourists</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the IDI participants also highlighted the value of culture as follows:

“We can showcase our traditions, culture and places to visitors. For instance, the Karen traditional dress is rarely worn except on special occasions for the Karen people. Now we have come to value our culture and dress more and more for the visitors are proudly wearing our dress.”
7. Conclusion and the Way Forward

The findings mentioned above have highlighted the participation of the communities in Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT initiatives as well as the economic, social, environmental and cultural impacts of CBT on them respectively. It would be hard to compare the situation of Myaing and Thandaunggyi in every detail as these two CBT projects have a very different background and their operations have only been in place for a year. Nevertheless, from the lessons and experiences of both areas, it would be of interest to explore what kind of model could be developed to further apply and promote CBT in other areas and communities. According to the findings, however, both initiatives have community participation: women’s participation is equal in Thandaunggyi while more women participate in Myaing. This seems to relate to the policy of women’s involvement in community development required by ActionAid Myanmar.

The management of Myaing’s CBT initiatives is mostly done by ActionAid Myanmar at the moment as the community members are not yet capable of handling communications with the tour agency, but it is said the entire management will eventually be transferred to the community. In the case of Thandaunggyi’s CBT, the community members only receive technical support from external partners and the community members themselves have to manage and carry out CBT activities. Individual community members from Thandaunggyi’s CBT own and run small businesses through providing B&B services while community members from Myaing’s CBT cooperate collectively for food and other initiatives. This highlights the involvement of local people in CBT initiatives of Myaing and Thandaunggyi. In addition, a participatory approach or the so-called “bottom up” method fits in the cases of Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT initiatives as the promotion of community participation at the grassroots, equity and empowerment for community members are integrated in CBT initiatives of Myaing and Thandaunggyi.

According to Community Involvement in Tourism Policy (CIT), the participation of the community in Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT initiatives could be said to meet the medium level of community involvement as community members participate in CBT initiatives. However, control of management and decision-making still has some way to go. In terms of community mobilization or CBT initiatives, the four villages of Myaing’s CBT are well organized as ActionAid Myanmar had a good relationship and engagement with the community for several years prior to developing CBT. In the case of Thandaunggyi, community mobilization for CBT initiatives seem a bit weak and this could be partly because Thandaunggyi was identified as an unstable area to travel during the conflict period between the KNU and the government and collaboration between non-profit organization and community members seemed rare, and thus the community mobilization in Thandaunggyi is different from Myaing’s CBT. Another aspect would be that Thandaunggyi’s CBT site is geographically larger than that of Myaing’s CBT. Regardless, community mobilization for CBT initiatives in Thandaunggyi should be done through community advocacy in the long run so that a larger number of community members is well informed and involved in further development of CBT and thereby the participation of local people in tourism development will be promoted.

The CBT initiatives of Myaing and Thandaunggyi are seen to be in line with almost all of the CBT principles set by ASEAN, but neither of the initiatives seem to be paying much attention to linking their existing CBT developments to the local and regional economic growth. How national and local government work together to create an ideal niche for Myanmar in supporting the growth of tourism and in particular its value chain could be strengthened. An understanding of the people who influence the agenda for tourism where community-based participation can be properly scaled up should be studied further. Apart from emphasizing the creation of jobs, income generation, community development, environmental conservation and cultural promotion through CBT development, the integration of CBT initiatives of
Myaing and Thandaunggyi with the local and regional economic growth should be focused in order to support the increase of GDP of the respective region and state. Thus, both Myaing and Thandaunggyi CBT initiatives should put more effort into highlighting the importance of developing CBT for rural and regional economic growth and thereby advocate the benefits of CBT initiatives to policy makers and government.

With regards to the impact of CBT initiatives on the host community in terms of social, economic, and culture, both CBT initiatives seem to have more positive than negative impacts on their communities. This does not mean, however, that this situation will remain the same in the coming years and thus the CBT initiatives of Myaing and Thandaunggyi should be prepared for possible negative impacts of developing CBT on host communities in the long run. In doing so, case studies of CBT initiatives from ASEAN countries and setting strategic policies for CBT initiatives will be of vital importance to handling and lessening the negative impacts on the community. Further exploration of the environmental impact is also needed.

The CBT initiatives of Myaing and Thandaunggyi practise different approaches for operation. As the CBT initiatives of Myaing and Thandaunggyi emerged from different backgrounds and political settings, they possess characteristics of their own. While Thandaunggyi’s CBT initiatives were mainly adopted as a development means and appeared out of the backdrop of keeping sustainable peace between the KNU and the government and to support people living in the conflict-affected area, the CBT initiatives of Myaing emerged from the background of supporting rural farmers and to help them generate extra income after their harvesting period. Both Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT initiatives are officially recognized by government officials and have the involvement of INGOs which provide technical support for CBT initiatives. Most importantly, community participation is taken into account in both Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT development. In the case of Myaing, the connection with the private sector also plays a critical role for the marketing of CBT initiatives. However, it is too soon to assume that the two CBT initiatives of Myaing and Thandaunggyi will be sustainable in the long run.

Local economic development (LED) supports sector-specific programmes to develop competitive value chains and creates opportunities for networks of enterprises to actively participate in the local economy and benefit from greater global market linkages, either through sector driven initiatives or economic clusters. LED encourages improvement in the investment climate which can lead to an enabling environment to create and retain jobs and improve local incomes. LED provides a framework for governance that can stimulate synergies among local and national government partners, while enabling a vision of economic transformation leading to sustainable and inclusive patterns of growth in a defined territory.

As many more CBT initiatives are expected to appear in future and the concept of CBT attracts many more rural communities in Myanmar, CBT developers should learn from the cases of Myaing and Thandaunggyi’s CBT development. In addition, a solid strategy for CBT initiatives, the participation of community members, networking with the private sector and recognition of government are some of the key considerations for new, emerging and potential CBT initiatives.
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Policy on Community Involvement Tourism, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, May 2013


Breugel Liedewij van. Community-based tourism: Local participation and perceived impacts. 2013


Myanmar Tourism (2015): Sector-Wide Impact Assessment. Published by MCRB, DIHR and IHRB.

Myanmar Tourism Master Plan 2013-2020, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, June 2013

Peace building and Community-Driven Tourism Development in Kayin State. Published by Peace Nexus Foundation.

The Responsible Tourism, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, June 2012.

Appendix I: Methodology

For this research, a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative approaches was employed. Survey questionnaires, key informant interviews and in-depth interviews were applied for data collection. 57 surveys, 4 key informant interviews and 2 in-depth interviews were conducted for Thandaunggyi’s CBT projects while 37 surveys, 2 key informant interviews and 2 in-depth interviews were done for Myaing’s CBT initiatives. Survey Questionnaires were adopted from the study *Community-based tourism: local participation and perceived impacts* by Liedewij van Breugel. Purposive sampling and snow ball sampling techniques were applied to the survey questionnaires in order to fulfill the purpose of this study through inviting participants involved in the CBT initiatives. Prior to responding to the survey and interview questions, participants were asked to take part voluntarily in the study and they were allowed to stop or not answer if they found the questions difficult to respond to.

The data collection in Myaing took place from October 3-5, 2016 and in Thandaunggyi from September 26-29, 2016. Surveys were delivered to participants and collected after their completion. For the key informant interview (KII) and in-depth interviews (IDI), interviews were primarily conducted in the Burmese language. The majority of participants were those who are involved in the process of CBT initiatives of respective communities. The manager, chairperson of the CBT initiatives and tour operators were involved as in-depth interviewees while B & B owners, officials from the General Administrative Department and community leaders took part as key informant interviewees.

For the data analysis, SPSS software was employed for the quantitative data and content analysis was applied for qualitative data. A coding table was developed and reading, rereading approaches were used for interpretation and categorizing the subtopic of the data from KII and IDI interview scripts.
Appendix II: In-depth Interview and Key Informant Interview questions for CBT in Myaing and Thandaunggyi

Name/ Age/ Education/ Gender

General questions

• How long has CBT been running in this community?
• Who initiated the community-based tourism development in your community?
• Why did you want to develop CBT in this community?
• Why do you think CBT is best suited to this community?
• What are the attractions and destinations in the community for visitors and tourists?
• Please tell us about the operation of CBT in the community briefly?
• Roughly, how many of tourists and visitors come and visit this place?
• Who are the majority of visitors? (national or international)

Participation in the CBT

• How many of the local community are involved in CBT?
• What is the percentage of the participation of women and youth in the development of tourism in your community?
• Do they participate in the meetings and discussions regarding CBT?
• Who is involved in the decision-making about CBT?
• How are you involved in CBT?

Impact of Tourism

• What are the economic impacts of implementing CBT in the community? (e.g. job opportunities and income increase)
• What are the environmental impacts of implementing CBT in the community? (conservation of forest, water and land)
• What are the social impacts of implementing CBT in the community? (getting better education, transportation, hospital)
• What are the cultural impacts of implementing CBT in the community? (cultural exchange, culture maintenance)
Appendix III: Structure and Timeline of the Thandaunggyi Tourism Development Working Group

Structure of Thandaunggyi Tourism Development Working Group

Karen National Union

Civil Society Organizations

Government

ADVISORY BOARD

IMPLEMENTING ACTION BODY
(at the community level)

SUPPORTING BODY
- external organizations such as HSF, PeaceNexus

Meeting | Outcomes
--- | ---
December 2014 | Structure and objectives of group decided; agreed to apply for overnight stay permit for international visitors
January 2015 | Assessment visits to nearby tourist sites, planned hospitality training
March 2015 | Discussion of the license approval process
May 2015 | Attendance of Ministry of Hotels and Tourism official to advise on licensing process, agreement to send a community member for further hospitality training
July 2015 | Planning for tour conductor training, marketing for foreign tourists, and waste management in the town