



Development of Community Tourism Services in Ha Giang Province

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ABSTRACT

Ha, Giang has become an increasingly attractive destination for both domestic and foreign tourists, thanks to its unique natural and social conditions. In particular, community-based tourism is the highlight of the province's tourism when there is a connection of indigenous people to develop tourism. In order for community-based tourism to really develop, tourism services need to be focused on improving quality and diversifying in order to make a difference and retain visitors. The article finds that Ha Giang's tourism products are quite rich but have not yet created specific features and are copied, so they have not increased the spending level of tourists coming to Ha Giang's community-based tourism. Therefore, the group suggested a number of solutions such as: Organizing to upgrade and expand community-based tourism activities, Strengthen and improve the effectiveness of state management of tourism, promote the participation of the local communities in tourism development... Hopefully, these changes will help improve the quality of tourism services and satisfy visitors to Ha Giang.

Keywords: development, services, community tourism, tourists

1. Introduction

In the past 10 years, Ha Giang province has been a bright spot in CBT development, with diverse topography and geology, and many beautiful sights to attract tourists such as Dong Van stone plateau, terraced fields, Lung Cu flagpole, Meo king palace, Quan Ba heaven gate, Chieu Lau Thi mountain peak... Especially, the features and cultural interferences of 22 ethnic groups living together in Ha Giang have maintained many festivals and long-standing customs such as the festival of the Dao people; Gau Tao festival of the Mong people; fire dance festival of Pa Then; It is the diversity of natural landscapes and national culture that has attracted domestic and foreign tourists to Ha Giang increasingly. In 2019, over 1.4 million people; in which international visitors 225,131 turns, domestic visitors 1,177,235 turns; revenue reached 1,500 billion VND. In 2020, due to the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic, the number of international visitors decreased significantly, but with many promotions, the number of domestic tourists skyrocketed by the end of December 2020, the number of visitors was 1.4 million people with a revenue of 2000 billion VND (Ha Giang Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2020). In order to gain a reputation, visitor preference can see the involvement of local leaders,

businesses, and residents in the effort to provide tourism services to visitors. Currently, the number of accommodation and catering establishments in the province has increased continuously with many prices and quality to meet the requirements of diverse customer groups. Moreover, each district has built different tourist highlights to "hold" tourists to experience Ha Giang longer or have the goal of returning here on the next trip. This is the right direction of the locality to develop sustainable tourism.

However, due to the short time of construction and development of tourism in the locality, the form of tourism is based on indigenous people whose level and understanding in providing tourism services are limited; Due to the requirements of world heritage management and environmental protection, many tourism services still do not meet the needs of tourists such as the number of standard hotels and homestays is not much, the seasonality of tourists Ha Giang's calendar creates a shortage of places to eat and stay in the peak season; the reproduction of cuisine, festivals, tours between districts in the province; The level of exploitation of new attractions is still slow... These issues greatly affect revenue, visitor satisfaction, and reputation for the "smokeless industry" of Ha Giang province. Therefore, the article evaluates the current situation



of tourism service development in the province in the past time to suggest solutions in the future.

2. Theory of community tourism services

2.1. The concept of community tourism

There are many concepts given about CBT such as:

Nicole Hausle and Wolfgang Strasdas (2000) introduced the concept of community-based tourism: "CBT is a form of tourism in which mainly local people develop and manage. The economic benefits from tourism will stay in the local economy." According to this definition, the community is highlighted with the main role in tourism development right in the area they manage. They are also the direct beneficiaries of this activity (Prabhakaran, 2014).

According to the World Wide Fund for Nature: "CBT is a type of tourism in which the local community has control over the development and management of tourism and most of the profits are derived from tourism activities are retained for the community" (Bui Thi Hai Yen, 2012).

According to Article 3 of the Law on Tourism, "Community tourism is a type of tourism developed on the basis of the cultural values of the community, managed, exploited and benefited by the local community".

Thus, a general concept can be given as follows: CBT is tourism that pays attention to the sustainability of the natural, cultural and social environment. CBT is owned and managed by the local community and serves the community itself, with the goal of increasing visitors' awareness and understanding of local people's lives.

2.2. Developing community tourism services

2.2.1. Concept

Tourism service is the provision of travel services, transportation, accommodation, dining, entertainment, information, guidance, and other services to meet the needs of tourists. Tourism service is a combination of services and facilities on the basis of exploiting tourism potentials in order to provide tourists with an enjoyable time, a complete travel experience and satisfaction" - Article 4 - Law on Tourism 2017 Vietnam. Mean:

Tourism services = Tourism resources + Tourist goods and services

CBT development is an economic and social process based on the active participation of local communities. Tourism development can lead to problems for the community, but if there is a clear direction and planning, tourism development will contribute to raising awareness for the community about the possible consequences happening, community opportunities, empowering communities to make decisions, training local communities on management and operations, providing better technical facilities and services to the community, establishing management mechanisms stronger sense of community and interdependence (Cengiz, 2011).

CBT service development is the process of increasing and perfecting tourism services such as travel, transportation,

accommodation, dining, entertainment, information, guidance, and other services to meet the needs of tourists in which the local community directly organizes and provides services to develop tourism, contribute to increase income, preserve national culture and natural resources, environment.

2.2.2. Criteria for assessing the level of community tourism service development

- Increase in community tourism services: Increase in accommodation and catering services; The level of increase in tours and routes; Increased level of infrastructure improvement
- Average spending and number of days of stay of tourists
- Number (proportion) of returning tourists
- Level of customer satisfaction
- Quality of tourism human resources
- Tourism promotion activities

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Situation of development of community tourism services in Ha Giang province

By the end of 2020, the whole province has 618 tourist accommodation establishments with 5,998 rooms/9,312 beds, of which: 02 3-star hotels; 16 hotels of 2-star standard; 33 hotels of 1-star standard; 36 standard hotels; 165 motels checked condition; 366 Homestay is qualified to serve tourists, the number of accommodation establishments in Ha Giang has increased rapidly in recent years due to the strong increase in tourist demand. However, the investment in accommodation facilities is mainly spontaneous, lacking proper guidance and direction. The investment scale is small and fragmented because it is invested mainly in the capital of individuals and families, has little access to bank credit, and lacks cooperation in investment. The quality of equipment is still limited, mainly meeting the needs of sleeping and resting at a minimum; There are not many value-added services for tourists such as mini bar, buffet room, conference room, entertainment area such as swimming pool, gym, sauna, souvenir stall...Accommodation facilities are mainly concentrated in Ha Giang city, Dong Van district, while in districts and destinations with tourism resources, there are still many shortages. Especially in the high season of matches, the demand for tourists increases sharply, making the number of accommodation establishments unable to meet. However, in the low season, many accommodation establishments have almost no guests, the number of empty rooms is very high. The average exploitation capacity in the year ranges from 60-65%. The quality of the accommodation facilities is not high, the management is still unprofessional, has not met the requirements of tourists, especially tourists with high income and service standards, has not brought satisfaction and comfortable for visitors. The quality of accommodation facilities is uneven, the service capacity is limited, especially in the peak tourist season, when the number of tourists increases, the service quality often goes down. In addition, human resources working in accommodation facilities have limited skills, especially communication and foreign language skills.



The current number of restaurants and capacity ensures to serve tourists in normal conditions, but at peak times, it is not enough to serve tourists. The distribution of restaurants/diners is mainly concentrated in urban centers and densely populated areas. Opening times are quite flexible but there are some signature dishes that are hard to find. Night cuisine is still not popular because the demand for night food of locals and tourists is very few, the quality of service is uneven, and the requirements of tourists have not been met. Ha Giang's ingredients and cuisine are diverse and rich in the locality, but the distribution of menus to serve tourists by gender, age, region, nationality, religion... is still inappropriate. Products and goods for tourism: Ha Giang has a lot of local products/specialties that are very attractive to tourists such as mint honey, ancient Shan Tuyet tea, medicinal herbs, and handicraft products. , brocade weaving, trumpet, awl, fine art stone...are produced from 27 craft villages of local people. Souvenir products are typical but still have simple designs and designs, and the level of promotion is not high.

Many festival activities are organized by the province every year to attract more tourists and create diversity for tourism products such as Buckwheat flower festival, Fire dance festival, Long Tong festival, etc. At the same time, many tours and tourist routes are created, including links between districts in the province and between provinces in the region to help tourists have many opportunities. the choice for their journey. From there, increase income for people and localities.

Traffic to the main tourist attractions is convenient, most of the road surface has been paved with asphalt, concrete, and cement. In fact, over the past years, Ha Giang province has paid much attention to investing in traffic infrastructure, including investing in and upgrading the quality of the road surface and many supporting items such as a system of guardrail walls, poles, and signs. Newspapers, convex mirrors at curved points have limited visibility... However, the system of roads leading to tourist attractions is still not many, mainly starting from national highway axes and main provincial roads leading to the main tourist destination. However, there are many large and small tourist attractions scattered along the route, but due to the lack of signboards, not all tourists notice and come.

The branches have strengthened propaganda and promotion with various forms, diversified information channels, closely linked with local and central mass media agencies. In addition, the culture, information, and tourism industry has actively built tourism promotion programs, improved the quality of tourism promotion publications,

participated in many tourism fairs of the region, localities and international fairs in the country, associated with practical events and activities bring efficiency.

3.2. Some results achieved

Currently, the province has been exploiting 12 typical community-based cultural tourism villages associated with new rural construction, of which the Tay ethnic group: 8 villages (Thanh Son, Vi Xuyen district; Na Rang, Xin Man district); Chi village (Quang Binh district); Ha Thanh hamlet, Lam Dong, Tha, and Ban Sui hamlets (Ha Giang city); Khiem village (Bac Quang district); Dao ethnic group: 01 village (Nam Dam, Quan Ba district); Mong ethnic group: 01 village (Lung Cam Tren, Dong Van district); Lo Lo ethnic group: 01 villages (Lo Lo Chai, Dong Van district); Giay ethnic group: 01 village (Tat Nga village, Meo Vac district). In 2019, a number of villages received a high number of visitors, such as Lung Cam village welcomed 50,000 visitors, with a revenue of over 1 billion VND; Lo Lo Chai village, Dong Van district welcomed 25,000 visitors, revenue of over 500 million VND; Nam Dam village, Quan Ba district welcomed 5,380 visitors (an increase of 1,256 visitors compared to the same period in 2017), the revenue reached over VND 1.5 billion; Ha Thanh village and Lam Dong village, Ha Giang city 11,520 visitors, revenue reached VND 3.45 billion, up 20% over the same period in 2017; Chi village, Quang Binh district received 3,981 visitors, revenue of nearly 1 billion VND; The average income of households doing tourism services (homestay) in cultural and tourist villages is on average 30 to 50 million VND/year.

It can be seen that tourism in Ha Giang province has made strong changes in both quantity and quality, making an important contribution to socio-economic development, economic restructuring, attracting foreign investment. investment, job creation; welcoming more and more international and domestic tourists, demonstrating the role of one of the important general economic sectors with profound cultural content, interdisciplinary, inter-regional, and highly socialized. The province's infrastructure continues to be built and completed. The tourism service business network in the province is increasingly developing, investment projects in tourism are increasing; The system of accommodation facilities has increased rapidly. The length of stay of international guests is getting longer and longer; revenue from tourism and tourism services in the 2016-2020 period increased on average by over 14.6%; Tourism products are formed and developed more and more diversified, promotion, promotion, and cooperation in tourism development are promoted. The quality of tourism human resources has many positive changes.

**Table 1. Ha Giang tourism growth targets in the period 2016-2020**

No	INDICATORS	Unit	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
I	Tourism and service revenue	<i>Billions VND</i>	795	913,6	1.150	1.500	2.477
II	Total number of tourists to Ha Giang	<i>In turn</i>	853.746	1.023.653	1.136.963	1.402.366	1.500.000
I	International tourists	<i>In turn</i>	176.537	169,689	273.193	225.131	70.000
	Visitors from China	<i>In turn</i>	155.593	139.774	223.516	185.950	50.000
	Visitors from other countries	<i>In turn</i>	20944	29.915	49.677	39.181	20.000
2	Domestic tourists	<i>In turn</i>	677.209	853.964	863.770	1.177.235	1.430.000
III	Tourism industry workers	<i>People</i>	1.750	2.637	3.614	5872	7404

(Source: Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Ha Giang province)

Table 1, has reflected the increase in the tourism sector from revenue, the number of domestic and international visitors, and industry workers in Ha Giang province in the period 2016 - 2020. Accordingly, revenue from activities The price of tourism has increased continuously over the years, if 2016 reaches VND 795 billion by 2020, the revenue will increase 3.5 times. The number of tourists coming to Ha Giang is continuously increasing, an average increase of more than 100,000 arrivals/year. In particular, Chinese tourists account for a large proportion of the number of international visitors. However, in 2020, due to the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic, the number of international visitors decreased significantly. In return, thanks to the domestic tourism stimulus policies of the government and Ha Giang province, the number of domestic visitors to Ha Giang increased by more than 200,000. As a result, tourism revenue in 2020 still maintained a good growth rate.

4. Conclusion

Although the development of community-based tourism products is in line with the trend and the number of tourists looking to these tourism products is increasing, in fact, community-based tourism in Vietnam in general and Ha Giang province, in particular, is still spontaneous, has not been organized and has not yet entered into reality. The new form of activity only has the meaning of sightseeing, not achieving the purpose of raising awareness, educating the environment, and feeling the unique cultural features of the indigenous community.

Therefore, in the coming time, in order for community-based tourism products to really play a key role in the development of community-based tourism, the authors would like to make some suggestions as follows:

- Restoration and embellishment of cultural and historical relics, festivals in accordance with the orientation of conservation and development of tourism resources: It is necessary to identify the factors that are stable and the factors that fluctuate in the conservation and development of tourism indigenous cultural values. When organizing community tourism in each locality in the province, it is necessary to correctly determine what is the traditional, unique and irreplaceable thing; What are the things that need to be adjusted to meet the needs and tastes of society while still preserving the culture and traditional values of the locality.

The funding to do these things is not only from the investment capital of the central government and the tourism industry, but also gradually increases the contribution of businesses and related organizations and individuals.

- Organization of upgrading and expanding community tourism activities in the direction of natural attraction but with high professionalism: Must create closeness to the community and well meet the needs of community tourists. Create unique cultural features of each community-based tourism activity in each place, so that from these uniquenesses, it can attract the media and people as well as tourists.

- Strengthen and improve the effectiveness of state management of tourism in the area through propaganda, guidance, inspection, and implementation of the law provisions: After each tourist season, each time when guests are welcomed, a meeting is required. point out the advantages, limitations, and causes to adjust and shape the organization for the next time to be more suitable and better. Reward and reward clearly, but it is necessary to resolutely sanction the arising social evils to set an example. The local State Administration of Tourism, the Community Tourism Management Board (of the village, of the village) also need to regularly exchange and learn from other localities' experiences in organizing professional festivals. , focusing on training and fostering relevant human resources.

- Promoting the participation of businesses: Measures should be taken to guide, encourage, invest, upgrade and modernize technical and material facilities such as accommodation facilities, means of transport, sales... open more services and improve service quality for tourists. Early information on plans to organize tourism activities and events to orient and attract tourism businesses to build products and connect and expand guest markets, with appropriate business strategies and closely linked with the Provincial plan. Businesses also need to pay more attention to training and fostering human resources, especially guides and narrators at tourist attractions, both in terms of knowledge, skills, spirit, service attitude, and core human way.

- Mobilizing the local community in the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage and tourism-related values: It is necessary to take the people and put the community here at the center of all activities, especially conservation and development of culture, cultural heritage, historical relics, and



important values. People need to be educated, raise the right and sufficient awareness about community-based tourism, understand that community-based tourism will create jobs, increase incomes and create internal resources to conserve and develop natural resources local tourism. People need to be aware of this issue and understand the limitations that still exist in the development of community-based tourism that can be factors that hurt the honor, pride of local traditions, resources, and their own jobs.

Nowadays, when traveling, everyone wants to participate in events taking place in tourist destinations, to be experienced in a positive sense. Therefore, when organizing community tours, it is necessary to exploit this aspect, creating

conditions for guests to participate in the activities of the community where the tourists visit; creating for guests to be integrated with the rhythm of life, the lifestyle of the local people. Not only do businesses have to do this, but state agencies, local authorities, and especially the residential community where tourists come to travel must also be proactive for visitors to integrate with the community. Only by proactively doing these things can we attract more tourists to visit, and we can avoid the negative and bad effects that may occur when tourists from all over the world integrate into the lives of tourists. Indigenous Peoples. This is a sustainable way to develop community-based tourism to contribute positively to poverty alleviation in the locality.

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