FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT

Access to Viable Markets for SCP Related Products and Services of Lao Tourism MSMEs

Prepared by: Enterprise & Development Consultants Co., Ltd

Submitted to: SUSTOUR LAOS

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ABBREVIATION

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
DMC	Destination Management Company
ECEAT	European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism
EDC	Enterprise & Development Consultants Co., Lt
F&B	Food and Beverage
LNCCI	Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
MICE	Meeting-Incentives-Convention-Exhibition
MoIC	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

I. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Plan International Laos (Plan) is the lead implementer of the SUSTOUR Laos project, a sustainable tourism project financed by the European Union and implemented through a partnership between the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC), the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI), and the European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism (ECEAT). The project target areas are Vientiane Capital, Vientiane Province and Luang Prabang. The project supports tourism businesses and their supply chains to obtain and adhere to Travelife certification standards and practices as promoted by ECEAT. The project utilizes a business-led approach to promote sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices, integrate micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) into supply chains, support local communities involved in tourism, develop eco-friendly solutions and create positive, lasting change for the Lao tourism industry.

This study and subsequent training/coaching are intended to increase the resiliency of MSMEs in the tourism industry supply chain to better cope with the uncertain situations like the pandemic by supporting them to access alternative, high-potential and viable markets for SCP-related products and services (i.e. markets outside of tourism). This includes identifying high potential markets of existing SCP-related products and services of MSMEs as well as identifying opportunities to improve existing or develop new SCP-related products and services which will enable MSMEs to better serve their current markets as well as access to other viable markets.

II. STUDY METHODOLOGIES:

As planned, the study covers 2 main target groups below:

Target Group 1 and 2 – SCP Supply side: a total of **90 MSMEs** (among which 52 respondents or 85% are women) covering Target Group 1, consisting of **66** micro and small businesses in food and beverage (F&B), transportation, handicraft & souvenir, cultural excursions and Target Group 2, consisting of **24** small and medium tour operators, travel agents, destination management companies, hotels and guesthouses, following the Lao Government definition of Small and Medium Enterprises[1]. The main source of contacts comes from the list of participants in the previous project workshops/meetings, business associations and the database of the Enterprise & Development Consultants Co., Ltd (EDC).

Target Group 3 – Demand side: a total of **25** medium to large companies/organizations, **10** of which are within Laos and the remaining **15** in China, Vietnam and Thailand. 70% of the total respondents are women.

A face-to-face interview was conducted with the Target Group 1 and 2 while Target Group 3 was able to reach, thanks to the timely support of the LNCCI and the partner Chambers of Commerce and Industry of China, Thailand and Vietnam. Ideally, in the region, we aimed at the

[1] Small = < 19 staff and Medium =< 99 staff (https://lncci.la/smes/)

enterprises/ organizations that could potentially be either the direct customers or importers of Lao products such as food, handicrafts, etc.

The concept of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) was explained to the respondents before the interview of Target Group 1 and 2 and included in the questionnaire for Target Group 3. The SCP means the following 4 measures/practices that the businesses apply:

1. Using local suppliers
2. Purchasing environmentally friendly products
3. Conserving natural resources
4. Applying socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the SCP is described in the Tourism for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – Goal number 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production.

III. KEY FINDINGS

This part of the report is divided into 2 main parts:

Part 1: Lao MSMEs as the SCP suppliers which presents the current status of the SCP measures/practices in the business, improvements needed, interests in continuing or starting ones and if so, what assistance is required.

Part 2: the Market demand for SCP products/services which describes the existing purchase of Lao products/services and the interest of the organizations in buying more, and the potentials of SCP as a competitive advantage for Lao businesses.

PART 1: LAO MSMES AS SCP SUPPLIERS

3.1 PROFILE OF PARTICIPATING LAO MSMES

Among 90 Lao MSMEs participating in this study, the highest number of respondents belongs to the food and beverage category with 29 enterprises, or 32%. The second largest group is the handicraft sector with 27 enterprises, or 30%. With 12 enterprises each, or 13%, other

subsectors such as lodging and tour operators/travel agencies make up the third category. Other tourism-related services are the information service and tourism sites such as the Luang Phrabang Buddhism Information Center, Phousy site, Xiengkhuan Park, etc. The smallest sub-sector, with only 3 companies interviewed, are transportation businesses.

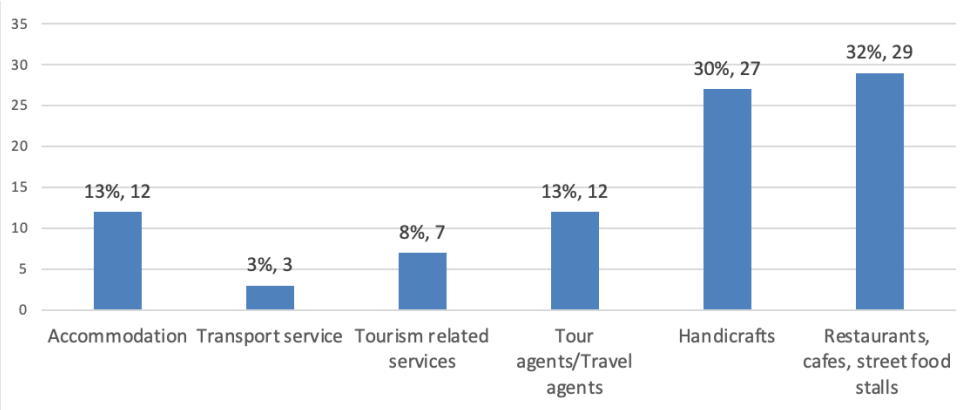


Figure 1: Respondents by Business Sectors

The respondents revealed that their main groups of customers have been changed to Lao and Thai nationals while other major groups of guests before the pandemic, namely Korean, Chinese, French, other European and American have decreased.

No	Nationality	Now	Before COVID	Difference
1	Lao	43%	27%	16%
2	Thai	32%	20%	12%
3	Korean	2%	11%	-9%
4	Chinese	5%	10%	-4%
5	French	2%	7%	-5%
6	Other European	3%	7%	-4%
7	American	5%	6%	-1%

Table 1: Nationalities of the main groups of customers before COVID and now

Even though the main customers have shifted to Lao and Thai, all respondents keep the same products and services.

As far as the employment is concerned, the table below shows that at the time of the study, the COVID-19 pandemic has seriously reduced half of the total employment of the participating businesses. However, the female staff is slightly less affected (594 females are employed now compared to 883 before COVID-19). The most affected businesses were accommodation and handicraft, which is understandable because these sectors employ mainly females.

Business Sectors	Now		Before COVID	
	Total	Female	Total	Female
Accommodation	134	82	272	157
Transport service	36	15	26	9
Tourism related services	106	55	157	77
Tour agents/Travel agents	76	38	99	38
Handicrafts	272	193	468	327
Restaurants, cafes, street food stalls	355	211	466	275
Grand Total	**979**	**594**	**1488**	**883**
Difference Now vs. Before COVID	↓ **52%**	↓ **48%**		

Table 2: Employment by Business Sectors - Present vs. Before COVID

As planned in the Inception Report, the MSMEs were selected reasonably equal among 3 project locations, namely in Luang Prabang Province and Vientiane Capital (37% and 39%, respectively) while Vientiane Province had a slightly less (24%) because some of the target businesses such as tour operators, travel agents, DMC in the provincial tourism hub Vangvieng, usually have their headquarters either in Vientiane Capital or Luang Phrabang.

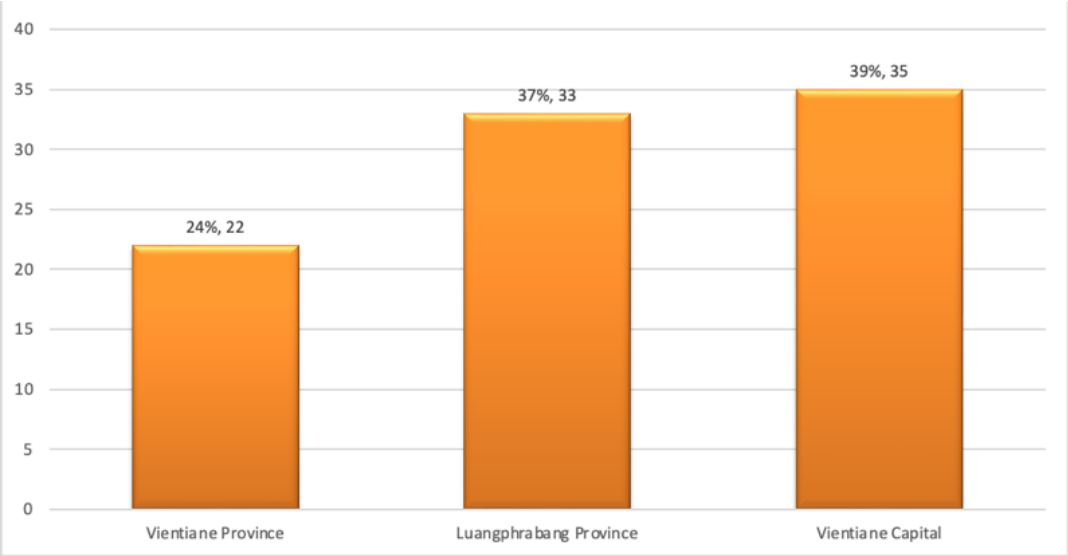


Figure 2: Business Location

The respondents are spread in all target districts as shown below:

Vientiane Capital: 35 businesses
- Chanthabouly: 19
- Sikhottabong district: 2
- Sisattanak: 2
- Saysettha district: 8
- Hatxaiphong district: 4

Luang Phrabang Province: 33 businesses
- LPB city: 29
- Chomphet district: 1
- Pak-ou district: 3

Vientiane Province: 22 businesses
- Phonehong district: 4
- Vangvieng district: 18

3.2 KEY FINDINGS

It's interesting to see that all 90 businesses continue to provide services to the tourism industry after COVID-19 pandemic. It suggests that despite having to scale back or close due to the pandemic, they did not choose to change their primary target market.

Regarding sustainability certificates, only 12 (or 13%) out of 90 enterprises have one, which are Fair Trade, ISO and TRAVELIFE. 40% of those without a sustainability certification say they would like to start one but do not know how, and the same number say they have never heard of one. Eleven companies (16%) think it is not applicable to their business.

The conservation of natural resources was ranked most important (with 84% of respondents indicating it would attract more customers), followed by socially responsible means of connecting with local communities (78%), using local suppliers (74%) and the selection of ecologically friendly products (69%). The chart below describes in more details on each area of SCP measures.

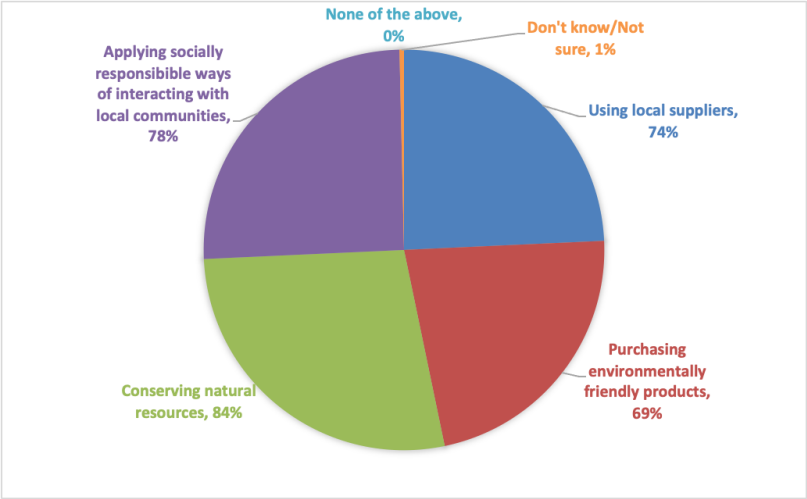


Figure 3: SCP Feature Attracting More Customers to Business

TOPIC 1: LOCAL SUPPLIERS

87 businesses (97%) have activities in supporting local communities such as buying local, services and/or supporting their production. Specifically, they encourage tourists to buy local products, locally produced food, handicrafts, and create jobs for local people, especially women, such as employing them in business, providing women employable skills like weaving, mulberry, banana fiber paper making, involving local people selling souvenirs in the touristic sites without any charge for the space, bringing tourists to villages to experience the local lifestyle, etc.. . Moreover, additional support varies from providing handicraft trainings for women, introducing eco-friendly products such as paper packaging, metal straws, promoting traditional festivals, and allocating spots for local people to sell goods in touristic places. Figure 4 shows the factors that are important to those businesses who have activities with local communities.

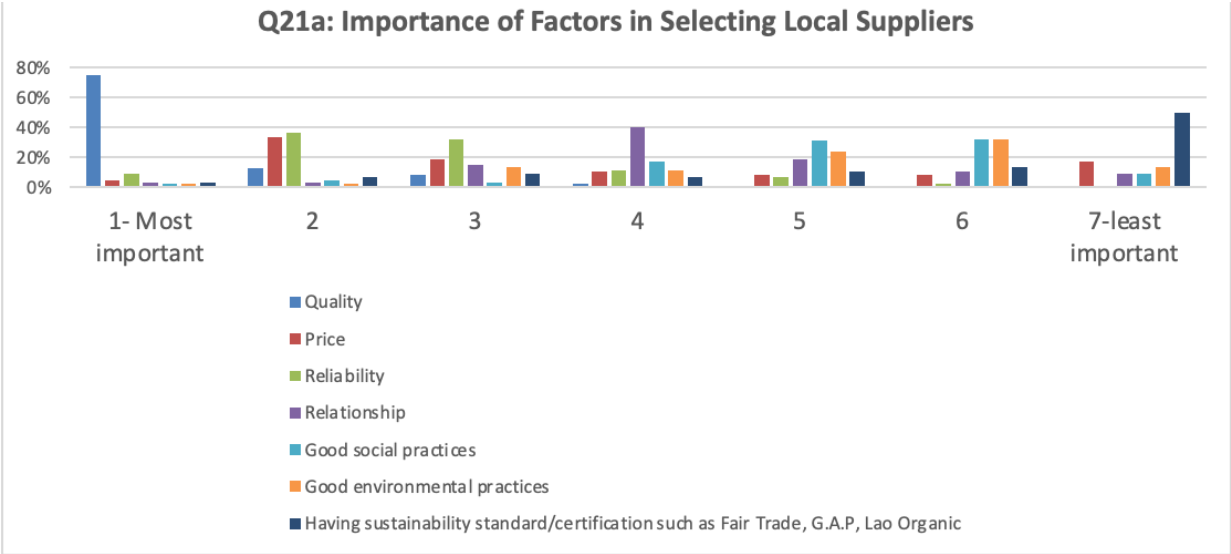


Figure 4: Importance of Factors in Selecting a Supplier by Businesses Using Local Suppliers

The most two important factors for the respondents in the buyers' point of view are **quality and reliability**. Having **sustainability standard/certification** appears least important. Even though the study does not assess the level of understanding of the respondents in terms of sustainability standard/certification, through the SUSTOUR project's experience so far, one could say that it is a rather new topic for the MSMEs and there is room for improvement.

The respondents recommended a number of changes to the operations of the local suppliers that are connected to product quality, a broad product selection, organic food, sustainability requirements, taking into account environmentally friendly packaging, and marketing tools including product stories.

For those businesses who do not involve the local suppliers, **quality (100%)** is ranked as the absolutely important factor for choosing a supplier, followed by **reliability, good social and environmental practices (67%, each)**.

Figure 5: Important Factors in Selecting a Supplier by Businesses Not Using Local Suppliers

78% of respondents are interested in either purchasing more or at least starting to purchase from local communities. Their interests are handicraft and souvenirs and organic food products.

The most important support that the Lao MSMEs need for them to work with the local suppliers better and more often is **expert advice on sustainability management and training**, **access to finance and financial advisory**, **improvement of sustainability practices among suppliers**, and **standards and certifications,** among others.

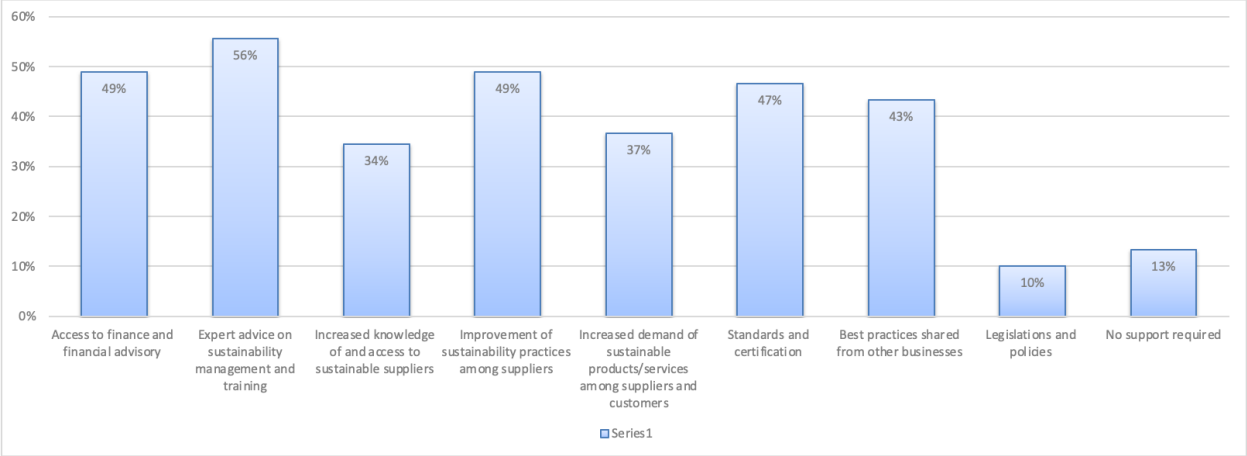


Figure 6: Supports Needed by MSMEs to Work with Local Suppliers

TOPIC 2: ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

The study shows that 74% of the respondents answered that their businesses have bought products that they consider to be environmentally friendly. 22% do not buy at all and the last group with a very small number of only 3% told us that the environmentally friendly products were not related to their business. There is a slightly smaller number of businesses that purchase environment friendly products compared to the practice of involving local suppliers (74% vs. 97%, respectively). Specifically, businesses are using products made from natural materials such as cloth, paper, rattan, cotton, silk, banana leaves, and bamboo. They are looking for improvement in natural dying, creative and new fabric products, paper food packaging, use of silk and some mentioned about keeping the tourist sites clean.

Among those businesses who have not had any practice in this area, 50% are interested in starting it. The products that the respondents would like to buy are products made of natural materials such as cotton, rice, wood, paper and also electric vehicles.

Expert advice and **access to finance** are again ranked as the 2 most critical support for the businesses to be able more environmentally friendly, followed by **improvement of sustainability practices among suppliers**.

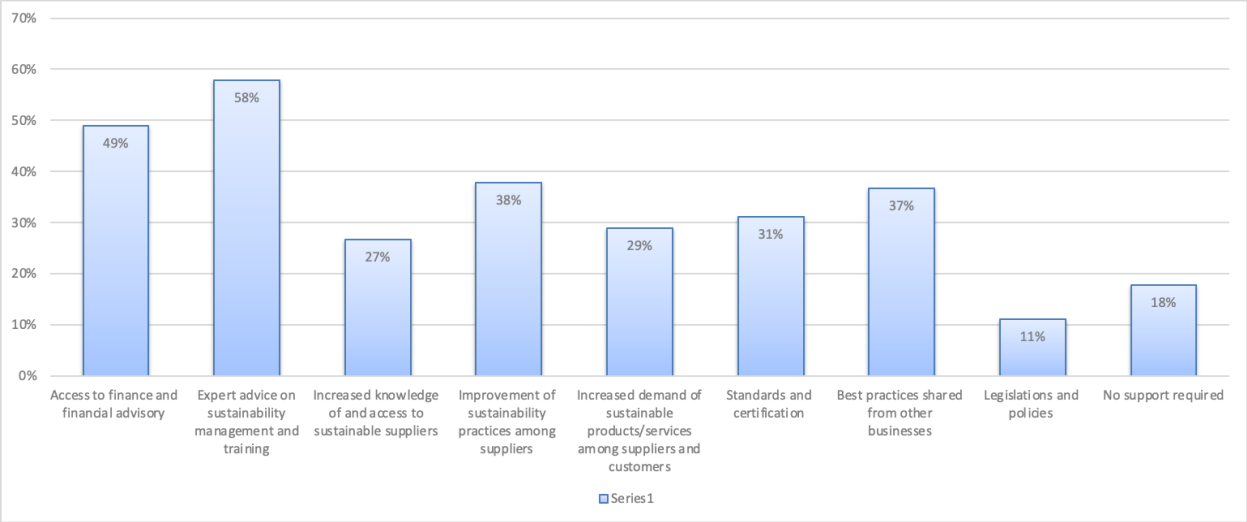


Figure 7: Support Needed by MSMEs To Be More Environmentally Friendly

TOPIC 3: CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES

The conserving of natural resources under the SCP concept comprises of 3 elements, namely energy, water and waste. The section below describes the status of business practices in each element.

Energy Saving

The most common measure for energy saving is using LED light bulbs (76%), followed by staff training (53%) and using efficient equipment (46%). Almost all respondents expressed that in the future, to reduce the electricity costs, they would like to use solar energy and put more awareness while using electrical appliances such as turning them off after use.

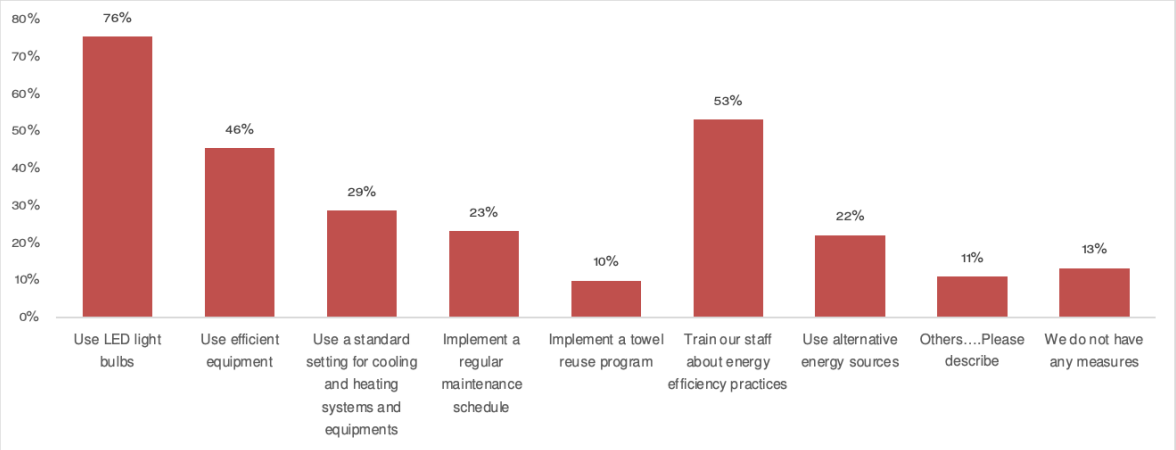


Figure 8: Energy Saving Measures

Among 12 businesses (13%) that have not taken any measures in this aspect so far, only one business is interested in using a standard for setting their cooling and heating system.

Similarly to the above-mentioned measure, **expert advice** and **access to finance** are ranked as the first and second priorities for support, followed by the **best practice sharing**. 30% of businesses indicated that no support is required.

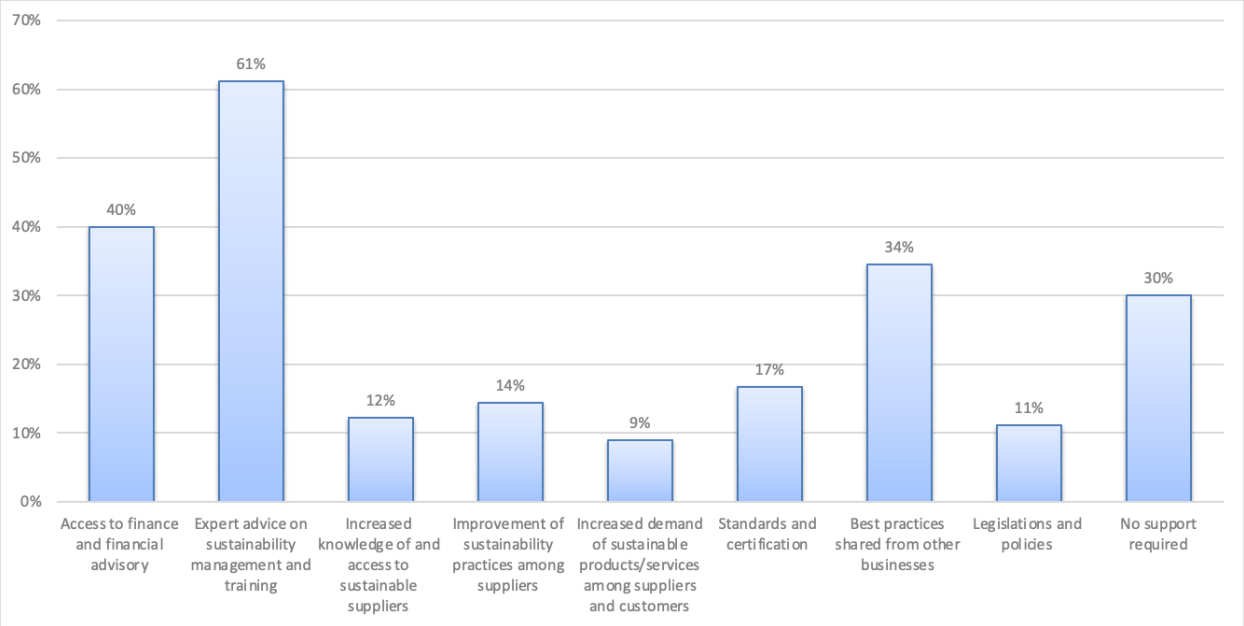


Figure 9: Support Needed by MSMEs in Energy Saving

Water Saving

For water saving measures, more than half of the responding businesses (52%) claim that they provide training to staff on detecting leakages and water flow dysfunctionalities and 44% install efficient equipment in their business. Interestingly, almost 40% of businesses do not take any measures.

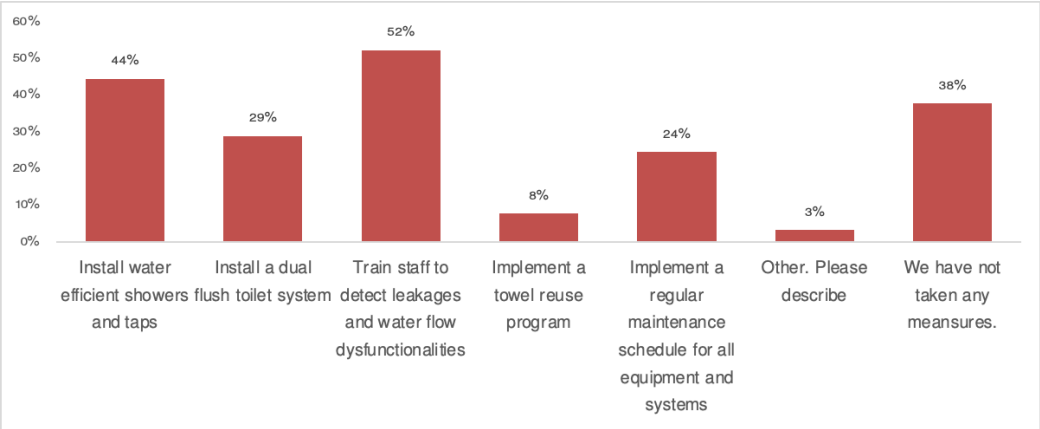


Figure 10: Water Saving Measures

82% of the respondents that haven't taken any action are not interested to implement water saving measures in their business operation. The general low cost of water in Laos could be the cause, as this puts little incentive for them to take actions.

Again, the assistance that businesses require is **expert advice**, **sharing of best practices** and **access to finance**. However, nearly 40% of respondents stated that no assistance is required.

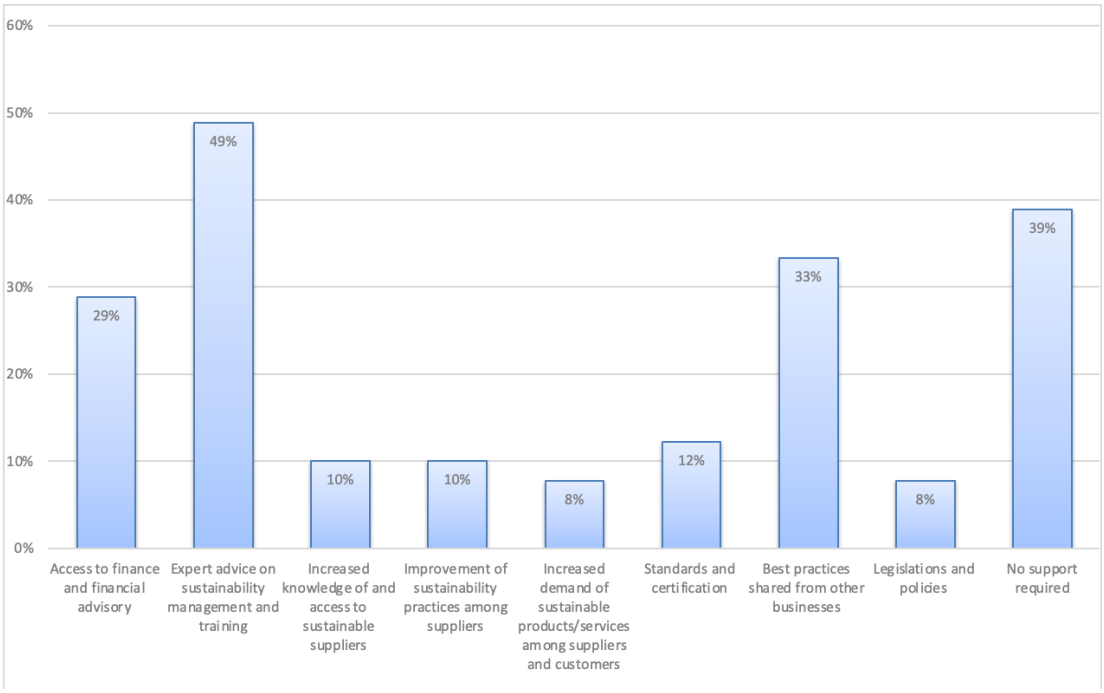


Figure 11: Support Needed by MSMEs in Water Saving

Waste management

Of the good waste management practices, the majority of the businesses has been applying waste separation and recycling (80%), reducing single use plastic items (59%), providing training to staff on waste management (48%) and purchasing in bulk to reduce plastic packaging (44%).

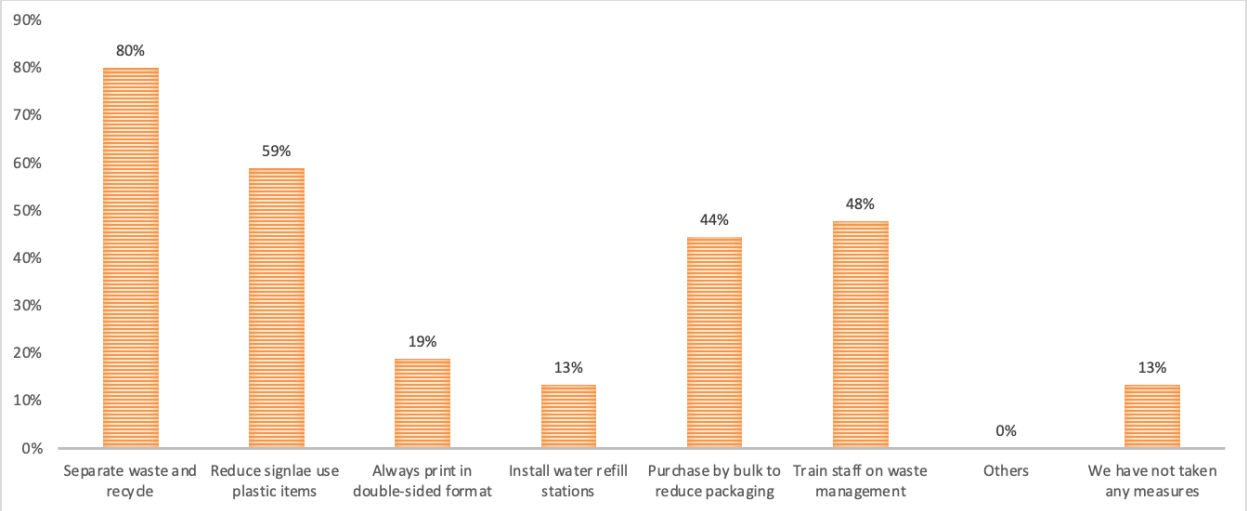


Figure 12: Waste Management Measures

Those who apply wish to improve the practice by reducing and re-using and training staff on waste separation. For the general improvement, the following ideas are proposed:

- Having more trash bins in business premises and public places;
- Practicing garbage separation from households to collectors;
- Lowering waste collection price as an incentive;
- Raising awareness of people's behavior, such as discouraging littering.

Only 4 out of the 12 businesses that do not take any measures are interested in starting one.

Similarly, **expert advice**, **best practices sharing** and **access to finance** are three priority areas of support that the respondents expressed. 29% indicated no support is required.

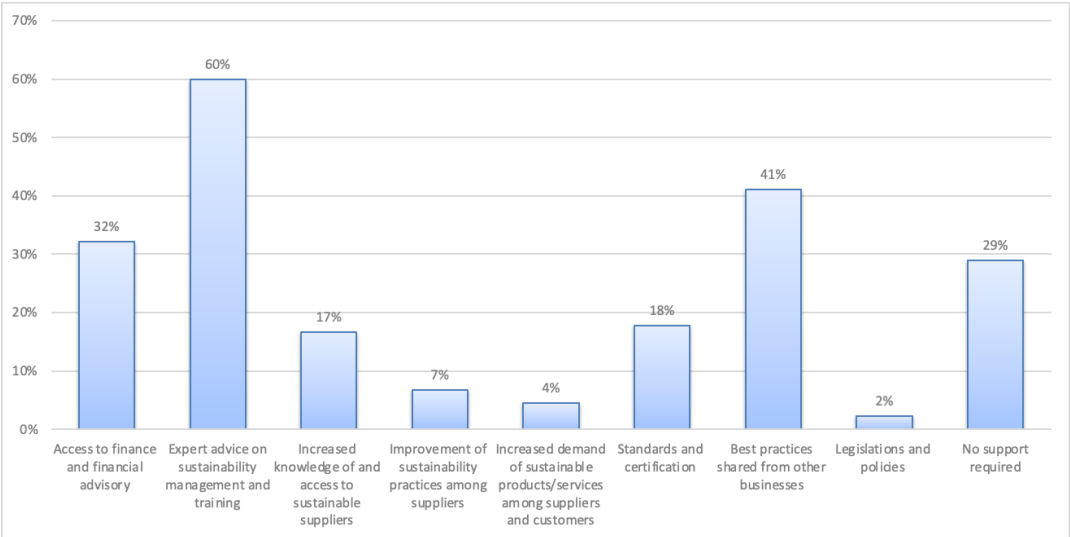


Figure 13: Support Needed by MSMEs in Waste Management

TOPIC 4: SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE

Almost all respondents (97%) stated that their businesses have fair treatment policies and procedures in place for their employees, as well as socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities. In general, the businesses' policies and procedures described such as eight hour working days, over time payment, extra pay in the case of illness or accident, and additional fringe benefits such as uniforms, bonuses, staff loan imply that the businesses are aware and well compliant with the Lao Labor Law requirements, and some go beyond. Several businesses provided the concrete sample of responsibly interacting with communities, which is offering fair prices while doing business with communities.

There are a range of possible good practices that the respondents wish to introduce such as extra paid leave, staff retreats, performance-based incentives, insurance, and opportunities for personal development.

Expert advice, best practices sharing, and **access to finance** are mentioned as necessary support, similar to the measures mentioned above. 38% indicated that no support was required.

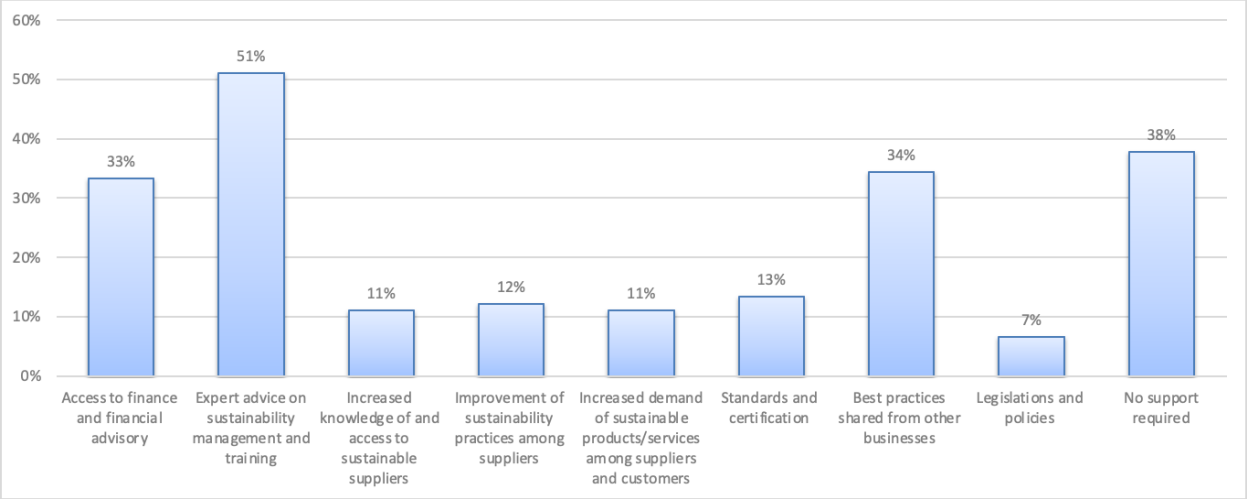


Figure 14: Support Needed by MSMEs To Be More Socially Responsible

PART 2: DEMAND SIDE

This section describes the results of the interviews of the Laos-based and regional companies in the capacity of the existing and potential buyers of the Lao products and services with the focus on SCP practices. The analysis is presented separately as they are considered different target buyers with their own unique needs and expectations.

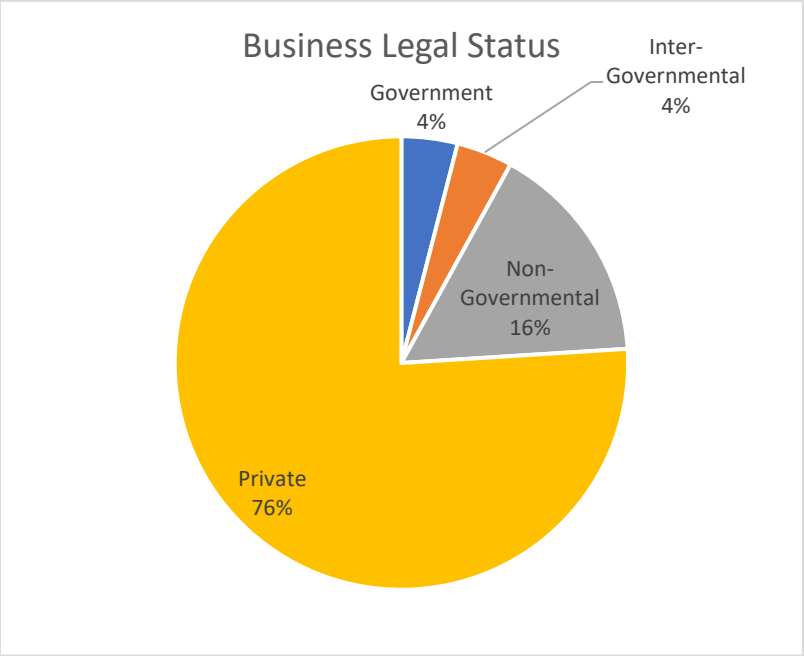
3.3 RESPONDENT PROFILE

Gender and position in the business
The majority of the respondents are either an owner or holding a senior manager position in the organization (64%) with 70% female respondents.

Business Legal Status:

Of the 10 companies surveyed in Laos, 7 are private organizations, 2 are non-governmental organizations, and one is an intergovernmental organization. Of the 15 companies surveyed in the Southeast Asia region, 12 are private companies, 2 are non-governmental organizations, and one is a government organization.

Among all 25 companies surveyed, 76% are private organizations, 16% are non-governmental organizations, 4% are government, and another 4% are inter-governmental organizations.



Ownership structure:

Among 10 companies in Laos, 4 are domestic privately owned and 6 companies are foreign owned including the intergovernmental organization. Regionally, 9 companies have domestic private ownership, 3 have state ownership, 2 have foreign ownership and 1 is a joint venture with 70% private ownership and 30% state ownership.

In total, 13 companies (or 52%) have domestic private ownership, 8 (or 32%) are foreign-owned, 3 (or 12%) are state-owned and 1 (or 4%) is a joint venture.

Figure 15: Business Legal Status

Business sectors: There were individual companies from the mining, international development, intergovernmental, trade, and service sectors from the Lao companies. Regionally, whereas there were seven from the service sector, 4 from the manufacturing sector, two from the trade sector, and one from the agriculture sector in the regional companies. One company did not respond to the specific sector it belonged to but just responded "other".

Size: Lao companies surveyed had employees ranging from 22 to 1,000 with three medium-sized companies and seven large-sized companies. Regional companies' employee numbers ranged from 37-16,000 with 4 medium-sized, seven large sized, three companies that did not provide a response to the number of employees and one company that declared to have 15 employees that we went forward within the study.

In overall, among 25 companies, 7 companies are medium-sized, 13 companies surveyed are under the large-sized organizations, one company falls under the small category (with 15 employees) and three do not have a response for this entry.

3.4 KEY FINDINGS

3.4.1 LAOS-BASED ORGANIZATIONS:

a. What are the products / services that you purchased in Laos in the last 6 months?

In the last 6 months most of the companies (90%) purchased **food and beverage** products followed closely by **accommodation and venue** services (80%). **Handicraft and souvenirs** and **cultural excursions** were the least purchased products taking up only 40% responses each. Only one company addressed additional purchase for their development project specifically construction materials for water system rehabilitation, contractors for improving toilets and hand washing station in school, agriculture inputs like seeds and animal vaccines for farmers. Most of these products are from Thailand but the suppliers are Lao (importers).

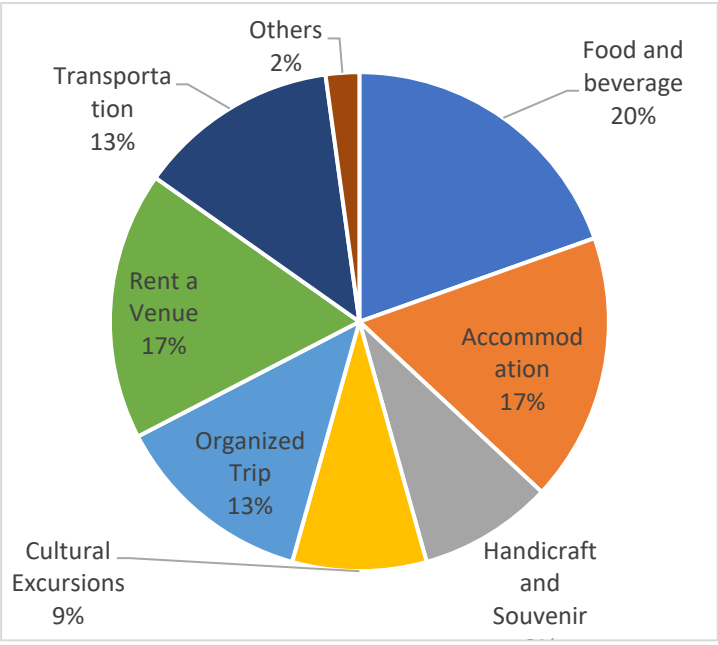


Figure 17: Purchase of Lao Products/Services

In terms of satisfaction with the product/service, food and beverage and venue got the highest in terms of outstanding and very satisfactory range. The rest of the products and services found mostly into the very satisfactory and satisfactory levels, which are the positive feedback to Lao businesses.

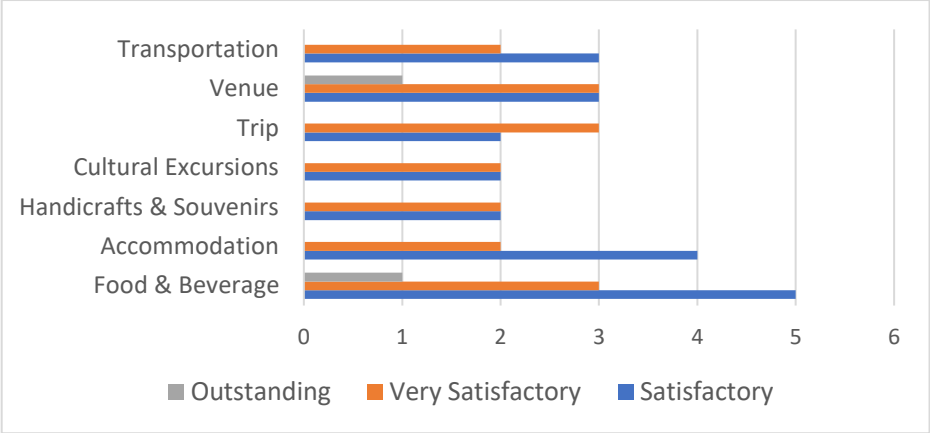


Figure 18: Satisfaction of Purchased Lao Products/Services

b. Would you be interested in continuing or starting to use Lao products / services?

All 10 companies we interviewed expressed clear interest in continuing to use Lao products/services in the future. The most common purpose for purchase is **business meetings** and **business visits** for all types of products and services mentioned above. The most prevalent is for the food and beverage products with 9 businesses giving meetings as a purpose for their purchase and for renting a venue with 8 businesses stating the same purpose. Renting of venues are shown to be more common for business meetings than for business visits.

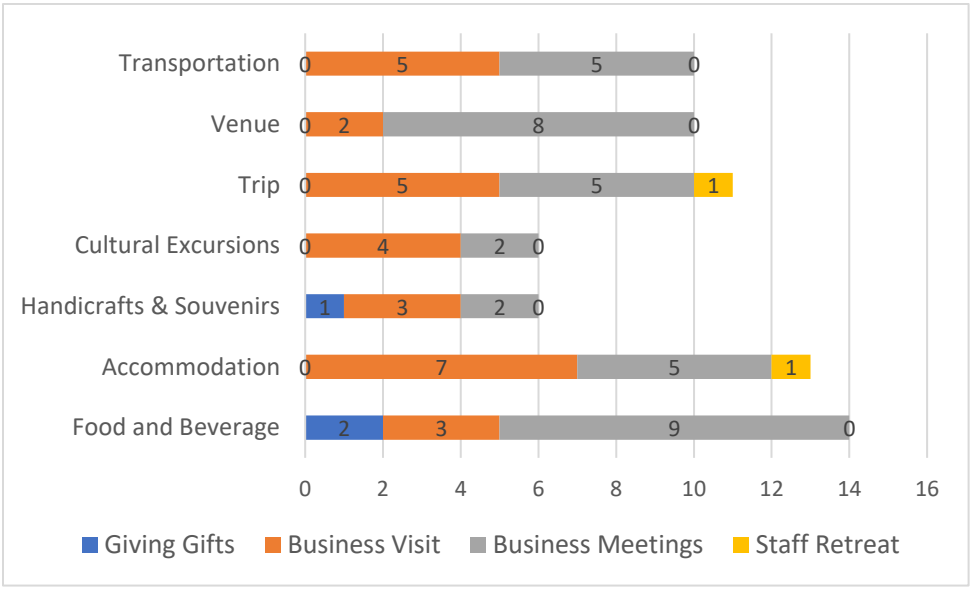


Figure 19: Purpose for Purchasing Lao Products/Services

c. Using overseas products/services:

Businesses continue to buy a few products overseas. The majority, 4 businesses, purchase food and beverage products and use transportation services each. Food and Beverage products were purchased for the purpose of giving them as gift by all the businesses. Transportation services were used for the purpose of renting vehicles to attend business meetings by all the businesses.

There are zero purchases within the handicrafts and souvenirs categories for overseas purchases. Moreover, only one business has stated a purchase of a cultural excursion product and one for renting a venue.

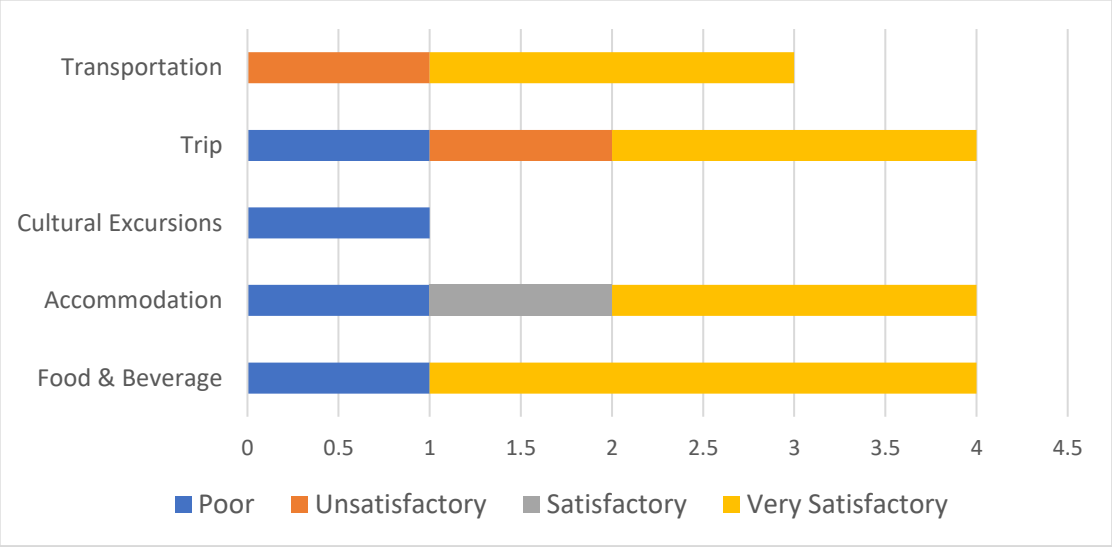


Figure 20: Satisfaction on Oversea Products/Services

Food and Beverage products were the only ones to be ranked as very satisfactory by 3 of the businesses. Otherwise only one vote was given for the rest, and it varied drastically between poor or very satisfactory.

d. The most important criteria for selecting a supplier:

Based on the survey, we can conclude that the most important criterion for choosing the supplier by the majority of 60% is ***Quality***, the 2nd criteria is ***Price*** with 50% and the last one is ***Reliability*** with 40%. In addition, the respondents also commented that they continue to preserve relationships with the businesses or suppliers who are committed to conserving natural resources. If they were to choose a fourth criteria, it would be certifiable sustainability standards of the products and the value chain.

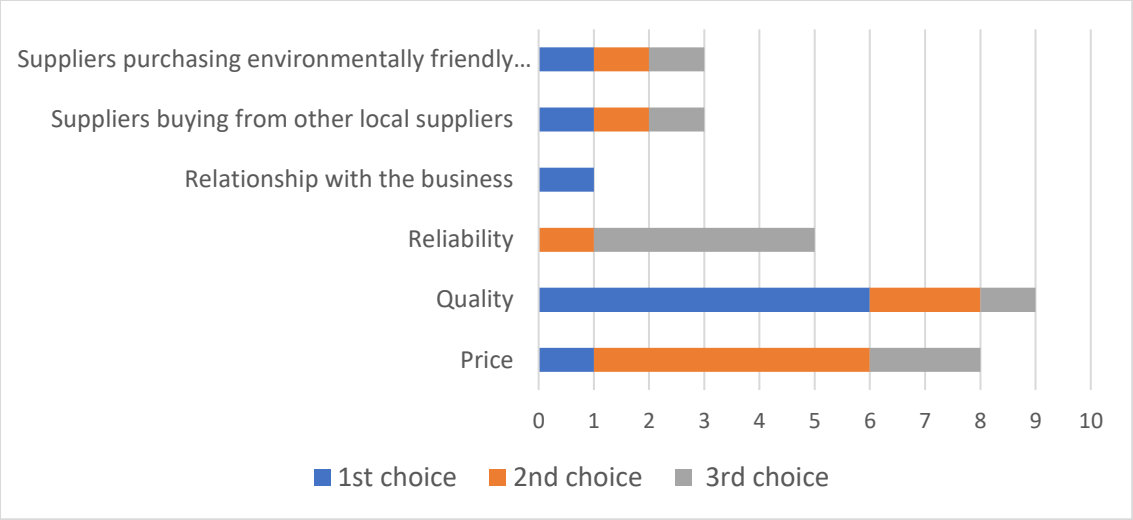


Figure 21: Criteria for Selecting Suppliers

e. Improvement towards sustainability suggested to the Lao business:

More than half of the respondents (70%) suggested that their suppliers purchase **environmentally friendly products**, 50% of them agree that suppliers should buy from other **local suppliers** and implement **sustainability standards/certifications**. Additionally, they mentioned and suggested **lowering prices** because currently the prices are higher, but the **quality is low** in comparison to Thai products. Other suggestions include **packaging improvements** and a higher focus towards using **natural materials**. For the services, it needs to be of a **higher quality** and have more **convenient systems**.

f. Other general business improvement for the Lao business:

All the respondents agree that the most urgent improvement needs to be of the **product quality**. All respondents said quality must be improved first. The other top choice for improvement is the **price** (90%) and the **design** of the products and services (80%).

3.4.2 REGIONAL COMPANIES

a. Products and services purchased within their own countries

Within the countries of the companies, transportation services were the most popular with 24% of the businesses responding that they have purchased these services within the last 6 months. Food and beverage products, handicrafts and souvenirs, and renting venues were all purchased by 16% of the companies. The least bought service within their own countries was cultural excursions chosen by only 4% of the companies.

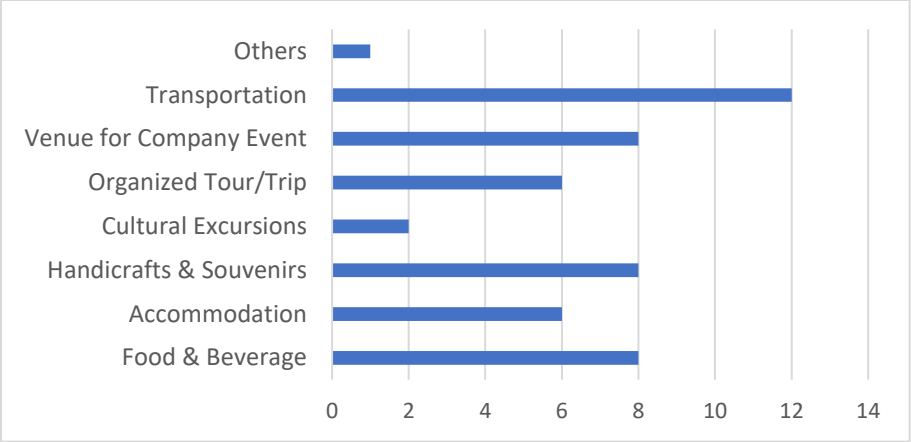


Figure 22: Products/Services Bought in their Own Countries

According to most companies, the main purposes for purchasing food and beverage products, accommodations, and transportation were for business visits. Most rated their purchases as satisfactory.

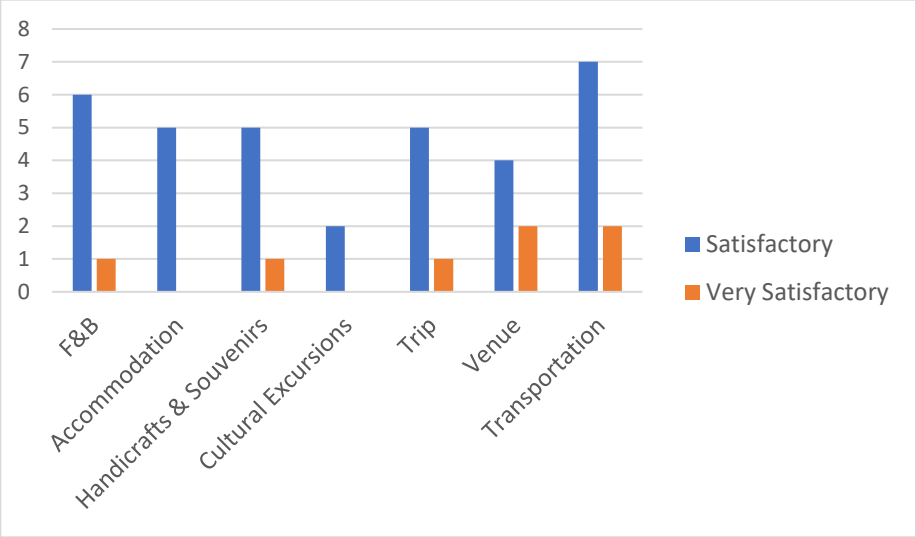


Figure 23: Satisfaction on the Purchase in Their Countries

b. Interest in continuing to or starting to purchase Lao products/services

Twelve of the businesses expressed a clear interest in purchasing Lao products or services in the near future but 3 businesses said that they were not interested. However, one of the companies stated that they were unable to answer at the moment as it depended on their business expansion strategy.

c. Using Lao products and services

So far, only three products and services have been purchased in Laos from the respondents and these include food and beverage products, transportation services, and tours. The main purpose for the purchases was staff retreats and business meetings. For future purchases, for

those who were interested in buying Lao products and services, 27% stated that they would purchase handicrafts and souvenirs, 23% stated they would purchase food and beverage products and 14% would purchase cultural excursions and transportation services. Renting a venue for a company event was the least popular purchase choice.

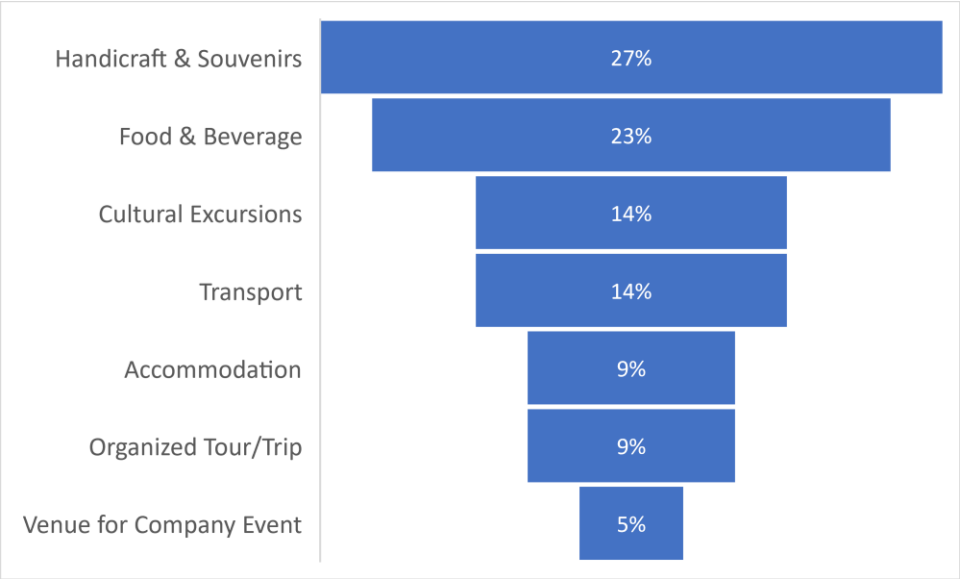


Figure 24: Specific Lao Products of Interest

d. The most important criteria in selecting suppliers

Most of the businesses ranked **quality** and **reliability** as the most 2 important criteria for purchasing decisions with 9 businesses choosing the quality of the product as their topmost important and 6 businesses choosing reliability as their second or third most important criteria. A couple of businesses chose suppliers with environmentally friendly products and sustainability standards/certifications as their second and third choice as well.

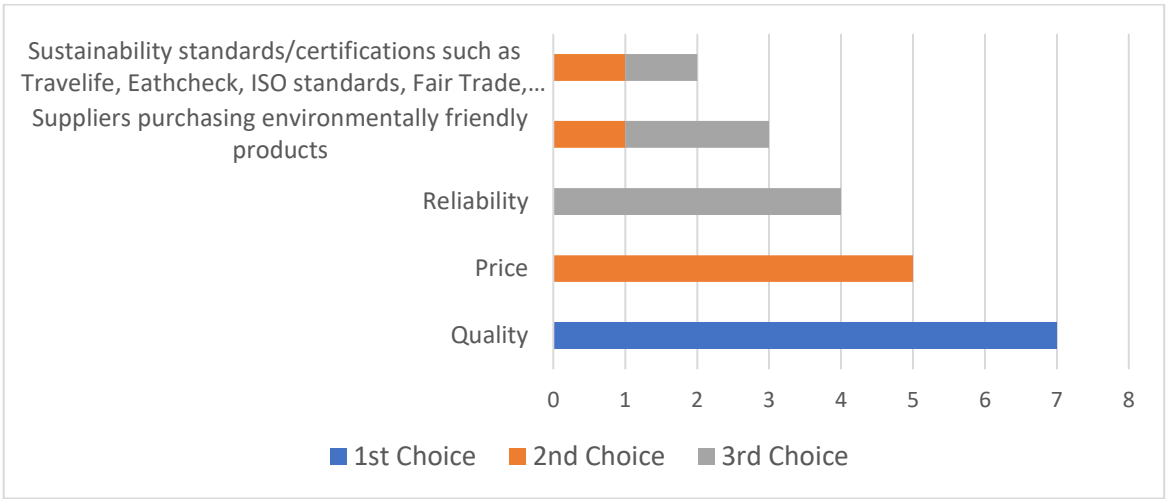


Figure 25: Criteria for Selecting Suppliers

e. Suggested Improvement toward SCP

Six of the companies each suggested that Lao products should offer environmentally friendly products. Applying socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities, buying from other local suppliers, conserving natural resources, and implementing sustainability standards and certifications were all chosen as an area for improvement by three businesses for each. The least number of suggestions was for buying from other local suppliers.

f. Other Suggestion for Business Improvement

Other general improvements were mostly the **quality** of the products by the majority (9 businesses), the **design** (7 businesses), and the **pricing and reliability** of the supply of products (4 businesses for each.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT LAO MSME IN IMPROVING AND DEVELOPING SCP PRODUCTS/SERVICES

4.1 CONCLUSIONS:

Overall, the promotion of SCP is highly relevant to the Government Green Growth Strategy, which is elaborated in the Greening Tourism Value Chain shown in the chart below. Three main strategies are (1) using environmentally friendly vehicles, (2) saving energy and resources and (3) reduce, reuse and recycle (sustainable waste management).

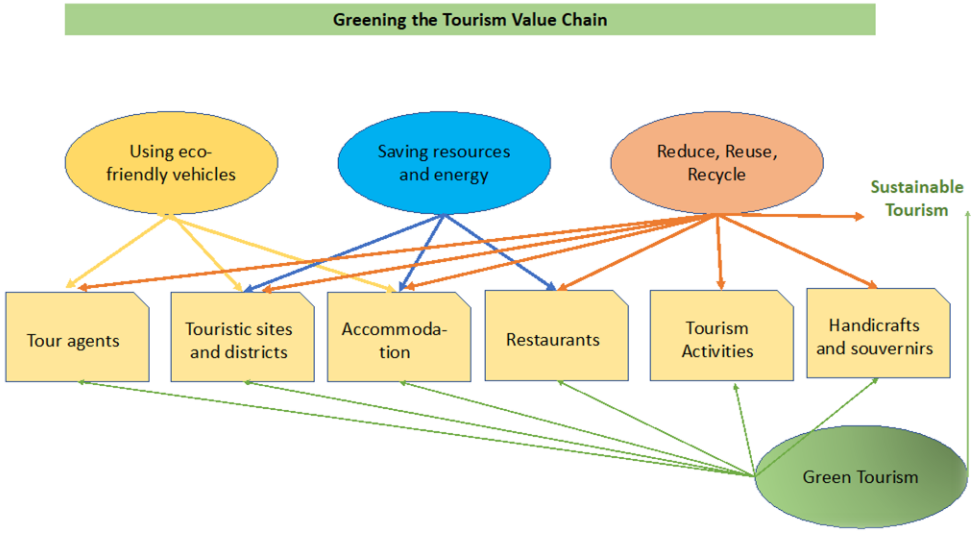


Figure 26: Greening the Tourism Value Chain

ON SUPPLY SIDE:

- The study results show that the Lao MSMEs are well aware of SCP features and give importance to conservation of natural resources, the participation of and the connection with the local communities in their business operation. Apparently, the awareness has been developed and supported significantly over decades via different Government and donor funded initiatives. However, the use of environmentally friendly products is not considered as important as the other SCP features, possibly because Laos is a country blessed with abundant water and energy resources and has the average lowest electricity tariff among the ASEAN countries and in the world [2].

- It is observed that Lao MSMEs apply all 4 SCP elements to varying degrees, with the highest rank from using local suppliers, having socially responsible practices to using ecologically friendly products and resource conservation. However, currently the number of the participating businesses achieving sustainability certificates remains low (13%).

- Lao MSMEs expressed high interest in continuing/starting local purchasing and practicing social responsibilities, less for using environmentally friendly products and little enthusiasm for energy, water conservation and waste management.

- In all areas of SCP, the Lao MSMEs stated their practical needs for further improvement, mainly via strengthening and deepening specific measures that are relevant to their business. The supports that the businesses most commonly require to improve SCP application are (1) **Expert advice**, (2) **Access to finance**, and (3) **Improvement of practices/sharing good practices**. They also expressed the need in improving quality and reliability of products/services.

ON DEMAND SIDE:

- F&B, accommodation and venues are the biggest purchases of the Laos based organizations in the last 6 months. Souvenirs and excursions have not been so much in demand. In general, the respondents expressed a high satisfaction with F&B and venue services. They did not use many services outside of Laos in the last 6 months, most likely due to the travel restrictions resulting from COVID-19. For the regional respondents, the most common services used in their countries are transport, F&B, handicraft & souvenirs, venue while cultural excursion is the least. They in general are satisfied with the products and services in their countries.

- When selecting suppliers, the **quality, price, reliability, sustainability certificates** are considered important to both Laos based and regional organizations while

[2] https://en.evn.com.vn/d6/news/Where-is-the-average-electricity-tariff-of-Vietnam-compared-to-the-world-66-163-2575.aspx

environmentally friendly products are specifically suggested by the latter. Interestingly, the most important SCP feature for both Laos based and regional organizations are the **environmentally friendly products**.

- The results show that Laos-based organizations have had a good experience with the suppliers in the country so far, they would likely continue to use while organizations in Vietnam, Thailand and China are interested in exploring Laos for business meetings and visits and in Lao products and services such as handicraft & souvenirs, F&B, cultural excursions, and transport. It is also noted that the new express train has made Laos even more popular among Thai tourists. Hence, business meetings and incentive travels of organizations within Laos and from ASEAN and neighboring countries appear a latent alternative market for Lao businesses.

- In order to further improve MSMEs performance, both Laos based, and regional respondents mentioned **(1) quality, (2) design, (3) price and (4) reliability,** which remain quite broad at this stage, yet can well serve as the key reminder for businesses as well as can be taken as specific topics for further support and capacity building activities to MSMEs.

4.2 RECOMMENDED WAYS FORWARD

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOTH TARGET GROUPS 1 and 2:

How tourism related MSMEs can use local suppliers (Topic 1)

1. Local suppliers can provide unique, authentic products and services that appeal to tourists as well as local and regional companies. For example, a local artisan or a group of artisans can partner with a tour agent(s) to offer handcrafted and customized souvenirs such as bamboo or wooden sticks with hand-carved Lao names for foreigners as necklace elements or key holders. A local restaurant can partner with a farm to offer fresh, locally grown produce with a well-advertised Lao food cooking training and recipes.

2. Tourism related MSMEs can support the local economy and contribute to the sustainability of the community by generating new ways of using traditional materials as high value adding souvenirs. Young Lao designers and architectural school students can be exposed to traditional materials and challenged to create new ways for tourism related MSMEs to use them. This can be done in the government-sponsored fairs and exhibitions or as the annual contests.

3. Using local suppliers can help MSMEs to reduce their carbon footprint and reduce their shipping costs by reducing the need for long-distance transportation of goods and services. This can be an important consideration for eco-conscious companies and tourists who are looking for more sustainable options.

How tourism related MSMEs can use environment friendly products (Topic 2)

1. Businesses such as restaurants, hotels, guest houses are strongly recommended to use biodegradable and eco-friendly cleaning products for maintaining their facilities and equipment. This will prevent harmful chemicals from seeping or entering the local ecosystem and water supply.

2. Similarly, they are encouraged to use eco-friendly packaging materials, such as biodegradable bags and containers, for any products or souvenirs that are sold to tourists and customers. This will also reduce waste and prevent pollution (See Topic 3).

3. Jointly develop a reputation for Laos as an environmentally responsible country by informing their guests about their environment friendly practices and the LASTING LAOS certification if they are working to achieve it.

4. Encourage their customers to engage in eco-friendly behaviors while they are visiting places of interest in Laos. For example, the businesses could provide information about local recycling or non-plastic programs, and encourage them to use public transportation, bike cycles, electric vehicles or car-sharing to reduce their carbon emissions and fuel costs.

How tourism related MSMEs can conserve natural resources (Topic 3)

1. Implement energy-efficient lighting and appliances such as LED light bulbs and Energy Star certified equipment in hotels and restaurants. This can reduce the amount of electricity consumed and help to conserve the energy and lower carbon footprint.

2. Invest in water-saving and recycling technologies, such as low-flow showers and toilets, to reduce the amount of water used in hotels, restaurants, offices, shops and other facilities.

3. Develop and implement a comprehensive waste management plan that includes recycling and composting to reduce the amount of waste produced by the businesses.

4. Encourage customers to participate in conservation efforts by providing them with information about the importance of preserving natural resources and ways they can help, such as conserving water and reducing their energy use while on using the businesses services.

5. Partner with communities, local non-profit organizations and government to support conservation efforts and sustainable development in the area, such as protecting natural habitats and promoting eco-friendly and SCP practices. This can help to preserve natural resources for future generations and support the local economy.

6. For transport companies that have a fleet of cars and vans, use an appropriate program (or software) to plan transport routes, oil and sub changes, maintenance and repair schedules.

Prevent unnecessary trips to reduce carbon footprints and reduce fuel costs. Introduce electric bikes and cars.

How tourism related MSMEs can practice socially responsible practices to manage their human resources (Topic 4)

1. Implement fair and equitable hiring and promotion practices. This can include setting clear criteria for hiring and promotion decisions and providing equal opportunities to all qualified candidates. Tighten the relations with tourism offices and associations for updates on appropriate socially responsible HR practices.

2. Provide ongoing training and professional development opportunities to employees. This can help employees develop new skills and advance in their careers, which can lead to increased job satisfaction, motivation, engagement and performance.

3. Offer competitive wages and benefits. Providing fair compensation and a comprehensive benefits package can help attract and retain top talent, as well as improve overall job satisfaction among employees. Encourage the employment of women and people with disabilities in decent jobs.

4. Create a positive and inclusive work environment. This can include promoting a culture of respect and inclusion and taking steps to prevent discrimination and harassment.

5. Engage in community outreach and support local organizations. Tourism-related enterprises can support their communities by volunteering, donating to local causes, and partnering with community organizations. This can help build positive relationships with local residents and enhance the overall reputation of the business.

RECOMMENDATION FOR TARGET GROUP 2 ONLY (ACCOMODATION, TOUR AGENTS AND TRAVEL AGENTS):

The demand and interest of the Laos-based and regional organizations in Laos reveal a new market idea of MICE (Meeting-Incentives-Convention-Exhibition). Globally, MICE has been a significant part of the tourism industry yet has never been strongly promoted until the ITB Berlin 2019 where “The MICE Guide in Laos” was first launched and later updated in 2020 with 24 participating hotels and resorts [3].

There are several reasons for Lao MSMEs to consider this market, at least for the first two M&I (Meetings and Incentives). Firstly, the demand from the regional and Laos-based companies in

[3] https://www.ttoscandinavia.com/mice-guide-to-laos/

organizing meetings and visits in Laos is confirmed in this study. It is also very well in line with the global increasing demand for MICE as shown in the chart below.[4]

Figure 27: Global MICE Industry

Secondly, among the given historical, cultural and environmental uniqueness of Laos, the concept of SCP measures/practices will create an even more unique feature for the Lao businesses in this particular market of Meetings & Incentives.

The MICE initiative has been promoted by LNCCI. To bring it forward, the following activities are suggested:

- With the lead of LNCCI, the hotels and resorts participating in the MICE initiative partner with interested MSMEs to develop MICE packages
- Build capacity of the MSMEs on MICE, with the focus on how to improve quality, design, price and reliability. SCP practices should also be promoted in this process, which potentially lead to the achievement of sustainability certification like Lasting Laos and TRAVELIFE
- Proactively promote and market Laos as a MICE destination within the ASEAN countries and other target tourism markets that the industry in Laos chooses to serve.

[4] https://tourismteacher.com/mice-tourism/

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MSMEs

USED FOR:

- Target Group 1 (F&B, transportation, Handicraft & Souvenir, Cultural excursions) and
- Target Group 2 (Tour operators, travel agents, destination management companies, hotels and guesthouses)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey.

We are conducting a survey regarding the SCP related products/services in about 100 selected existing tourism related businesses, one among which is your business. The SCP products/services and practices mean:

- ☐ Using local suppliers
- ☐ Purchasing environmentally friendly products
- ☐ Conserving natural resources
- ☐ Applying socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities

The specific objective of this survey is to

(1) Identify what are your current SCP related products/services or practices
(2) Identify your interest in further improving the existing SCP related products/services or practices or in developing ones
(3) If you would be interested, what support you would need to achieve it

The survey would take 45 minutes.

All responses will be kept completely confidential, and every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity. Individual responses are never attributed without your prior consent.

By proceeding with the survey, you confirm that your participation is entirely voluntary and that you have understood the above information.

For all respondents

Section 1: Business Details

1. **Name of the respondent**
2. **Position in the business**
3. **Gender:** ☐ Male ☐Female ☐Others
4. **Email and Telephone**
5. **Business name**
6. **Sector**

Sector	(Dropdown list) Tour Operators/ Travel Agents Accommodation (hotels, guesthouses, resorts) Building and Construction Handicrafts Restaurants, Cafes and Roadside Stalls Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Other Tourism Services Businesses Wholesale and Retail Trade Education Financial and Insurance Services Transportation Other. Please specify: _

7. **Current number of staff:** Female
8. **Staff before COVID:** Female
9. **Business location:**

☐ Vientiane Capital
☐ Vangvieng ☐ Keoudom ☐Phonhong
☐ Luang Prabang city ☐ Chomphet ☐ Pak-ou

10. Do you service the tourism sector?

Before Covid	☐ Yes ☐ No
Now	☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Where did your clients come BEFORE COVID? Mention your top 5 source markets and their share in your total clientele.

#	Country of origin	%
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Total		100%

12. Where do your clients come NOW? Mention your top 5 source markets and their share in your total clientele.

#	Country of origin	%
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Total		100%

For Target Group 2 ONLY (Tour operators, travel agents, destination management companies, hotels and guesthouses)

13. Through which channels do you receive clients BEFORE COVID? Please list the (approximate) percentages of your bookings per channel in the below table.

Direct bookings	
Through European outbound tour operators	
Through Asian outbound tour operators	
Through DMCs in Laos	
Through online booking sites	
Walk-ins	
Other. Please specify	
Total	100%

14. Through which channels do you receive clients NOW? Please list the (approximate) percentages of your bookings per channel in the below table.

Direct bookings	
Through European outbound tour operators	
Through Asian outbound tour operators	
Through DMCs in Laos	
Through booking sites	

Walk-ins	
Other. Please specify	
Total	100%

For all respondents

15. How would you describe your 3 main groups customers before COVID and NOW?

Before COVID
☐ Seniors
☐ Families with children
☐ Couples
☐ Singles
☐ Youth
☐ Students
☐ Persons with disabilities
☐ Business travelers
☐ Small groups (up to 10 pax)
☐ Medium groups (11 to 20 pax)
☐ Large groups (21 pax and more)

NOW
☐ Seniors
☐ Families with children
☐ Couples
☐ Singles
☐ Youth
☐ Students
☐ Persons with disabilities
☐ Business travelers
☐ Small groups (up to 10 pax)
☐ Medium groups (11 to 20 pax)
☐ Large group

16. What are your 3 key products/services before COVID and NOW?

No	Before COVID	Now
1		
2		
3		

Section 2: Sustainable certification and SCP Products/Services

17. Does your business currently have any sustainability certifications (i.e Travelife, Earthcheck, ISO standards, Fair Trade, Ecocert, Global G.A.P, LEED)? If yes, please name the certification(s).

☐ Yes. Name of the certification(s): .
☐ No.

18. If no, why doesn't your business apply any sustainability certifications? One answer

☐ It's not relevant
☐ It's not useful
☐ It's expensive
☐ I have not heard about it before
☐ I am interested but I don't know where to start
☐ Other. Please specify

19. Among the 4 areas of SCP, which one do you think would bring more customers to your business? More than one answer, except None and I don't know/not sure

☐ Using local suppliers
☐ Purchasing environmentally friendly products
☐ Conserving natural resources
☐ Applying socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities
☐ None
☐ I don't know/not sure

TOPIC 1: Using local suppliers

20. Do you currently engage in activities that support the local community such as buying local products or supporting local initiatives?

☐ Yes. Please explain about your engagement Then answer Q 21.a and Q 21.b

☐ No. Please explain why not Then answer Q 21.c

For note:

21.a For those answering YES, rank the following factors in order of importance when you selected your local suppliers - 1 being the most important factor to you and 8 being the least important

☐ Quality
☐ Price
☐ Reliability
☐ Relationship
☐ Good social practices
☐ Good environmental practices
☐ Sustainability standards/certifications such as Fair Trade, G.A.P, Lao Organic, etc.
☐ Others. Please specify

21.b Any improvement needed?

21.c For those answering NO, which factors of the following are important if you would – 1 being the most important factor to you and 8 being the least important

☐ Quality
☐ Price
☐ Reliability
☐ Relationship
☐ Good social practices
☐ Good environmental practices
☐ Sustainability standards/certifications such as Fair Trade, G.A.P, Lao Organic, etc.
☐ Others. Please specify

21. Would you be interested in buying more local products or supporting local initiatives or in starting it in the near future?

☐Yes…. Continue Q23. ☐No. Move to the next topic.

22. If yes, what local products/ local initiatives?

23. What support would you need to further improve your engagement with the local suppliers or to make it happen? More than one answer

☐ Financial support
☐ Expert advice on sustainability management and training
☐ Increased knowledge/awareness of and access to sustainable suppliers
☐ Improvement of sustainability practices among suppliers
☐ Increased demand of sustainable products and service among suppliers and customers
☐ Standards and certifications
☐ Best practices shared from other businesses
☐ Legislations and policies

TOPIC 2: Purchasing environmentally friendly products

24. Do you currently procure environmentally friendly products such as environmentally friendly packaging, organic certified vegetables, Fair Trade certified tea and coffee or FSC certified paper, use online platform for marketing, ordering, selling, payment?

☐ Yes. Continue Q24.1 and Q24.2
☐ No. Continue Q24.3
☐ Not applicable

24.1 If yes, what are the products/practices?

24.2 Any improvement needed?

24.3 If no, would you be interested in purchasing environmentally friendly products in the near future?

☐ Yes…continue Q24.4. ☐ No. Move to the next topic.

24.4 If YES, what environmentally friendly products or/and environmentally friendly business practices?

25. What support would you need to further improve your purchasing the environmentally friendly products or/and environmentally friendly business practices or to make it happen? More than one answer

☐ Financial support
☐ Expert advice on sustainability management and training
☐ Increased knowledge/awareness of and access to sustainable suppliers
☐ Improvement of sustainability practices among suppliers
☐ Increased demand of sustainable products and service among suppliers and customers
☐ Standards and certifications
☐ Best practices shared from other businesses
☐ Legislations and policies

TOPIC 3: Conserving natural resources

26. What measures do you currently take to reduce the amount of energy your business uses? More than one answer

☐ Use LED light bulbs
☐ Use efficient equipment
☐ Use a standard setting for cooling and heating systems and equipment.
☐ Implement a regular maintenance schedule (for all equipment)
☐ Implement a towel reuse program
☐ Train our staff about energy efficiency practices
☐ Use alternative energy sources (i.e., solar)
☐ Other. Please describe
☐ We have not taken any measures. Continue Q26.2

26.1 For all answers, except "not taken", any improvement needed?

26.2 If "not taken any measure", would you be interested in introducing this practice in your business in the near future?

☐ Yes. Continue Q26.3. ☐ No. Move to the next topic.

26.3 If yes, what measures?

27. What support would you need to improve the practice or to make it happen?

☐ Financial support
☐ Expert advice on sustainability management and training
☐ Increased knowledge/awareness of and access to sustainable suppliers
☐ Improvement of sustainability practices among suppliers
☐ Increased demand of sustainable products and service among suppliers and customers
☐ Standards and certifications
☐ Best practices shared from other businesses
☐ Legislations and policies

28. What measures have you taken to reduce the amount of water your business uses after the pandemic happened? More than one answer.

☐ Install water efficient showers and taps
☐ Install dual a flush toilet system
☐ Train staff to detect leakages and water flow dysfunctionalities
☐ Implement a towel reuse program
☐ Implement a regular maintenance schedule for all equipment and systems.
☐ Other. Describe
☐ We have not taken any measures. Continue Q29.2

28.1 For all answers, except "not taken", any improvement needed?

28.2 If "not taken any measure", would you be interested in introducing this practice in your business in the near future?

☐ Yes. Continue Q28.3. ☐ No. Move to the next topic.

28.3 If yes, what measures?

29. What support would you need to improve the practice or to make it happen?

☐ Financial support
☐ Expert advice on sustainability management and training
☐ Increased knowledge/awareness of and access to sustainable suppliers
☐ Improvement of sustainability practices among suppliers
☐ Increased demand of sustainable products and service among suppliers and customers
☐ Standards and certifications

☐ Best practices shared from other businesses
☐ Legislations and policies

30. What measures have you taken to manage and reduce the amount of waste your business generates? More than one answer

☐ Separate waste and recycle
☐ Reduce single use plastic items such as bags, straws, bottles.
☐ Always print in double-sided format
☐ Install water refill stations
☐ Purchase by bulk to reduce packaging
☐ Train our staff on waste management
☐ Other. Please describe
☐ We have not taken any measures. Continue Q30.2

30.1 For all answers, except "not taken", any improvement needed?

30.2 If "not taken any measure", would you be interested in introducing this practice in your business in the near future?

☐ Yes. Continue Q30.3. ☐ No. Move to the next topic.

30.3 If yes, what measures?

31. What support would you need to improve the practice or to make it happen?

☐ Financial support
☐ Expert advice on sustainability management and training
☐ Increased knowledge/awareness of and access to sustainable suppliers
☐ Improvement of sustainability practices among suppliers
☐ Increased demand of sustainable products and service among suppliers and customers
☐ Standards and certifications
☐ Best practices shared from other businesses
☐ Legislations and policies

TOPIC 4: Applying socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities

32. Do you have policies and procedures to ensure that your staff are treated fairly and in accordance with all labor laws and to ensure fair and justice in interacting with local communities?

☐ Yes.
☐ No.
☐ Not sure

32.1 If yes, what are the policies and procedures?

32.2 Any improvement needed?

32.3 If "no or not sure", would you be interested in introducing it in your business in the near future?

☐ Yes…continue Q32.4. ☐ No. Move to the next topic.

32.4 If YES, what specific policies and procedures?

33. What support would you need to improve the existing practice or make it happen?

☐ Financial support
☐ Expert advice on sustainability management and training
☐ Increased knowledge/awareness of and access to sustainable suppliers
☐ Improvement of sustainability practices among suppliers
☐ Increased demand of sustainable products and service among suppliers and customers
☐ Standards and certifications
☐ Best practices shared from other businesses
☐ Legislations and policies

Thank you for completing the survey!

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE DEMAND SIDE

USED FOR
Target Group 3 (Medium and large organizations in Vientiane Capital and in SEA)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey.

We are conducting a survey regarding SCP products/services with 25 selected medium and large organizations in Laos and SEA region, one among which is your business. The SCP products/services and practices mean:

- ☐ Using local suppliers
- ☐ Purchasing environmentally friendly products
- ☐ Conserving natural resources
- ☐ Applying socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities

The specific objective of this survey is to

(1) Understand about your current purchase of Lao SCP related products/services and if you have not purchased yet, your interest in purchasing them
(2) Obtain your suggestions in further improving the existing Lao SCP related products/services

The survey would take 30 minutes.

All responses will be kept completely confidential and every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity. Individual responses are never attributed without your prior consent.

By proceeding with the survey, you confirm that your participation is entirely voluntary and that you have understood the above information.

Section 1: Business Details

1. **Name of respondent:**
2. **Gender:** ☐ Male ☐Female ☐Others
3. **Position in the business:**

   ☐ Owner ☐CEO ☐Senior Manager ☐Staff

4. **Email and Telephone:**
5. **Name of Business:**
6. **Business Address:**
7. **Business Legal Status:**
   - ☐ Government
   - ☐ Private
   - ☐ Non-governmental
   - ☐ Inter-governmental

8. **For business entity, business ownership:**

Owned by the domestic private sector:	_____ %
State owned:	_____ %
Foreign owned:	_____ %

9. **For business entity, business sector:**
   - ☐ Agriculture
   - ☐ Manufacturing
   - ☐ Trade, Import/Export
   - ☐ Service
   - ☐ **Other. Specify…..**

10. **Current number of staff:** **…..** Female: ….

Section 2: Purchasing SCP related products/services

11. a For organizations in Laos: What are the products/services that your business purchased in Laos in the last 6 months? For what purpose?

No	Products/services	Purchased most recently	Purpose (see below)
1	Food & Beverage		
2	Accommodation		
3	Handicrafts and souvenirs		
4	Cultural excursions		
5	Organized tour/trip		
6	Rent a venue		
7	Transportation (e.g. rental car, train, boat)		
8	Others. Specify		
9	None		

11.b For organizations outside Laos: What are products/services that your business purchased in your own countries or other countries but not in Laos in the last 6 months and for what purpose?

No	Products/services	Purchased most recently	Purpose (see below)
1	Food & Beverage		
2	Accommodation		
3	Handicrafts and souvenirs		
4	Cultural excursions		
5	Organized tour/trip		
6	Rent a venue		
7	Transportation (e.g. rental car, train, boat)		
8	Others. Specify		
9	None		

Code for purpose:

1. Meeting
2. Visit
3. Staff retreat
4. Give out as gifts/souvenirs
5. Others. Specify

12. What is your overall experience?

No	Products/services	Satisfaction 1 Least satisfied – 5 Most satisfied
1	Food & Beverage	
2	Accommodation	
3	Handicrafts and souvenirs	

4	Cultural excursions	
5	Organized tour/trip	
6	Venue for company event	
7	Transportation (e.g. rental car, train, boat)	
8	Others. Specify	

13. a. For organizations in Laos: What are 3 products/services that your business purchased overseas in the last 6 months? For what purpose?

No	Products/services	Purchased most recently	Purpose (see below)
1	Food & Beverage		
2	Accommodation		
3	Handicrafts and souvenirs		
4	Cultural excursions		
5	Organized tour/trip		
6	Venue for company event		
7	Transportation (e.g. rental car, train, boat)		
8	Others. Specify:…..		
9	None		

If yes, in which city/country? Why was this specific location chosen?

13.b. For organizations outside Laos: What are 3 products/services that your business purchased in Laos in the last 6 months and for what purpose?

No	Products/services	Purchased most recently	Purpose (see below)
1	Food & Beverage		
2	Accommodation		
3	Handicrafts and souvenirs		
4	Cultural excursions		
5	Organized tour/trip		
6	Venue for company event		
7	Transportation (e.g. rental car, train, boat)		
8	Others. Specify…….		
9	None		

If yes, where in Laos? Why was this specific location chosen?

Code for purpose:

1. Business meeting
2. Business visit
3. Staff retreat
4. Give out as gifts/souvenirs
5. Others. Specify

14. What is your overall experience?

No	Products/services	Satisfaction 1 Least satisfied – 5 Most satisfied
1	Food & Beverage	
2	Accommodation	
3	Handicrafts and souvenirs	
4	Cultural excursions	
5	Organized tour/trip	
6	Venue for company event	
7	Transportation (e.g. rental car, train, boat)	
8	Others. Specify:	

15. Would you be interested in continuing/starting using Lao products/services?

☐ Yes. Continue Q16.
☐ No. Why not *Thank you. The interview ends here*.

For note:

16. If yes, for what purpose?

☐ Business meeting
☐ Business visit
☐ Staff retreat
☐ Give out as gifts/souvenirs
☐ For re-selling

☐ Others. Specify

17. What specific Lao products/services?

☐ Food & Beverage
☐ Accommodation
☐ Handicraft and souvenirs
☐ Cultural excursions
☐ Organized tour/trip
☐ Transport (car, train, boat)
☐ Venue for company event
☐ Other. Specify

18. In general, what are 3 most important criteria for your business when selecting a supplier? (1 most important to 3 least important)

☐ Quality
☐ Price
☐ Reliability
☐ Relationship
☐ Suppliers buying from other local suppliers
☐ Suppliers purchasing environmentally friendly products
☐ Suppliers conserving natural resources (energy, water, waste management)
☐ Suppliers applying socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities
☐ Sustainability standards/certifications such as Travelife, Earthcheck, ISO standards, Fair Trade, Ecocert, Global G.A.P, LEED, Lao Organic, etc.
☐ Others. Please specify

19. You are interested in using Lao products/services, what improvements towards sustainability would you suggest to the Lao businesses? More than one answer

☐ Buying from other local suppliers
☐ Purchasing environmentally friendly products (organic, degradable packaging)
☐ Conserving natural resources (energy, water, waste management)
☐ Applying socially responsible ways of interacting with local communities
☐ Implementing sustainability standards/certifications such as Travelife, Earthcheck, ISO standards, Fair Trade, Ecocert, Global G.A.P, LEED, Lao Organic, etc.
☐ Others. Please specify

20. What are the reasons of your suggestion?

21. What other general business improvements would you suggest to the Lao businesses? More than one answer

☐ Product/service design
☐ Quality
☐ Pricing
☐ Staff performance
☐ Reliability of supply
☐ Others. Please specify

Thank you for completing the survey!

Annex 2: Photo sections

UNWTO World Tourism Organization

Tourism for SDGs How to engage

Companies

Competitiveness is the key business driver for sustainability. Companies can take advantage of the 2030 Agenda, by embracing sustainable business models and practices.

SDGs can be used as an overarching framework when connected with sustainable operations and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies.

No Poverty

Develop tourism products and services tailored for customers with lower income, to ensure that everyone can become a tourist.

Recruit, train and employ local community members, including those living in poverty, and integrate them in the tourism value chain (as producers, suppliers, distributors, vendors).

Invest in business-driven poverty eradication activities (e.g. develop living wage policy).

Partner with civil society networks to provide education and entrepreneurial skills training (e.g. tour guides, local artisans, local cooks).

Zero Hunger

Support, encourage and demonstrate the continued viability of small-scale farming, sustaining grower communities by developing partnerships with cooperatives and producer organizations supporting many small farmers.

For larger businesses, establish long-term business relationships that support small-scale producers.

Invest some of the tourism receipts in sustainable agricultural technology, intensifying collaboration with academic as well as scientific institutions.

Good Health and Well-Being

Invest in the development of health tourism.

Align human resources policies with principles of human rights, including policies for HIV/AIDS.

Use already existing resources on health for guidance (e.g. from the ILO, WHO, etc.).

Quality Education

Establish relationships with government entities and higher education institutions to improve education curricula to better align with business needs including responsible management.

Create programs (e.g., internships, work-study programs, traineeships, etc.) that give students earlier access to the corporate environment and demonstrate employment opportunities in tourism.

Provide employees with continuous opportunities to improve their (job) skills for their current and future employment.

Develop cost-effective education products and services that eliminate barriers to access and improve the quality of learning (e.g., ICT solutions to improve the delivery of education, innovative measurement tools, etc.).