NTF III Myanmar Inclusive Tourism

INTERVIEWEE: NAY MOE AUNG, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF 9 GENERATION FORCE TRAVELS AND TOURS

About the company:

9 Generation is a Loikaw based ground-handler focused on sustainable tourism. The company provides tours which benefit communities and emphasize 3S (safety, service and story) for tourists. Currently, as a start, it prioritizes building the company image more than increasing profit. 9 Generation is yet to find direct market linkage in the international market, but is currently offering services to Yangon Tour Operators.

1. What challenges do you face in exporting your services?

Thailand could be considered as one of the most successful tourism destination in South East Asia with 700,000 tourists annually, just in Mae Hong Song. Myanmar has more or less the same resources, but they are providing much more attractive services for tourists. Myanmar people migrate to Thailand to learn and find good job opportunities. For us at the moment, we are still trying to look for destinations that maintain traditions and show the authentic daily life of the communities.

2. In what ways have NTF III interventions helped increase export competitiveness?

We cooperate with NTF III to implement the development of tourism in Kayah. With the technical assistance from ITC, we are trying to work on new products and more attractive places, to protect culture and environment in close collaboration with communities. We are proud to be on the list of the project beneficiaries and to receive technical support from ITC which brings benefits to communities.
3. Please give us one example of a successful achievement made thanks to the NTF III support provided.

All the trainings provided by ITC are helpful. The first workshop organized by ITC was helpful in understanding the role of tourism associations in communicating, educating and advocating its members. Then, we learned the linkages among all businesses in tourism, the important fact that we are all connected and we have to work as a team. We also learned about the mutual benefits for companies and communities from supporting villages by respecting their culture and traditions.

We have experienced how these trainings benefit us. For examples, before the projects started, visitors came to Kayah just for one day simply to visit and take pictures, which didn’t benefit the communities. Now, the communities are able to make extra income from being involved in tourism. Nowadays, the visitors take three or four days to tour and experience better the life of the communities. Communities are proud to share their local wisdom, daily life, culture and traditions. The trends of services are changing and I am very very happy and proud of all these programmes that we try to implement in close collaboration with ITC.

4. Which upcoming event or training are you looking forward to in the next few months?

In the next month, we need to train guides as there might be more tourists in the near future. We are expecting to have more trained and skilled guides at the regional level. We also look forward to the trainings for traditional food providers in line with hygiene practices and food safety and quality. We also wish to gain more knowledge on sustainability and environmental conservation which is quite important also for the communities we work with.

5. How do you think NTF III can help achieving your company’s and other tour operators’ short term and long term goals?

In the short-term, we are looking for new destinations and training staff to be skilled with everything we are learning from ITC trainings. It is our duty to follow the entire NTF III programme to sustain the growth in the long-term when the project ends. Our aim is to promote sustainable tourism and to implement it in new destinations with the same techniques which NTF III is supporting currently.