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## Promoting rural development

Sustainable tourism and short agricultural supply chains



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Luang Prabang, Lao PDR



www.itcilo.org



# Promoting rural development: Sustainable tourism and short agricultural supply chains



## Background

The ILO has actively participated in rural work since the 1920s. In 2008 the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution in relation to Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction, which paved the way for an ILO Rural Employment and Decent Work Programme (2009–13) and the declaration in 2013 on “Decent work in the rural economy” as one of ten strategic outcomes under its 2016-27 Programme and Budget.

The lessons drawn coming out of the work of the ILO in this field lead to recognition that the rural communities have great potential, and call for integrated approaches at all levels. This activity, organized by ILO in collaboration with the Lao Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW), aims to analyze the potential and the synergies, along two axes:

## Sustainable tourism in rural areas

For the ILO<sup>1</sup>, sustainable tourism is made up of three pillars: social justice, economic development and integration of the environment. The ILO is committed to fostering local/rural progress by means of the maximizing of the contribution of tourism to the economic prosperity of the destinations, and should generate revenue and decent work for the workers, without affecting the surroundings and the culture of the place of destination, and should ensure the viability and competitiveness of the destinations and the companies, in order that they may continue to prosper and to generate long-term benefits. The rural areas frequently find themselves in situations of economic decline, as a consequence of the fall in agricultural production, the loss of a part of their human resources (who emigrate to the cities), and the thin infrastructure endowment. Promotion of sustainable tourism in these regions

may be an instrument for development that permits not only protection of heritage and promotion of the cultural identity of the community, but also diversification of the economy and creation of new jobs that help to settle population and improve the quality of life.

This approach entails strategies that base the tourist offering in development of the natural and cultural resources of the territory, including its agricultural and agro-livestock products and the traditional livelihoods.

Within this framework, short chains – in addition to being economic activities of the territory – contribute to the valuing of the agro-food heritage that constitutes the main tourist resource of the offer of the destinations for rural tourism, community tourism and culinary tourism – in short, forms that turn on the local culture, the traditional means of agricultural and livestock production, local cooking and the agricultural landscape.

## Shortening rural supply chains

Recent lessons learned from the supply chains for foodstuffs show that food systems are increasingly linked, from the producer to the consumer, and the emerging trend for short supply chains to contribute not only to helping in diversification of the rural economy, but also for sustainable empowerment of rural actors:

- The reduction of the number of businesses that participate in a supply chain between the producer of a raw material and the end customer, may increase the portion of the final price received by the participants.
- Fewer steps may reduce the costs for the consumers and help everyone to know where the raw materials come from. Direct sales (from the original producer to the end customer) are the shortest supply chains.

- The businesses that participate in local food projects may find new routes for selling more products and attract new kinds of customers. Stronger connections may be established between the agricultural and tourist sectors and that of local food supply.



## Who should participate?

This training programme and study visits have been particularly designed for professionals and political decision-makers who participate in the design and implementation of policies, programmes and initiatives for sustainable tourism and private sector development.



## Objective

Following this training programme, participants will be able to:

- Understand the concepts and practices of sustainable tourism and short supply chains;
- Analyze the challenges and opportunities for promoting these approaches in rural development, in terms of creation of decent employment and social inclusion;
- Apply these approaches to the design of policies and initiatives in the rural setting.



## Contents and structure

This activity will be structured around three strands:

- Classroom sessions: including interchange of knowledge through discussions in round tables and group work, case studies and studies of best practices (three days).
- Study visits to experiences in and around Luang Prabang, and participative feedback as regards the study visits (two days).



## Languages

This training course is given in English.



## Learning from real experiences

This training programme is based on real examples, and great importance is given to the interaction and interchange of knowledge between the participants, both with international experts as well as with professionals operating in Asia, Europe and Latin America.

The participants will be asked to present their own experiences, to learn from each visit and to feed back to the group so as to together analyze possible applications in their own contexts.



## Application and tuition

**Venue:** Luang Prabang, Lao PDR.

**Dates:** May 22 to 26, 2017

**Fees:** €1,000 (including tuition and study visits). A limited number of fellowships are available to qualifying candidates.

Participants are expected to cover travel costs, accommodation and meals (lunches and snacks provided at the venue).

Enrolment online at <http://intranetp.ilo.org/SHN/A3510641/en>

**Application deadline:** 30 April 2017

**Contacts:** rural@ilo.org

1. Practical guide on sustainable tourism and poverty reduction