

Adventure Travel Guide Training for local guides to bolster Adventure Tourism

Context

Competencies (qualification and performance standards) of adventure travel guides largely determine the quality of services provided to adventure seeking tourists in Nepal - a mecca for adventure lovers and thrill seekers. However, the majority of adventure guides in Nepal are identified only as pathfinders, logistics managers or technical/operational managers. For a country with soaring potential for adventure tourism that requires specialized adventure travel guides, majority of the guides lack the technical skills and knowledge of safety and security management as well as adequate knowledge to interpret the culture and history of the mountainous landscape.



Practical classes on risk analysis and safety management at Shivapuri National Park.

To fill this void in the tourism industry, the **Adventure Travel Guide Training** was organized to strengthen the capacity of trekking guides to provide top-of-the-line services to adventure travelers. The objective of the training programme is to help elevate the ability of local guides to take on the role of a trip leader, a role predominantly undertaken by western guides on adventure travel trips and help improve the quality of experiences offered to tourists and enhance the industry standards. This training forms a part of the **industry standard development intervention** under the tourism portfolio as well as post-earthquake rebuilding through standardization and up-scaling of core competencies.

An 8 day training: From wilderness first aid to cultural interpretation

An eight-day adventure travel guide training programme, the first of its kind in Nepal, was organized by Samarth-NMDP in co-ordination with Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal (TAAN), Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) and Wilderness Medical Associates International starting 13th June, 2016 to 20th June, 2016. Twenty two trekking guides were provided training on five core competencies: medical training – wilderness first aid; customer service and group management; natural and cultural history

interpretation; interpretive techniques; and sustainability issues. The training programme consisted both classroom based theoretical sessions as well as field based practical sessions.

The closing day of the training programme concluded with a ceremony where the participants were awarded with certificates on the completion of the programme by the **Minister for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation (MOCTCA)**. The participants received internationally recognized certificates from Adventure EDU of ATTA and medical certificate from Wilderness Medical Associates.

“It was a great learning experience for me. The programme has created a platform where I can share my skills and knowledge with my staff and other guides. I am glad that I got this opportunity because female guides do not get a lot of exposure where we can improve our competencies and skills. We need to include more training for women and if possible in the rural areas of the country.”

Pasang Dolma Sherpa Lama
A female participant of the training programme

What Next

The programme aims at organizing additional training programs to trekking guides to uplift the tourism sector by improving local human resources and providing top-of-the-line services to adventure travelers. Along with such training activities, the programme also aims at reaching out to more training guides through Training of Trainers (ToT) which will focus on building the capacity of trekking guides to become professional trainers serving as a platform to train additional trekking guides as per international standards.

Development Impact

“My first visit to Nepal was 11 years ago where I trained Nepali guides in Khumbu and it has always been my passion to come back to Nepal and continue my work as a medical expert. Despite coming back a couple of times, I have not been able to continue my training due to lack of resources and funds. I am glad to have this opportunity and very happy to see such investments being made to your own people and country.”

Susan Purvis,
Wilderness Medical Associates

The Adventure Guide Training will serve as a benchmark for the required criteria to become a certified adventure travel guide. This will also help eliminate the reliance of expedition groups and adventure travelers on hiring foreign trip leaders and advisors instead of opting for local trekking guides. This will eventually help the capacity of local trekking guides and will support the economic growth of adventure tourism that will subsequently lead to high value tourism. All in all, such trained professionals will help provide quality

services to adventure travelers making Nepal the true destination for adventure lovers. This in the long run will help to increase the number of tourists visiting the country and eventually uplifting the tourism sector.



2. Mock drill of a medical emergency.



1. Tourism Minister addressing the closing day of the programme.

Pictures of the
eight day
**Adventure
Travel Guide
Training**



3. The camp site in Shivapuri for practical training on wilderness medical emergency



4. Briefing on the way to the camp site



5. Class room session of the training



6. Practical training session in Shivapuri National Park