

Government to leverage GHT brand for improving tourism infrastructure

Intervention: GHT brand development
Sector: Tourism



Background of GHT

Originally designed as a single long distance trail along the length of the country (1700 km), the Great Himalaya Trail (GHT) has become a synonym for trekking tourism in Nepal and has been featured in many high-profile international media. GHT has received excellent national and international exposure since its launch in late 2010. In addition, some 20 Nepali celebrities have conducted the traverse in support of awareness creation on a variety of livelihood challenges affecting mountain residents

Constraints

However, the quality of Nepal's physical destination facilities as well as its service delivery does not meet international expectations and creates an unsustainable shift towards a high-volume, low value model. The situation is further aggravated by a weak and unsupportive policy and regulatory environment; a largely informal industry, lacking in innovation and formal linkages along the value chain; and high exposure to the impact of climate change.

Intervention and preliminary result

A new standard for products and services needed to be established, spearheaded by the positive exposure of the GHT, as a quality product in Nepal and abroad. Samarth-NMDP facilitated a dialogue between the government (Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation) and the private sector (TAAN, NMA, NATTA & others) on the development of the Great Himalaya Trails as a brand. As a result, **GHT brand has been incorporated in the action plan of Nepal Tourism Strategy 2015-2024 and the Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation has allocated a designated budget to it.**

Next steps

Going forward, the GHT Brand will be strengthened and applied to various accommodation establishments, guiding services, information products and others. This will provide the basis for a certification system along the various sections of the GHT reflecting the positive attributes of Nepal's mountain tourism.

Expected impact on the beneficiary

Local entrepreneurs who adhere to the standards of the GHT brand will be able to charge higher prices for their products and services which will structurally increase their income. In addition, specific marketing activities and listing on the GHT website and associated social media, will increase exposure and subsequent demand from visitors.

