STEP 2 - QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

TOURIST AND STAFF SURVEY

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For external use
ABOUT STEP 2 - QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE STUDY

For the second step of this project, it was important to understand what travellers are looking for and what type of profiles Battambang is attracting. It was therefore necessary to gather people’s opinion about Battambang and its existing activities, what people missed while being there, their interest in helping local NGOs and their profile and travel habits. The aim was to have an insight of what people are looking for while being on site and have a better understanding of customers’ needs/interests.

THE SURVEYS

We decided to create different surveys according to the people we wanted to partner with: tourists, expats, tour providers, hotels/hostels and restaurants/cafes. Unfortunately, due to the current situation (COVID-19), we’ve only focused on tourists and staff surveys. In order to gather travellers’ opinions, we’ve shared the survey:

1. On Facebook pages such as backpacking groups, expats groups, les Français au Cambodge...
2. On CFI’s official FB page by writing a post about it
3. By email to internal contacts
4. On an article in the Battambang Travellers’ online newspaper
5. By sharing it on our personal FB pages and people we’ve met while being in Battambang.

The staff survey was shared internally on email.
1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

A both sided research

For this quantitative/qualitative research we decided to create surveys in Google Forms in order to collect online data. Due to the current situation (COVID-19), this type of administration was the most suitable for our study.

TOURIST SURVEY
Concerning the tourist survey, we had an ongoing collection of data for around a month. We extended the length of survey in order to gather as many responses as possible. The survey targeted both people who had already stayed in Battambang or planned to stay there in the future.

After one month, we had gathered 44 responses. Even though the number of responses was lower than expected, it still helped us to have clear answers to our questions.

STAFF SURVEY
Our staff survey was created in order to gather CFI’s opinions and concerns. It was shared internally via email and on our private Facebook page. 26 staff members participated in the survey.

The aim was to make sure that all our staff felt comfortable with the idea of having visitors coming to CFI and were keen about our workshop project.

CFI makes its staff a priority in every decision, without exception. Deciding if CFI should, or not, get involved in ethical tourism remains a collective internal decision.
According to the latest available data from the Ministry of Tourism, Battambang is Cambodia’s fifth most visited city. The city welcomed in 2015 close to 600,000 visitors (including 95,000 international travellers) and stands behind Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, Sihanoukville and Kampot. The city benefits from a very good location along the main road axis linking Thailand to Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. A factor which already is reflected in public transport: Battambang is one of the few destinations to be linked by regular bus services to Bangkok as well as regular domestic services to Phnom Penh, Poipet and Siem Reap. Regular bus services have helped to attract visitors.

In the last few years, Battambang emerged as an alternative destination for tourists interested in colonial architecture. The city gained special fame with the presence of Phare Ponleu Selpak Circus, an NGO initiative which started in the early 1990s with art and music courses for traumatized abandoned children.

And it is now the Cambodian government, which is starting to look closely at Battambang’s potential. Recently, Cambodia’s Minister of Tourism Thong Khon mentioned studies conducted in cooperation with Hungary to find ways to develop the city into a new heritage tourist destination. The historical town revolves around the old Governor’s House with the provincial museum and a couple of historical temples. Battambang is currently applying for UNESCO world heritage status.

*Latest data found on the Tourism Cambodia, consulted Thursday 21st of May 2020 website, https://www.tourismcambodia.com/tourist-information/tourist-statistic.htm
Out of 44 respondents, we collected data from 28 (63.8%) women and 16 men (36.4%). Even if the majority of respondents are women, this result can’t allow us to conclude that a majority of travellers coming to Battambang are women.

Concerning the age of the respondents, half of them were between 18 and 44 years old with respectively 29.5% for the 18 to 34 and 27.3% for the 35 to 44 years old. Once again, this might not reflect the reality as the survey was exclusively shared via Internet and social media. Even if we tried to reach as many people as possible, the survey’s access was a limitation.
3. TRAVELLERS' PROFILE

A short term destination

According to the survey results, Battambang tends to mainly attract individual travellers either travelling alone or in couples, and families with kids. Small and larger tour groups only account for a small portion of the travellers who’ve been in Battambang or are planning to come.

Half of the respondents stayed or were planning to stay an average of 1 to 3 nights. Battambang remains a destination that attracts short term visitors.

1. Which best describes how you are travelling WHILE IN BATTAMBANG (Please choose 1 answer)

- Individual (solo traveler) - 44.1%
- Couple (2 people) - 25%
- Small group of friends - 9.1%
- Family with kids - 18.2%
- Small tour groups (<10) - 4.7%
- Larger tour group (10+ people) - 2.2%
- Hiring a scooter and exploring the countryside - 0.9%

44 responses

2. How long are you staying or were you planning to stay in Battambang? (Please choose 1 answer)

- 1 night - 0.9%
- 2 - 3 nights - 25%
- 4 - 6 nights - 47.7%
- 7+ nights - 0.9%

44 responses
4. ACTIVITIES

Flexible travellers relying on word of mouth

75% of the survey’s respondents had 1 or 2 ideas about what they wanted to do while being in Battambang but, nothing arranged or booked ahead. This factor is an opportunity as travellers might not hear from us before arriving but could be made aware of our program via hotels and other tourist hotspots. The fact that people remain flexible in their travel plans leaves us a door open to catch their interest during their stay.

Not so surprisingly, most respondents looked online for information about Battambang’s activities. Another high percentage relied on word of mouth and social media. Customer satisfaction and having a good visibility online will equally be important for the success of the project.
4. ACTIVITIES

A door open for new activities

Most of the respondents seem to be mainly ok with the amount of activities available in Battambang. Though, as the majority was not fully happy, we believe that adding a new activity might not overload the existing offerings.

5. Are you happy with the amount of activities available or have you been looking for more things to do in Battambang? (Please choose a number on this scale) - តើអ្នកស្រស់ស្អាតការឈ្នះការស្វែងយល់ពីការធ្វើការជាមួយប៉ុន្មានអត្ថបទនៃការស្វែងយល់បែបនេះនៅក្នុងបាយភ្នំប៉ាត្តាំងទេ? (សូមជ្រើសុំលេខស្ថិតិឈ្មោះតូចចុះស្វែងយល់).

The main activities undertaken by the survey’s respondents were visiting the usual tourist activities (Bamboo Train, Bat Caves), as well as walking around the town and taking a tuk tuk tour in the countryside.

6. What activities have you done, or are you planning to do WHILE IN BATTAMBANG? (Please tick any you have done already, or that you plan to do) - តើអ្នកបានធ្វើការណែនាំឬអ្នកស្រស់ស្អាតបានធ្វើការណែនាំឬប្រាជ្ញបានធ្វើការណែនាំដែលអ្នកមានចង់ធ្វើការណែនាំ, ឬអ្នកស្រស់ស្អាតមានចង់ធ្វើការណែនាំ. (តើអ្នកបានធ្វើសិក្សាពីឈ្មោះសម្រាប់ការធ្វើសិក្សាដែលអ្នកបានធ្វើចម្លង៖ ឬអ្នកស្រស់ស្អាតមានចង់ធ្វើសិក្សាដែលអ្នកបានធ្វើចម្លង៖)
5. INTEREST IN NEW ACTIVITIES

High interest in discovering the local culture and local projects

On the graph below, we can see that participants would have been or are interested in seeing more countryside, discovering the local culture but also local challenges and projects. A very positive result for us! 26 people would also consider volunteering in an NGO while being in Battambang. People are willing to help out which represents a good opportunity for us to catch them.

We can definitely confirm this trend by looking at the results below. 40% of respondents would be interested in visiting a local NGO and learn more about what they are doing. Opening an activity at CFI would enable us to respond to this demand.
6. THE WORKSHOP

A positive and encouraging feedback

After clearly identifying an interest in helping local NGOs, we wanted to know if our first idea of launching a workshop was something travellers would consider doing. Out of 44 respondents, 36 would be interested in participating in such a workshop.

It was also important for us to identify the topics people would like to learn more about. As we can see, the three main topics are girls' education, tradition VS modern society and job opportunities for girls.
6. THE WORKSHOP

Cross analysis with staff survey

As we’ve seen before, travellers would be interested in participating in an educational workshop. Yet, at CFI, staff’s well being comes before anything else. We therefore wanted to make sure that our staff was also excited about this project. We created a survey to gather their opinions and concerns. We can see below that our staff are also keen about this idea..

Concerning the potential topics, our staff would like us to cover in priority gender inequality, girls’ education and employment opportunities. With a similar interest as travellers, our topics will reflect our work at CFI and try to answer visitors’ questions.
7. STAFF FEEDBACK

CFI and ethical tourism

After clearing up the fact that this project would attract visitors, it was important for us to make sure that our staff would feel comfortable with this idea. First of all, it is important to say that our staff liked the idea of CFI being involved in ethical tourism.

The majority would feel comfortable with visitors coming to CFI which is also a positive result.
7. STAFF FEEDBACK

Happy about interaction but less about distraction

Yet, even if most of our staff feel comfortable with having visitors coming to CFI, less feel comfortable with having people visiting their office. As a result, we are planning to open discussions with the team in order to understand if it is a matter of privacy, potential disruption or something else that concerns them.

Because funnily enough, all our staff would be happy to speak with visitors.
7. STAFF FEEDBACK

Advantages and disadvantages

We have also wanted to know what benefits it would have to welcome visitors at CFI. According to our staff it would increase our visibility, enable us to share our work with others and give us the opportunity to learn more about different points of views.

On the other hand, our staff strongly fear that it could be too time consuming, could harm our beneficiaries or could be difficult because of the language barrier. Once again we are planning to open a discussion with the team to find out more about those concerns and think of solutions to minimize or avoid them.
CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

POSITIONING AND TARGETING

After gathering these pieces of information and identifying a clear interest from potential visitors in helping local NGOs and participating in an educational workshop, we will pursue this idea and start the planning and designing.

From the workshop components, to the targeting, positioning, distribution, pricing and promotion, we will start putting all the pieces together to respond appropriately to the travellers’ needs and market trends.

As mentioned in the report, we are also going to open discussions with our team in order to have a deeper understanding of the survey’s results. We also plan on preparing and delivering a cultural communication training in the next few weeks to raise awareness around cultural differences and potential misunderstandings.

Concerning the workshop, we have attributed one topic to each team at CFI in order to discuss potential scenarios and create an activity as realistic as possible.