**CHAPTER 6**

**6.1 Players of Sustainable Heritage Tourism**

The ownership of heritage sites is important to understand, for each type of ownership has unique management issues, economic implication and human resource repercussions. The three sectors that tend to own different types of heritage attractions play the significant role in development of sustainable tourism in their close cooperation with local communities.

The following table demonstrates these three types of ownership; provide the example of historic building that each type of ownership might include, and describes the primary and secondary motivation for each sector.

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| **Sector** | **Example of Attractions Owned**  | **Primary Motivation** | **Secondary Motivation** |
| **Public** | Archaeological ruins, Ancient monuments, historic homes/building, Parks, Museum, Forests. | Conservation | Public access, education, revenue, catalyst for tourism development.  |
| **Private** | Historic Theme Parks, Museums, Wineries and distilleries, culture center, Art galleries, Industrial plants and mines. | Profit Maximization/Revenue | Boost Visitation, entertainment, public image enhancement. |
| **Voluntary/NGO’s** | Historic buildings, Museums, Heritage centers, Trail. | Conservation by self-sufficiency  | Entertainment, education |

**6.1.1 The Role of Government.**

Government plays its own role in the areas of its heritage attractions ownership. Public ownership means that a site is owned and possibly operated by government organizations at different levels of federal, regional, zone and district.

The public sector in most countries has assumed the major role in heritage conservation. What are the reason behind public in owning and conservation of heritage attractions?

1. **Market failure**: This occurs when market forces are unable to support heritage places because of inadequate financial resources/earnings. Government budgets usually provide a means for overcoming these shortfalls to some degree. Likewise, the market is inclined to be short–term oriented despite the fact that the environmental effects of tourism are long term issues.
2. **Public Interest**: Historic features might be of such high universal value that their rescue/to be saved/ is reasoned to be in the ‘public interest’ rather than in the control of any particular group.
3. **Historical public ownership:** State owned buildings that have been state owned throughout much of history usually continue to be once they have achieved some degree of heritage status.
4. **Political Consideration:** Many monuments commemorate state achievements like winning war and political independence constitute an important part of nation building.
5. **Economic Considerations:** Public agencies almost always have an interest in increasing job opportunities, earning regional income and establishing strong tax base. Therefore, they realize that conservation may be encouraged through economic motives, such as tourism development.

Government with all these aim to conserve heritage sites plays the significant role in development of sustainable heritage tourism development. However, the community-managed sites have less uniformity and few explicit management plans and strategies.

***Exercise: Identify heritage sites in Ethiopia owned by government as per the reason discussed above.***

**6.1.2 The Role of Private/Tourism Industry**

Although the primary goal of private sector in owning the attractions is profit, heritage managers at this place must also consider the conservation and education domain. The three basic elements of tourism means accommodation, accessibility and amenities are closely interdependent. Tourism industries like Tour operators, car rentals, hotels and travel agencies engaging in different business sector of tourism cannot survive or properly operate with out destination/ places to be visited. Private sectors, during their decision in investment of tourism industry, should properly consider or take in account the destinations/attraction sites whether it is natural or manmade in the their sustainability so as their business to be sustainable.

In these cases tourism industries can play sustainability role by giving codes of conducts for visitors, means what they should do and not do in museums, historic sites, national parks etc, enough information for tourists visiting the site about the culture and norms of the destination societies etc. The tourism industries needs to understand the concept of carrying capacity for which destination can be deteriorated if large number of visitors at a time sent to the sites.

***Exercise: Take one of tourism industry surrounding you and assess their activities in development of sustainable heritage tourism to give them professional suggestion.***

**6.1.3 The Role of Volunteers/NGO’s**

Among the most common types of heritage attractions owned and operated by non-profit organizations are museums, cemetery/memorial perks, heritage trails, and historic buildings are the one. As their primary goal is conservation by self sufficiency, they usually charge entrance fees, to continue to exist and reinvestment for the site maintenance.

***Exercise: Are all NGO’s are said to be conservationist? Discuss.***

**6.1.4 The Role of Local Communities**

It is important to understand that local residents are a part of players of sustainable heritage tourism development, the tourism products; as a result, they should be treated with respect, their concerns and ideas have to be addressed to make them key parts of tourism development. ***How?***

This in theory is supposed to reduce the negative social impacts of tourism destination on communities. The notion follows that if residents are empowered to determine their own futures, they will be inclined to criticize development effort and have higher tolerance level for tourists.

The public participation have critical role in development of sustainable heritage tourism in destination areas. These can be done through allowing or giving them the chance in participation in decision making and benefit of tourism.

1. **Participation in decision making**

Means that the residents have opportunity to voice their own hopes, desire and fears for heritage tourism development and contribute to the planning process from their own expertise and experience, there by gaining a meaning voice in the organization and administration of tourism. In this context it is important for heritage manager, whether governmental, private or NGO’s, by every means in their power, to stay close to the ‘grass root’, where histories are made and remade. In terms of heritage tourism, resident involvement in planning gives communities an opportunity to voice their concerns for the ways their heritage will be protected and demonstrated to tourists. It should allow them a say in which artifacts, building and places they would like to have promoted as tourism resources and which one they would prefer to keep hidden.

This can cultivate community pride and sense of ownership of heritage tourism as it helps them reclaim their own cultural history and allows them to decide how it will be portrayed/ exposed to the broader society.

This is particularly crucial in indigenous communities as there are fewer people with each passing generation who know and understand the meaning of traditions, culture and artifacts. It is important among ethnic minorities, for there is a danger that dominant ethnic minorities and their heritage may over power and eventually eliminate intentionally or unintentionally the heritage of minorities.

As a means of promoting the principles of sustainable development (E.g. harmony, quality, holistic development), all stack holders ought to be encouraged to participate in heritage tourism development. Heritage conservation advocacy groups, public agencies, business associations that may be benefited from grow of tourism, and non governmental organizations are all stakeholders that have an interest in heritage conservation and tourism.

Involving residents and other stakeholders is not an easy task, but it is the most sustainable approach that can be taken. Such efforts require some money, and patience, and are some times arduous/ difficult to co-ordinate.

Moderated/sensible, open town meeting, surveys, round table discussions and site visits for residents have all been proposed as an appropriate ways of involving local communities to maximize their contribution in sustainable heritage tourism development.

1. **Participation in Benefits of Tourism**

The other part of participatory tourism, is taking part in benefit of tourism, means that the resident should have an opportunities to gain financial and in other ways from industry’s development. Community based tourism planning should also include creating opportunities for the people to own business, to work in industry-related employment, to receive training and to be educated about the role and effect heritage tourism in their region so as to increase their role in development of sustainable heritage tourism .

Although this seems like common sense, in many parts of the world, significant socio-cultural, political and economic conditions still constrain many would-be entrepreneurs from participating in tourism in this way. Small scale locally owned business tends to have the best influences by supporting local people and minimizing economic leakage to the out side.

Some sustainability advocates in recent years have argued that this kind of small scale tourism will remain more financially and economically viable in the long term than rapid mass tourism development that is sometimes taken over by out side conglomerates or multinational corporations.

Generally, as far as local communities are the owner of heritage sites, which are the key for the development of heritage tourism, they should be considered in all dimensions. The above discussed owners of heritage sites, means government, private and NGO’s, are the secondary participant in the developing sustainable heritage tourism. While the societies lives many decades with the attractions and know detail of the history, nobody using its own financial and political power, isolating them and thinking of any conservation decision is fancy which is not tangible.

So, locals are whom all actions should be discussed with them, and any developmental activities done to develop tourism should consider the resident, in which they are expected to be the first share of all facilities like water and power supply, telephone, road and other amenities surrounding the destination. These helps in bringing balanced regional development for which the societies could have access to the door of modernization like education and internet, leading to the change of their living style when they are economically capable.

**Exercise:**

1. Assess the level of community involvement in the development of sustainable heritage tourism in your surrounding and come up with the constructive recommendations based on your finding.
2. What will happen if government force the local residents and relocate them in far distance from the heritage sites and close the way they access to the area and open the destination for only visitors? Discuss.
3. Do you think there will be sustainability issues hindering the investment project to survive in tourism market? Discuss.