

Participation and sharing in community based tourism development: Misi Village, Turkey

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Developed countries, being aware of the fact that sustainable development cannot be achieved without participation of the local communities, carry out projects in different sectors with the guidance and support of different foundations and associations such as World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These projects mostly aims to diminish poverty and overcome regional imbalances. When it comes to tourism, it is observed that sustainable programs and projects focusing on the community based tourism (CBT) are being increasingly employed in less developed and underdeveloped countries. However, there is relative evidence that the large majority of CBT initiatives enjoy very little success. CBT initiatives are generally small-scale and it is not possible for all members of larger communities to be involved and thus derive benefits. Unfortunately, this results in uneven distribution of the benefits of tourism development among the locals. Moreover, since communities are hierarchical, often elites garner the benefits of CBT development. The marginalized and disadvantaged members of the community on the periphery could be down to class, gender, religion, culture or political affiliation, and they may not benefits from the developments around their community. In these circumstances, it can be argued that CBT is not able to deliver on its basic premise of community participation and the equitable share of benefits to all community members. Therefore, this study aims to examine the perceived benefits and costs of CBT project in the village of Misi in Bursa, Turkey. Further, it is aimed to determine the benefits supplied to local community by the development of CBT project. Finally, the study aims to reveal how CBT based benefits and costs are shared among the local community. For the purpose of the study, structured and semi-structured interviews were made to collect data, and the data was analyzed descriptively. Study results suggest that not all members of the community benefits from the

development of tourism in their community. The study ends with discussions of the results and implications for the tourism planners.