Partnerships for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Cultural Heritage Sites

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Abstract

Cultural heritage sites are among the most important tourist attractions in any country. The importance of "Sustainability" has emerged as a result of the direct relationship between the environment and development, and thus "Sustainable Tourism" must be environmentally sensitive and culturally appropriate, in addition to achieving economic benefits. And to develop cultural heritage sites, we should consider the intertwined relationship of many relevant parties. This research paper evaluates the roles of different bodies that are directly related to the conservation of cultural heritage sites. Hence, to establish guidelines for a sustainable development approach, the research relied on the descriptive-analytical approach through conducting an extensive literature review followed by a comparative analytical study of some global experiences. This paper thrived to exchange the gained knowledge to the local case study of Anakato. Anakato has unique and important elements of cultural heritage, and this ecolodge is an individual initiative to achieve sustainability. The research proved that achieving coordination and partnership is challenging, but it is a key factor to achieve sustainability, and the paper also concluded that coordination and partnership are essential for achieving sustainable tourism development in cultural heritage sites.

Abbreviations

ADF	African Development Fund
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
EQI	International Environmental Quality Company
CH	Cultural Heritage
CT	Cultural Tourism
IFC	International Finance Corporation.
MMO	Mundo Maya Organization
NGO	Non-government Organization
STD	Sustainable Tourism Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNWTO	World Tourism

1 Introduction

Cultural heritage sites in many countries were subjected to many cultural and social changes that have led to their deterioration. However, as of the last century, many intellectual streams have called for the preservation of cultural heritage sites have emerged (Ibrahim, 2013). With the increasing trend of the tourism industry and its revenues, there is a need to strike a balance between the protection of cultural heritage and tourism development (Al-Naiem, 2005). International organizations such as UNESCO and UNTWO emphasize the importance of cooperation and the participation between different parties in the process of cultural heritage site conservation. The contribution of this research is to address and analyze this interrelation, justify the importance of this issue, and explore the role of various parties and bodies to achieve STD in the heritage sites. This research highlighted three main sectors that have a direct impact on the conservation process (government sector, private sector, and NGOs). The research methodology is based on the descriptive-analytical approach. Accordingly, a literature review for references dealing with the topic of the

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research was conducted, selecting global experiments for the analytical study, and Anakato Lodge in Aswan was chosen to conduct the field study.

2 Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Tourism

CH in the past meant only tangible heritage. Now the definition of CH is much broader and includes *"All creative expressions of people's existence in the past, near past and present that have been passed on to the present generation by past generations"* (UNESCAP, 2008). According to the previous definition issued by UNESCO, cultural heritage is divided into tangible and intangible heritage as the following:

- Tangible heritage: "*Physical manifestation or symbol of cultural expressions or traditions of the societies that are living or lived in the area. Monuments, traditional buildings, archeological sites, temples, historic cities, etc. are examples of tangible heritage.*" Tangible cultural heritage is divided into the tangible cultural heritage that can be transferred and cannot be transferred (UNESCAP, 2008).
- Intangible heritage: "*Non-physical manifestation of cultural expressions and traditions of a society that has its roots in the cultural values and practices of the previous generations. Traditional ways of life, social practices, festivals, music, crafts, etc., are examples of intangible heritage*" (UNESCAP, 2008).

There is a dynamic relationship between tourism and heritage. Tourism has been seen as a tool for bringing visitors to cultural sites, as cultural heritage and its events are sources of attraction for tourists to do cultural experiences (EENCA, 2017). Tourism can generate funding and educate societies, and when managed well, it can be an effective factor for sustainable development. Meanwhile, mass tourism or poor tourism management can threaten the nature and the characteristics of heritage, in addition to the deterioration of the environment, culture, and lifestyles of the hosting communities. We must emphasize that tourism should achieve economic benefits to the host communities and provide important means and motivations to preserve their cultural heritage and practices (UNESCAP, 2008). Also, CT is an incentive to preserve the elements of CH in tourist destinations, where it helps to preserve these elements as important tourist attractions (Bahaa-El-Din, 2005). The definition of CT according to UNWTO is *"The movements of persons, essentially for cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other events, visits to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art"* (UNESCAP, 2008). According to this definition, the concept of CT is no longer limited to visiting monuments and temples only but has become an interactive experience with the local community. Hence, social values, customs, and traditions of the local community have become one of the most important tourist attractions, by attending exhibitions, festivals, events, and purchasing traditional local products.

As a result of the rapid expansion of the tourism sector, a lot of tourist destinations are facing pressure on their natural, cultural, social, and economic environment. Besides, unbalanced tourism growth aiming to achieve short-term benefits often leads to negative impacts that harm the environment and societies (Mahmoud, 2011). The importance of "Sustainability" has emerged as a result of the direct relationship between the environment and development, thus "Sustainable Tourism" must be environmentally sensitive and culturally appropriate, in addition to achieving economic benefits, especially to the host communities (EENCA, 2017). Furthermore, the involvement and cooperation of local community representatives, environmental protection workers, tourism operators, and policymakers are essential to achieving sustainable tourism and strengthening the protection of heritage resources for future generations (UNESCAP, 2008).

3 Challenges of Sustainable Tourism Development in Cultural Heritage Sites:

The following part is illustrating the expected challenges facing sustainable tourism development in cultural heritage sites:

- Protection of cultural heritage: CH resources are including both tangible and intangible heritage. These resources are usually scarce and cannot be recreated, so protecting and managing these resources is the biggest challenge for STD. As the main goal of the preservation is to protect the cultural significance of CH (UNESCAP, 2008).
- Lack of information: To have an integrated approach to sustainable development in cultural heritage sites, it is important that the following relevant information is collected: cultural resources, tourism needs, and available infrastructure. This information helps to determine what is available and what needs to be done (UNESCAP, 2008).
- Technical training: Many countries are lacking trained and qualified personnel to manage CT resources and

high-quality tourism products. Providing training for local people to participate in cultural tourism activities leads to achieving economic benefits for the local community, which leads to STD (NWHO, 1999).

- Management of cultural heritage sites: The lack of plans to manage tourism in cultural heritage sites leads to many problems such as pollution, overcrowding, and other problems. Good management in CT sites can identify and prevent threats and conduct corrective actions in time (Ruoss & Alfarè, 2013).
- Local community behavior: Local communities play an important role in tourists' reception at tourist destinations. The host communities should therefore be empowered to take decisions concerning tourism and to set tourism guidelines if they desired to. Accordingly, the challenge, however, is to facilitate the integration of residents into the tourism economy (NWHO, 1999).
- Laws and legislations: It means having a framework of the legislative act for construction works and changing in the cultural heritage sites, and the purpose of these laws is to control and direct processes to serve the overall development (Al-Saleh, 2002).
- Funding: One of the biggest obstacles facing tourism projects in cultural heritage sites is securing the funds needed for sustainable development. The funding has many forms such as funds from the government, funds from the private sector through investment (BTB, 2008), donations of goods and services, funds from corporate foundations, funds from a festival or other large special event, and funds from international institutions (THC, 2010).
- Marketing: It is considered a major challenge in CH sites. These challenges are represented in increasing visitors' numbers, increasing length of stay, increasing daily spending, and ensuring tourists return and/or pass good recommendations to others. There is a strategy meant to attract "big spenders.` And this strategy can make a major contribution to sustainability, by increasing benefits (revenue and jobs) without increasing visitor numbers (NWHO, 1999).
- Coordination and partnership: Cultural heritage sites should be where all stakeholders cooperate through effective partnerships to maximize conservation and presentation outcomes, while minimizing threats and adverse impacts from tourism (Ibrahim, 2013).
- The negative impact on the environment: Environmental impact assessments (EIA) should be carried out before any new facility such as accommodations, visitor centers, roads, waste treatment and disposal, heritage trails, tourist shops, and other constructed facilities, and then identify the necessary procedures to reduce the negative impact on the environment, to achieve the sustainable development (Ibrahim, 2013).

4 The Role of Relevant Parties in Facing the Challenges of Sustainable Tourism Development in Cultural Heritage Sites:

There are many parties whose relations are intertwined with the development of cultural heritage sites, including the government sector, the private sector, local community, civil society (NGOs), international organizations and bodies, local and international financial institutions, in addition to experts (engineers, project designers and managers, and environmental experts) (Ibrahim, 2013). However, the focus of this research will only be on three sectors, which are the main parties that have direct contact with the cultural heritage sites and the tourism process therein. These sectors are the government sector, the private sector, and civil society sector (NGOs):

4.1 Governmental Sector

The responsibility of the government is the following: developing plans and schedules for sustainable tourism development; provides an integrated system of legislation and laws; creating a comprehensive database of cultural heritage sites; establishing heritage and natural reserves; granting licenses after studying the environmental impacts of projects; and conducting environmental awareness for society (El-Khasawna, 2008).

4.2 Private Sector

The role of the private sector is to take responsibility for basic infrastructure, ownership, and/or management of the natural and cultural heritage that serves as tourism attractions (NWHO, 1999), to rely on local laborers after providing them with the required training; to develop competitive tourism products suitable for sustainable tourism development; and to promote sustainable tourism projects (El-Khasawna, 2008).

4.3 Civil Society Sector (NGOs)

The importance of NGOs is that they have the ability and flexibility to work and interact with the local community and the different levels of the population (Ghawy, 2010). They also can coordinate partnerships between stakeholders (NWHO, 1999). Their role is in providing cultural awareness and technical training for the local community to emphasize the economic benefits that can be obtained by implementing the principles of sustainable tourism development and protection of cultural and natural resources (Ghawy, 2010).

A key goal of sustainable tourism is to provide benefits—especially economic benefits—to local people. These benefits can be achieved through the participation of residents in the tourism or auxiliary industries. Therefore, when local communities can connect to their personal, local, regional, or national heritage, they are often eager to protect their cultural resources and achieve STD (NWHO, 1999). The following Table 1 gives a summary of the three sectors' role in addressing the challenges of achieving sustainability.

Table 1 Role of the three sectors in addressing the challenges of STD in cultural heritage sites (Adapted by the researcher)

Challenges	The role of the three sectors		
	Government sector	Private sector	NGOs
Protection of the cultural heritage	Establishment of natural and heritage reserves with special provisions to preserve cultural heritage sites and natural areas	Commitment to laws and strategies for the protection of cultural heritage	Connecting the sense of ownership to community members, so that the tourism and heritage resources are taken care of and preserved
Lack of Information	Conduct a comprehensive database on cultural heritage sites, internal and international tourist movement	Participation in the database compilation	Providing the necessary information for all participants in the tourism development process
Technical training	Conduct training courses for the local community to participate in preservation projects and tourism services	Reliance on national employment after their training and rehabilitation	Conduct technical training for the local community needed for the tourism development process
Management of cultural heritage sites	Identify tourist sites, working on the construction and support of infrastructure and support services. In addition to developing programs for monitoring and evaluation	Distributing tourism investments in different regions and taking advantage of tourist potentials and components	Training local community cadres to participate in the management of tourism projects in cultural heritage sites
Local community behavior	Conduct environmental awareness for all segments of society through various types of media	Utilizing local community capacity in employment and tourism project management	Contribute to raising the community awareness of the economic benefits that can be obtained as a result of the application of the principles of sustainable tourism development
Laws and legislations	Provide an integrated system of legislation, laws, and guidelines for the protection of environmental resources	Compliance with laws and regulations to protect the architectural heritage approved by the government sector for the investment projects	Raise the local community awareness of the importance of compliance with the laws and legislation to preserve the architectural heritage
Funding	To attract and encourage investments in the field of ecotourism by providing incentives and facilities to investors	Provide necessary infrastructure for the development of ecotourism represented in the establishment of hotels, restaurants, and amusement parks	Coordinate with international donors to obtain the necessary funding for the preservation process

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Challenges	The role of the three sectors		
	Government sector	Private sector	NGOs
Marketing	Put cultural heritage sites in the country plans and strategies and promote them through different media	Marketing tourism projects to reach the largest number of the target audience	–
Coordination and partnership	Coordination and partnership between the three sectors, achieve the expected economic benefits of tourism activity while facilitating the process of preserving cultural heritage sites, and then achieving sustainable tourism development		
The negative impact on the environment	Study the environmental impacts of projects before granting licenses	Conduct the study of environmental impact assessment of projects before their implementation	Raise the awareness of the local community about the importance of preserving the natural and cultural heritage

5 Global Experiences in Preserving Cultural Heritage

The following part is a presentation of global projects aimed at achieving sustainable tourism development for cultural heritage sites. All projects share several points, such as the existence of a distinctive urban heritage stemming from the local environment, the existence of natural heritage, and the existence of a community with its distinctive characteristics, culture, and products, while agreeing on a single goal of "conservation of natural and cultural heritage and achieving sustainable tourism development."

5.1 Dana Biosphere Reserve Project—Jordan

This reserve is located in the south of Jordan, Tafilah Governorate, and it was founded in 1989. The project received an international award from the Hanover exhibition in 1998, and it was described by World Bank President James Wolfensohn as "One of the most successful projects that the bank has contributed to financing for sustainable development" (Jordan, 2009). The project aims at preserving the natural and cultural heritage legacy of the region, exploiting natural and heritage resources in the region to maintain its sustainability, taking advantage of ecotourism to encourage and develop and promoting cooperative action in the community. In this project, the NGO (The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature) has played a key role in sustainable development, with limited roles of the government and the private sector. The Dana project has succeeded in involving the local community from the first phase of planning, and by taking advantage of the skills of the local community, and the economic return has been achieved for this community, and the urban heritage (98 archeological

sites) has been preserved and traditional crafts have been revived, as seen in Figs. 1 and 2.

The project has succeeded and achieved the expected results of sustainable development, through prepare a comprehensive study on the region, reconstruction of the village with its original stones and the traditional way, training the local population to work as tour guides, encouraging ecotourism to the reserve through the Rummana Camp, the funding problem was resolved through community contributions, then funding from the World Bank for investment project, and the contributions by the international organizations (RSCN, 2011). The conclusion is this project involved many relevant parties, where the NGO has played the key role, the local community has participated in the execution, in addition to the participation of several parties in the planning, funding, and execution of some programs that needed funding or expertise, especially investment projects (governmental and non-governmental organizations, private sector, local initiatives, international financial institutions, and agencies).

5.2 Santawani Lodge Project—Okavango Delta —Botswana—Africa

The Santawani Lodge is located in Botswana, Okavango Delta, with an area of 8000 hectares. It is a model of Botswana's sustainable tourism development. It is located in a nature reserve, constructed from local building materials and using local labor. It is the first ecotourism destination to be fully managed by local community members (Kalikawe, 2001). The project aims at poverty alleviation while achieving the objectives of preserving urban, natural, and cultural heritage, by providing financial incentives to the community to encourage participation in sustainable development and natural resource management practices (AWF,

2005). In this project, it was noted that the NGO played a key role in the conservation process, while the government's role was limited to renting the lodge, with the absence of the role of the private sector.

The NGO has developed a conservation strategy within the overall framework of Botswana's conservation strategy and following its principles. The urban and cultural heritage has been preserved, the traditional crafts have been revived, and an economic return has been achieved for the local community. The lodge has succeeded in achieving the results of sustainable development, through a commitment to international conventions signed by Botswana, which support conservation of biodiversity and sustainable tourism, a comprehensive study of the project was carried out before its execution, using local building materials and local labors only (see Fig. 3), the revival of traditional local crafts, engaging the local population in the tourism activities (see Fig. 4), using part of the lodge's profits to develop local

Fig. 3 Santawani Lodge (AWF, 2005)

Fig. 4 Santawani local community (AWF, 2005)

facilities, funding has been collected with several ways: firstly, African funding institutions (AWF) and (ADF), then from the local community, and then from the international grants (Sampéré, 2004). The conclusion is this project is the result of a partnership between NGO and community members who managed the lodge, and African and international funding institutions, with the absence of governmental & private sectors' roles.

5.3 Yaxunah Camp Project, Yucatán, Mexico

Yaxunah village is located in the central part of Yucatán, Mexico. It is characterized by the distinctive cultural and urban heritage of the local community. It is a traditional village of the ancient Mayan civilization in Mexico, in addition to the nature reserve and urban heritage in the village. A sustainable tourism development project has been carried out in this village, preserving the distinctive natural and cultural heritage of the local community and achieving economic returns (MRP, 2007).

This project aims to develop community-based tourism in Yaxunah Village, by taking advantage of the distinctive natural and cultural heritage of the Mayan civilization, in partnership between researchers and academics, and the village's local leaders (Magnoni et al., 2007). It was noted that the camp was developed by NGO Mundo Maya Organization (MMO) who has played the leading role in the

Fig. 5 Yaxunah Camp (MRP, 2007)

conservation process; the government's role was limited to renting the lodge, with the absence of the private sector's role. The camp was originally established by American scientists to carry out archeological research on Yaxunah Village, and Fig. 5 illustrates Yaxunah Camp. After the completion of "Yaxunah Archeological Project," the camp was developed with tourism services provided by the village's members (voluntarily) under the umbrella of (MMO), to achieve economic return while preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the local community. The project has succeeded in achieving sustainable development, through engaging the local population to conduct a comprehensive study on the village, building the camp of local environment materials and the traditional construction way, the NGO (MMO) trained and educated the local population to work in tourism field (see Fig. 6), and funded the rehabilitation

Fig. 6 Mayan local community (MRP, 2007)

projects of archeological and historical sites (Magnoni et al., 2007). The conclusion is this project included partnership between many relevant parties, where the Mexico Government provided the land for project construction, a US academic institution has built the camp for archeological research, the NGO prepared a strategy to develop the camp and provide the materials needed for camp restoration, and the local community provided tourist services in the camp voluntarily.

5.4 Al-Dariyah Development Project—Riyadh—Saudi Arabia

Al-Dariyah is located in the northwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula, 20 km from Riyadh city, and it is one of the important projects to preserve the urban and cultural heritage and achieve tourism sustainability in KSA, Fig. 7 illustrates Al-Dariyah cultural and natural heritage. The Tarif District in Al-Dariyah was listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2010 AD (Riyadh, 2009). The project aims to develop the historic Dariyah through its reconstruction and transform it into a cultural center at the national level according to its historical, cultural, urban, and environmental characteristics, as well as making it a tourist attraction by preserving its historical cultural heritage, for example, Fig. 8 illustrates Salwa Palace in Tarif District. In this project, the government body "The High Commission for the Development of Riyadh" has taken the leading role in the development process alongside the experts, with the involvement of the private sector by investing in certain projects. (Riyadh, 2009).

The development program has been developed following the laws and regulations for the protection of natural and cultural heritage and was based on conducting a comprehensive study of the current situation, developing a plan to raise the awareness of the local population, preparing
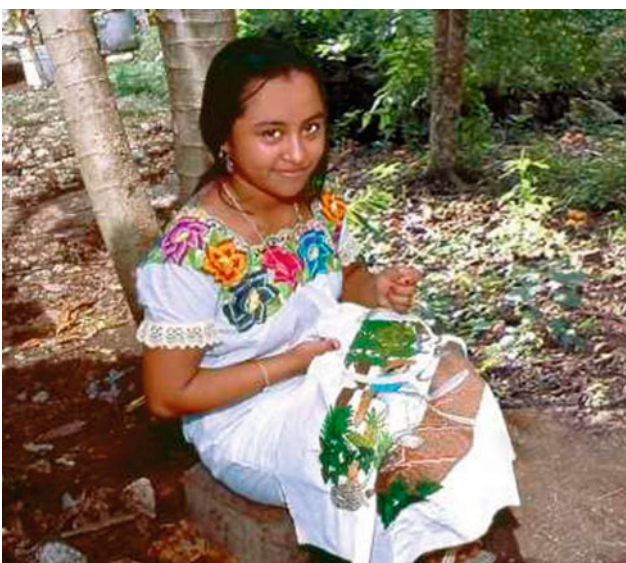
Fig. 7 Al-Dariyah cultural and natural heritage (Riyadh, 2009)

Fig. 8 Salwa Palace in Tarif District in Al-Dariyah (Tatweer Magazine, 2010)

specialized studies and training courses for the workforce in the field of heritage protection and ensuring the full application of the determinants of heritage preservation in the restoration, rehabilitation, and utilization projects, the project was funded by Saudi Arabia, with specific projects being assigned to the private sector to invest and execute (Tatweer Magazine, 2010).

The conclusion is this project involved many relevant parties, where the government body has played the key role in planning, construction, management, and operation works, the private sector has invested in some development programs according to the plan in a manner that ensures the preservation of the natural and urban heritage of the historical Dariyah, the NGO organized voluntary participation by

individuals and institutions to raise environmental awareness and culture of the local population. A group of experts from outside the kingdom was engaged to study the current situation, prepare the development idea, and to develop an operational program, and estimate its cost (Tatweer Magazine, 2010). Although the three sectors were involved in the development project, the success in achieving sustainability is not clear yet. As in order to sustain a project, a part of the economic benefits must accrue to the local community, which motivates them to help to maintain the project, and this is not yet clear in the development project.

6   Case Study: Anakato in Aswan—Egypt

"Anakato" is an ecolodge hotel located in Gharb Soheil Nubian Village, on the west bank of The River Nile in Aswan, and it was built in 2008. Anakato means "Our Home" in the Nubian language (Anakato, 2017). This ecolodge started with one exclusive Nubian House (see Fig. 9) and expanded to encompass five complexes along Gharb Soheil's Nile bank which all maintain the same traditional architecture (El-Beih, 2017). These small enterprises are reflecting the Nubian culture in the designs of their homes with colorfully painted houses and furniture (Talaat, 2017). Anakato ecolodge is owned by a local businessman who has built the house as a private residence before turn it into a lodge (Shampoo & Ghalib, 2019). This project aimed to put Nubian Cultural Heritage on the tourism map by attracting tourists interested in Nubian culture. Besides, this project achieved economic benefits for the local community, by providing job opportunities to the residents through tourism activities, such as renting camels, or taking guests for felucca rides across the riverbank, or buying handicrafts from the local market, which led to bringing further income to the

Fig. 9 Anakato ecolodge

Fig. 10 Nubian local community

village (Sonbol, 2012). Anakato ecolodge has taken a unique step in partnering with key Nubian families in managing their guesthouses and boutique concept hotels. In this way, the tourist can get the experience of the families and lifestyles of Nubian culture, as seen in Fig. 10 (Anakato, 2017).

Anakato has taken a unique step in partnering with Nubian families in managing the guesthouses. In this way, the tourist can get the experience of coexisting with the real Nubian culture. Besides, Anakato managers are paying attention to train their employees continuously to ensure the quality of hospitality (El-Beih, 2017). And according to Sonbol (2012), Anakato's owner has built a mosque in the village from the hotel's profits (see Fig. 12). Anakato's success led to the spread of the idea of ecohotels in the village, which encouraged the local villagers to transform their houses into ecological hotels, as seen in Fig. 11

The idea of staying in the Nubian guesthouse spread through social media, until it became a well-known destination on many online booking Web sites (Sonbol, 2012). The major problem is the bazaars and the camel ride trips in the village are disorganized, and a lot of souvenirs in bazaars are not Nubian-made (El-Beih, 2017), Figs. 13 and 14 illustrate boats, camels, and bazaars in Gharb Sohail village (Site Visit). There is no sewage network in the village, and with the increase in the homes' transformation into ecohotels, the increase in unplanned construction of hotels, and the increase of the visitors, the wastes had been increased, which will affect the natural environment in the village (Shampoo & Ghalib, 2019).

In this project, the private sector played a key role in the ecolodge initiative, by building the hotels in the traditional architecture, train the residents and employ them in the hotel, and involve the local community directly in tourism projects. However, the absence of the governmental role especially in setting guidelines and strategic plans could lead to destroying the nature and culture of the village.

Fig. 11 Gharb Sohiel villagers transform their houses into hotels

Fig. 12 Gharb Sohiel mosque

Fig. 13 Boats and camels in Gharb Sohiel

Fig. 14 Bazaars and camels ride

and environmental resources; studying the environmental impacts of projects before granting licenses; constructing and supporting the infrastructure and transportation services; and finally marketing Nubian cultural heritage through different media.

- The basic roles of the main three sectors to achieve tourism sustainability in cultural heritage sites are:
  - Government Sector: Its key role is to develop conservation laws and policies.
  - Private Sector: Its key role is to invest and support tourism projects.
  - Civil Sector (NGOs): Its main role is to raise community awareness and to train and engage the local community in tourism projects.

7   Conclusion

From the literature review, the global experiments, and the work field conducted in Anakato, the following results were achieved:

- The main objective of STD in cultural heritage sites is to develop these areas in a sustainable economic, urban, and cultural manner that preserves the continuity of the heritage identity and makes it an economic resource for the local population, by benefiting from tourism in creating job opportunities for the local community through the revival of handicrafts and traditional industries which were prevalent in the cultural heritage sites.
- Engaging the local community in the rehabilitation and development of cultural heritage sites, leading to feeling more responsibility toward cultural sites.
- Coordination and partnership between the three main sectors (Government, Private, and NGO's) will lead to achieving tourism sustainability, and the neglect of any sector's role is leading to the deterioration of the cultural and heritage sites.
- Although Anakato is a good initiative, it is missing key steps to achieve sustainability. The major and important step is by activating the government role.
- The absence of planning or guidelines from government side for achieving sustainable development in Gharb Sohail could destroy the nature and the culture of the village.
- The key steps needed in Anakato to achieve sustainability are: conducting a comprehensive database on Gharb Sohiel cultural heritage and internal and international tourist movement; providing an integrated system of legislation, laws, and guidelines for protecting cultural

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