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Rural Tourism

Good Practice Examples



IPARD
EU4Rural Areas



Preface



With sustainable rural development, environmental protection, efficient use of resources, and mitigation of poverty are adopted and with this insight, sustainable rural development becomes increasingly important in improving the socio-cultural and economic conditions of rural areas. Within this scope, the importance of rural tourism increases day by day in the sustainable rural development process.

As in the world, changes in the understanding of tourism are monitored in our country, and rural tourism stands out as an important alternative type of tourism that needs to be vitalized, promoted and developed. "Rural Tourism" is a tourism activity that can be integrated with rural culture, handicrafts, natural beauties and agricultural activities and can easily mingle with other types of tourism in our country as in the world.

The natural resources, climate, endemic plants, agricultural capacity, historical and cultural heritage of our country are very suitable for this type of tourism. In recent years, there has been an increase in demand and applications for rural tourism in our country.

In this context, the Rural Development Component of Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPARD), which is created by European Union (EU) to support candidate

and potential candidate countries, is of great importance. Within the scope of IPARD Programme, the projects of the beneficiaries who made investments within the framework of the supports of Rural Tourism and Recreation activities under the "Diversification of Farm Activities and Business Development" measure have been supported by providing the grants.

As the Ministry, our aims are the establishment of accommodation, catering and recreation facilities and development of rural tourism by improving the conditions and capacities of existing facilities, improving the quality of living conditions in rural areas, creation of new jobs, promotion and protection of cultural and natural assets in the rural tourism sector.

I wish good fortune for this work that examines the examples of good practices of beneficiaries who got benefit from rural tourism supports and told their stories and that sheds light on investors in order more projects to be submitted over the rural tourism measure under the IPARD Programme by revealing the rural tourism potential of our country; and I would like to thank those who contributed to the study.

Dr. Bekir PAKDEMİRLİ
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry



Living Village



I'm from Beypazarı. I'm a folklorist. In the past, I was lecturing Folk Science Museology at Gazi University and Ankara University. There was more than one factor on the road to the Living Village project. All my life, I have been trying to preserve, display, record and sustain the ancient culture of this land on which I was born and raised. The conservation and survival approach, which has no economic basis, does not make sense alone. Therefore, I had to ensure the economic sustainability of it and prepare its infrastructure while I was carrying out the work of preserving and sustaining my culture. During this process, I became aware of ARDSI projects in 2013. When I searched for the support programme, I saw that it coincided with the rural tourism project I was thinking about. That's how my work began. Beypazarı had a rich tourism potential. The project I will implement would diversify the tourism of the district, create an employment area for folklorists and local people, and contribute to the development of tourism in the region. In this way, I would have established a business suitable for my field of expertise, as well as a new one for the tourism work of Beypazarı, and Ankara. I dreamed, took a risk and brought it into life.

Firstly, I went on research trips. I visited places such as Safranbolu, Cumalıkızık and Birgi in the country. I searched the businesses around here, the information boards and the routing signs. I spoke to the business owners. I took a lot of notes, took pictures. The second part of my research trips were abroad. For this, I visited countries such as Hungary, UK, Sweden and Spain. I visited open-air, ethnographic and science museums in these countries. Reading and seeing things give a person substantial knowledge and inspiration.

The most important feature of Living Village is that it is an archite-



LIVING VILLAGE

cturally oriented rural tourism project. Here are the traditional architecture structures of Anatolia that are about to disappear, as well as exhibits about the ancient culture that took shape around these structures. You can think of the Living Village as a small model of Anatolia. In the compound, we have friends who are cultural scientists working as guides. They are wearing costumes referencing the 19th century. During the trip, our guests are toured by these guide fellows. Inside the houses there are exhibitions. We organize thematic events in the Living Village. For example, we have "A day in the Village" event that attracts attention a lot. In this event, aimed at the 5-12 age group, we dress the participating children in traditional clothes and let them experience rural life. Children taking a basket gather eggs from hencoops, vegetables from garden and prepare breakfast with them. They do laundry in the laundromat with laundry sticks, mix soil with straw and cut adobes. They feed the goats, the chickens. We're doing a sourdough bread workshop. After we talk about the culture of the neighbourhood, cooperation over the stone ovens, sourdough breads, we knead and bake bread with them. With the theme of preparing for winter in Anatolia, we dry pickles and cut noodles with our participants. We do bird watching, hiking. In the evening, we light our fire and tell fairy tales. We're playing with beyblades. We show what kind of toys children used to play in Anatolia and let our visitors experience them. In short, beyond the classic definitions of rural tourism, we do original, educational, fun activities.

The Living Village became especially famous for its breakfast. We care about Beypazarı's food culture and taste. We are making a serious production in Living Village. We grow the vegetables we use for breakfast ourselves. We try to choose as many local seeds as possible and not use pesticides, agricultural fer-





tilizers. In the garden, we grow lettuce, cress, parsley, dill, potatoes, tomatoes, pepper varieties, eggplant, watermelon, melon, spinach. Imagine that you come for breakfast, and the vegetables on your plate are gathered 20 minutes ago and natural. Of course, we can't produce everything. For example, we need honey, sausage, and butter. We buy it from the local producers in Beypazari. We definitely don't buy it in big stores. Buying them from the local area can sometimes be costly for us, but we want to do what we do properly, provide people with healthy and delicious products and win together with our producers in the district.

Our guest profile is quite diverse. For example, a family came from Niğde. They followed us on social media and found us quite successful. They caught the fancy of Living Village. And then we surprise that a group of few teacher friends from Istanbul gathered and came here. They want to spend the weekend away from the city, the crowd, the stress, in a place that is intertwined with nature. A father came with his children to give them the experience of the village life he lived once when he was little.

I think the IPARD Programme grants are an important opportunity in this sector. Apart from the grant rates provided for the project and the construction works, items such as purchases made within the scope of the project, the supply of machinery and equipment for accommodation and catering services can be very attractive for investors. But business owners who want to present projects to the institution should do their work seriously. In order to provide a better service and to improve the quality of tourism, they should always be in research and learning efforts. Away from copy initiatives, original, innovative initiatives should be made.



Obasya



I've been a cooperative system for 45 years uninterrupted. I'm one of those people who believe that common problems can be solved by working together. I don't just see cooperatives as tools of economic development. Cooperatives are also effective tools of social development. Although Manisa, the city where I live, has a rapidly developing structure in agriculture and industrialization, I thought it could not develop in rural tourism sector and something had to be done for it. We started by considering that tourism should be developed in a city with historical sites, rich mythology and natural beauty and established Obasya Tourism Development Cooperative.

I knew that people who were bored with the density of cities would support facilities to be built in the countryside. Because there were so many people around me who expressed such a quest. We set out to do something different. We wanted to build a hotel by making the wooden and felt structures used in Central Asia more comfortable. But where would we get the necessary monetary support? So we started investigating. We have reached IPARD and ARDSI through our internet research. We found out that ARDSI is existed in our city and we visited it. The information we received gave us hope. We found that managers and employees are young and talented and solution-oriented. They've made our job easier at every stage.

As a result, we started working and achieved our goal. We established Obasya Rural Accommodation Facility and hobby gardens with IPARD grants. We have received all the necessary equipment that our business needs with the support we have received. Mini refrigerators, beds, cabinets, televisions, air conditioners were taken with this support. The multi-purpose hall was built and furnished with this support. Our hobby gardens were the first gardens made with IPARD support in our country.



OBASYA

When we built our business, we wanted it to be both original and pioneering. Instead of taking other businesses as an example, we raised the question of what we would do by ourselves. At the end, an admirable, exemplary project appeared. Obasya facility is organized in the concept of "Residence in Turkish folk culture from ancestors' fatherland to homeland". In the hotel section, round-shaped houses consisting of wood and felt, which have been used by Asian nomadic peoples for centuries, were used.

Families create the majority of guests who stay in our facility and eat in the restaurant. We host groups that organize social events and daily guests; and also the trips and workshops organized by travel agencies. Tourists from foreign countries, although at a low rate, also stay at our facility. Our facility is also used as a set for documentary and film shooting.

Our guests who come to our facility to stay, do hiking, go to the nearby waterfall, do photo shoots, do bike tours, horse riding, brides and grooms come and take photos with professional photographers, historical places such as the ancient city of Aigai are visited, our guests who have shares in hobby gardens are interested in agricultural activities.

Our feature, which most affects our guests and causes their preferences, is that our facility is planned as a time gate museum. The arrangement of tents made of wood and felt used as hotel rooms, integrated with nature, creates an atmosphere of peace and nostalgia. Being far from the city, clean air, natural beauty and animal-friendly environment is also the reason for choice. There is one oven in our facility. In this oven, sourdough village bread is cooked, marketed to the visitors, as well as consumed





in our facility's restaurant. In our facility, pancakes with herbs, cheese and cottage cheese, which can be considered as a local product, are also produced. The vegetables grew in our gardens are also used in our facility's kitchen. Cheese, yogurt and ayran produced in the region are served in our restaurant.

We aim to develop and grow our business. We'll make new investments. Our project "Obasya Ecological Life Center", which we submitted to the Development Agency, was accepted. With this project, we will have given Obasya another attraction center. We are planning studies on archery and horse riding. We're going to start archery on part of the land we own. We started project design work to create a caravan park in our facility.

The world's interest in rural tourism and agro-tourism as a part of it is growing. The way for every rural tourism business in Turkey to start and continue joint work with similar businesses in European countries should be opened. In order for rural tourism facilities to initiate and maintain cooperation at the national level and to jointly solve their common problems, they should be organized as an umbrella union. I think that the biggest contribution that can be given to investors in the rural tourism sector in our country is provided by IPARD Programme supports. Thanks to IPARD, we have seen concretely in our project applications that every good project will create its own source and find support. Thanks to our work, we continue to be an example and a pioneer in our region. The number of people who take our project as an example and implement similar projects is increasing. For us, what we learned became more important than the grants we received. We learned when we did it, when we produced it.

Now we share what we have learned with pleasure.



Gölköy Yaşam Resort

Gölköy Yaşam Resort

BAHAR AKGÜN

I'm originally from Kastamonu, but I was born and raised in Ankara. I am a graduate of Gazi University, Department of Architecture. My uncle lives in Kastamonu and he was the one who gave us the information that we can benefit from the purchase of machinery, equipment and construction within the scope of IPARD supports. On the farm left over from my grandfather in Gölköy, the whole family came together in the summers for many years and created comfortable living and recreation areas for ourselves in nature. Our guests who came to our farm liked this place very much, and they always told us why we do not build a hotel here. The whole family came together and we wanted to add a hotel in nature to tourism. As a result, we have brought Gölköy Rural Tourism Facility to the region which we have provided employment to 20 people in winter and about 25 people in summer thanks to IPARD supports.

Our hotel has been designed to be very stylish and to reflect the local architecture. Our rooms are furnished with solid sculptured furniture made by the masters of Kastamonu, and we have sofas in the exhedras. Our doors are a work of art that reflects the solid sculpture. Although the whole hotel has floor heating, our veranda restaurant, which is in the concept of a winter garden, has kitchen stove fireplaces on fire and a very authentic environment is formed in the snowy nature visuals in winter.

Our facility consists of 20 rooms, indoor restaurant for 250 people, 250 square meter multi-purpose hall with fireplace, poolside bar with a stone oven inside, horse stable that can accommodate 12 horses, manege, a parkour where horse riding and walking is possible between 450 meters of poplars, playground, outdoor swimming pool and two large verandas located around it within 17 acres. A copse of 1000 cypress and poplar, 200 different pine trees on our poplar road and an orchard of 150 fruit trees constitutes the botany of our facility. In addition, we serve all kinds of organic vegetables that we grow in our 4-acre garden by the creek to our customers in our hotel. Therefore, our guests who come to our facility start the day with a very rich village breakfast, then they can take



GÖLKÖY YAŞAM RESORT

a walk between the poplar, which is beautiful in every season, walk with our trained horses or take a horse riding lesson. At noon, they can taste the delicious Black Sea pitas that come out of our stone oven according to their desires. In addition, our guests can bike around Golkoy during the day, hike or even pick vegetables, fruits and buy the products they gathered in our organic vegetable orchard.

Black Sea pita varieties, which cooked in the stone oven in our facility, are very preferred by both local people and our guests from outside. In addition, minced meat tarhana soup, einkorn wheat bulghur, banduma (local food done with pastry and turkey broth), botched bagel, apple sour, uryani compote, pumpkin dessert done with pumpkins that we grow in our garden, ashura, baked rice pudding that we make from village milk are included in our menu. The fact that our customers can buy these products by gathering them from the garden themselves makes them feel like a part of natural life and affects them very much. Natural products such as village bread, eggs, milk, butter, cream, apple molasses and honey, which I buy from my neighbours in the village, play a very important role in our customers' choice of us. At the same time, it becomes a significant income for the villagers.

In addition to our guests who want to get away from the stress of the big cities, we also serve to the people who live in Kastamonu and use our facility for one-day. We also provide intensive services to sports clubs that want to camp in the summer. Large company dinners and weekend workshops are also held in our facility. Since Kastamonu region has important hunting areas, both domestic and foreign hunters also prefer our hotel. From time to time, we also welcome motorcycle racers and photographers. We have just started to welcome groups who want to do Yoga, meditation, breathing camp.





The experience we have gained from the day we opened leads us to new investments. First of all, in order for us to be a good winter and health hotel, we need to invest in spa (Turkish bath, sauna, massage), fitness (gym where tools such as treadmills and yoga, pilates can be performed). We also want to build our own boutique dairy. In addition, we plan a small barn (for example, 4 cows, 4 buffaloes, 4 goats, 4 sheep) that shows how the milk to be processed in this dairy farm is obtained from which animals and a hencoop where we can get eggs from cage free chickens. Of course, the milk we get from the animals will not be enough for the dairy, and we will get the milk from the villagers. The main purpose of this small fattening barn is for our guests from the big city to see every stage of how the butter, cheese, yogurt, cream are produced and feel that they are involved in this natural life. If they want chicken eggs, they'll go and collect them themselves. How milk is produced and how we produce the healthiest and most natural food we eat will be very valuable for the people of the big city to see and to make their kids to live it at every stage.

In the coming years, interest in rural tourism will increase not only in our country, but also all over the world. I think that substantial financial support should be provided for the right investments that integrate with nature and do not pose a threat to nature. The IPARD Programme's support for rural tourism is very valuable. But I think it should be used more in this sector and good sustainable projects should come out. For this reason, in order to prepare for projects, it is necessary to have a very serious infrastructure or to use a serious advisory service. I believe that in order to diversify rural economic activities, it is very important that the procedures are manageable by people living in the countryside.



Kayabaşı Gölet Restaurant

Kayabaşı Gölet Restaurant

NURCAN BAYRAM



I'm a 35-year-old business owner, mother of 4 children. The place where our business is also our village and where we live. Business opportunities here are limited. My husband is actually a teacher, but he was running a store selling electrical supplies. He didn't do much work in the village either. The area we're in is a recreation area having a lot of visitors. We have a beautiful nature. It is preferred because of its beauty especially on weekends. One-day visitors usually come. Due to the characteristics of the visitors, we designed our facility as a restaurant and resting place. When we decided to build a facility, we started researching grants. First we investigated the banks and then we found out about the advisory companies. We used artisan loan and bank loan for equity. The advisor company informed us about the IPARD Programme supports and directed us to ARDSI. In this process we also visited the facilities in the region and got ideas. These were similar facilities. We also conducted research in centres such as Hamsi Village. We gathered additional ideas. We tried to combine all the good ideas and implemented them in our business. After all, we got our family-run business, where we employ 10-12 people in season.

Our business is located in the forest, close to the pond. There are no other businesses in the region like ours. Those who want delicious local food in a calm, clean environment within nature prefer us. The reasons of the visitors are very different. People for weekend barbeque or food, biking groups, off-road performers, mountain hikers, people for country wedding or photo shoot, wedding photo takers, those who come to participate in the festivals in the region. Arabs, Turks from Germany, local tourists, people of the region, tours of tourism companies, we serve not only for the upper income groups, but also for the general tourist groups. Recently, tourists from Middle East also come to our region a lot and benefit from our business.



KAYABAŞI GÖLET RESTAURANT

In our business, only local food is served. Cabbage wrap, kuy-mak (special omelette of the region), lamb meat, grass pan (this is a local dish made from vegetables. It is made with herbs that grow naturally in the area. Butter is added close to cooking). We produce butter, milk, eggs and vegetables in the garden in the village. We also buy the ones we don't have from the producers in our region. In this way, we become customers for the producers of our own region. We grow vegetables, potatoes, corn in our own garden. We have 4-5 cows. We produce butter, milk, yogurt, ayran. We both use them in our kitchen and sell them. We don't have a separate sales unit. It's just in the closet and in our little sales stand outside. Those who want can buy them from there.

People fleeing from the noise of the city, the humid air and the crowd end up in our plateau. Those who want calmness and a beautiful nature also become guests of us.

Since our location is a forest area, it is very difficult to establish and expand facilities. Actually, we want to add accommodation facility as well, but our license prevents this. As our region has significant potential, if infrastructure issues are resolved, there will be arrivals for different activities most of the year. A lot of facilities will be established with a little promotion, a little support and measures that will encourage investors. If the licence issue is also solved, I think there will be more investments in our region in the rural tourism sector thanks to IPARD Programme supports.







Gököz Natural Park

Gököz Natural Park

ARİF DOĞRU



I was born in 1970 in the village of Gököz in the Keles district of Bursa, where the investment took place. I'm a computer engineer. During my 20-year professional life, I have been involved in hundreds of projects and managed tens of projects. As someone who has achieved a certain economic strength and work experience, it was time to implement the rural tourism project, which was my childhood dream and which I designed during my university years. I met IPARD when I was searching how I could implement my project. After I first conducted preliminary reviews and research from the corporate website, I went to the Bursa Provincial Coordination Unit of ARDSI and held warm and constructive meetings face to face. Some of the most important reasons I decided to invest in rural tourism in this region is to ensure the socio-economic and cultural development of our local people by providing an investment with added value in the land where I was born and to contribute to Bursa and country tourism by promoting Gököz Pond which makes a magnificent natural beauty with Uludağ, to the whole world.

Our business is located on the southern side of Uludağ, on the Mareşah Plateau at an altitude of 1120 meters, on the shore of the Gököz Pond. This place is within the borders of Gököz Quarter, a Yörük-Türkmen village in Keles district of Bursa. This place was included in the list of "10 most romantic winter routes in Turkey" in the January 2013 issue of National Geographic Traveller magazine. Some of the "hiking and cycling routes of Bursa" published by the Bursa Governorship are also in this region. Opened in 2016, built on an area of approximately 4.500 square meters, our facility consists of 10 luxury wooden houses (bungalows), one authentic and a classic lounge restaurant that can serve 250 people and a cafeteria and hobby gardens. It provides 12 different activities. Our company offers uninterrupted service to our domestic and foreign guests all year round with the principle of "continuity in service is es-



GÖKÖZ NATURAL PARK

sential". Its primary guests are from many provinces, especially Bursa and İstanbul, and many nature lovers abroad, including Middle East, North Africa, Europe and Far East countries. Gököz Natural Park Project has proved that tourism in Bursa can be realized 365 days and even in the countryside. Our business was selected as "Best Nature Hotel of the Year" by EVOS ANGELS magazine in 2018. With the increasing number of domestic and foreign tourists coming to our business, our recognition has increased both at home and abroad, which has enabled us to host many music videos, commercials and movies.

As I have mentioned already, our business is the first and only facility in Turkey, where accommodation in luxury wooden houses, restaurant cafeteria with local tastes, 12 different nature activities and hobby garden services can be done all together. Even with this feature, it is considered as an innovative project in the field of tourism. Our main activities include ATV safari, horse riding, paintball, mountain biking, boating, line fishing, archery, trap shooting and hiking on marked trails. We also provide hobby garden services in an area of 19,000 square meters. We offer clean, high quality, safe, comfortable and extraordinary service in a natural environment to our nature-loving guests living in cities.

I also consider expanding our business, to make new investments under IPARD and adding new activities in particular. I want our guests to see and experience something new that has been prepared for them every time they come to our facility. Actually, I can summarize what I want to do for our region with four main projects and aims. Establishing a rural tourism business was the first of these aims, and I realized it with the Gököz Natural Park Rural Tourism Facility. My second aim is to make a





facility in the same region where accommodation is provided in stone-wood weight houses with indigenous architecture and where activities such as meetings, workshops, trainings, seminars will be held and swimming pool, SPA and Turkish bath services are offered. My third aim is to establish a practice farm with agricultural and livestock production activities in which our guests will personally take part. My fourth aim is to open the old houses in the village to the rural tourism sector with a small-scale restoration that will meet the expectations and needs of the city people by preserving the authentic and architectural structure. Besides, I also plan to expand the activities in my business, providing an environment where artisans can demonstrate their skills, conducting small workshops and creating departments where these products can be sold. Gököz Village, in which our business is located, is also the village where our famous artist Müzeyyen Senar, the diva of our Republic, was born and raised. I would like to establish a house of art and culture here in memory of Müzeyyen Senar. If such a project that I intend to prepare within the framework of IPARD is supported, I will have fulfilled another dream. I believe that IPARD will again be a great motivator for me to achieve all these objectives.

I recommend that anyone who wants to do a value-added business for herself/himself, for her/his hometown and for her/his country, and who has dreams waiting to be realized for it, to review the IPARD Programme. Don't push your dreams away, be brave and entrepreneurial. Yeah, maybe it's not easy, but remember, our ancestors said, "No pain no gain". Idea, project, courage, entrepreneurship from you, support from the IPARD.



Roc of Kapadokya

I'm from Göreme-Nevşehir. Our hotel is a family-run business with a garden and terrace in the center of the town of Göreme. Our facility, which has a history of more than 100 years, was actually our old house, left from my grandfather, with a stable, a barn and a warehouse. We used to live here. In short, a place that has come from generation to generation has now become bread and butter for me.

A hotel project came to my mind when I was previously working in a hotel as a housekeeper. I imagined how I could make this old house, inherited from my father, a hotel, where to start. I started digging. When I searched on the internet for "grant programmes", I found ARDSI website directly. I found Nevşehir Provincial Coordination Unit of ARDSI and went to the institution and got information. I asked people around and looked into it. I mostly got the answers, "How are you going to do it, the construction sector is a very difficult one". The staff of the institution supported me in application process. When I said people that I would do it with support, they said, "No one gives anyone this money in these times, they cheat you, we have never heard where it is".

I didn't have any examples around me when I started our business. I also didn't know how to use the internet well back then. I had some boutique hotels around me, but no one started a business with support like me, so I could not get any ideas from anyone. I went to a business plan preparation course hoping to learn something from there and I tried to learn this business with limited opportunities. It was also very difficult to get information by asking businesses around me.

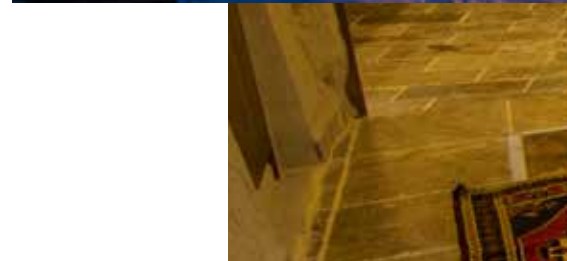
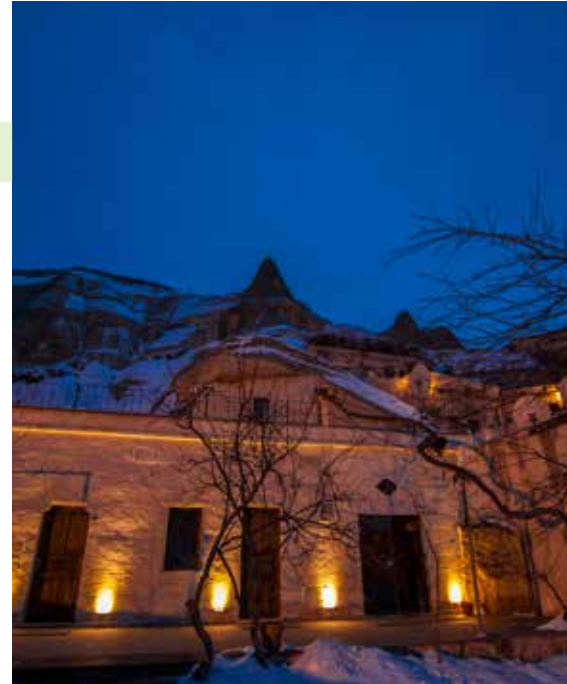


ROC OF KAPADOKYA

During the process, I also had some difficulties accessing the source of finance. I had trouble getting loans from banks because I was working with minimum wage. But I never gave up. My husband had an old house, and I was able to withdraw my first loan by mortgaging it. Also, there were no advisors in our region; I even heard for the first time that there were advisors in ARDSI. A trainee girl helped me on my projects and my business plan. I've collected all my documents without being intimidated. My work was very coincidental and easily passed both at the project stage and at the construction and implementation stage.

I have benefited from IPARD Programme supports in terms of machinery and equipment, construction expenses, furniture, many tools that we use in the kitchen. My business, which I have established with the support of ARDSI, has a capacity of 9 rooms and 17 beds. 3 of the rooms are in the form of a rock, 2 are in the form of an arch and 4 are in the form of a hezen (special architectural structure with sticks) room and we also have a breakfast hall. During the tourism season, 5-6 people work in our hotel, but currently 4 people are working. This opportunity I searched and found while working in a hotel with minimum wage changed my life. In short, it all started with dreaming.

At our facility, we take care of our guests one by one. We even prepare and offer their trip plans. Our guests participate in balloon tours, ATV tours, hiking, gastronomy





experiences, horse tours, red/green region tours. We do everything we can to direct them to any activity they ask us for help and make them travel this area well. Because if our guest leaves here satisfied, both our reference is very good and they direct their friends to our business and also prefer us again. When I bought this business, I also bought a small field near it. We plant there and grow our own vegetables / fruits. We also have a garden in our business. Our guests (especially foreign tourists) are very happy to pick off the tree and eat our grapes and other fruits at any time. They say they feel like at home. The fact that they experience this naturality makes them prefer us again. It is a very nice for us to see their happiness.

Our country has many beautiful places, the increase in the number of "boutique" hotels is very important for the development of rural tourism. I see small rural boutique hotels as a sustainable, profitable investment. In addition, the people working in ARDSI are promising; it was very good that they were directed in a way that did not break the enthusiasm of those who wanted to invest. For example, I'm a primary school graduate; I wanted to invest in a sector that I never knew about before. They encouraged me and gave me hope, and if I had seen an opposite attitude, maybe I wouldn't have attempted to do this business.



Çır Çır Şelalesi Restaurant

Çır Çır Şelalesi Restaurant

ÖMER DURMUŞ



We were both doing fish farming and running a restaurant. For a long time, we have been thinking about renewing this business that we started 22 years ago. We were already in constant dialogue with the Provincial Coordination Unit of ARDSI. There were also many people around us who benefited from IPARD Programme supports. ARDSI's promotional meetings both in the city center and in the districts were very useful. By constantly following the meetings, we investigated everything described in detail about both the fishing sector and rural tourism. As a result of our long-term research, we decided to receive support and eventually applied for it. We built a restaurant on a natural waterfall. Naturally, this place was supposed to serve in a much more modern way. For this purpose, we started to serve our local and national guests as a modern facility by renewing all our equipment with our application to the Provincial Coordination Unit of ARDSI.

Our business is a very large complex including a restaurant, cafeteria, and children's playgrounds. Of course, due to the fact that our business is located on the youngest waterfall in the world, it acts as a natural air conditioner in the summer. Besides, we have fish production pools in our business. People who come here have the opportunity to see live fish. As our business is based on a large area of 20 acres, we have also included hiking trails. You can visit wherever you want. There are also stands where we sell gifts unique to Elazığ to our guests who come in the summer months. We strive to create all the necessary conditions in order

to ensure that our guests spend time here comfortably as much as we can.

One of the reasons why we are preferred is our food diversity. Elazığ has a rich culinary culture. We have also added trout to the Elazığ cuisine, which contains a large number of food varieties. Trout was not spoken in Elazığ before. Thanks to our intense strive, Elazığ started to be known as a fish city and Keban as fish district. In many places, when Elazığ is called, Çırçır Waterfall comes to mind, and then trout. This is also a joy to behold for our business and for us. We offer our guests 23 kinds of fish dishes together with trout.

As our facility is 1 km from Keban Dam, people who come to our facility have the opportunity to walk to the dam and see it. In addition, they can also visit our cultural heritage, such as the historical Yusuf Ziya Pasha Mosque, the Denizli Caravanserai, which is 8 km from our district.

Thanks to IPARD Programme supports, we have made this place a modern business. We had a facility that employ 55-60 people during the summer season. Thanks to the grants we received, we have become comparable to enterprises in metropolis. Of course, we consider new investments in the coming period. In order to solve the accommodation problem of our guests coming to our Keban district, we plan to build a rural tourism hotel. Besides, by creating an artificial waterfall there, we wish to present a visual feast to our guests.



İskalita Otel

İskalita Otel

AYŞE KAYA DURMUŞOĞLU

I was born in Trabzon in 1988. I'm a graduate of the Faculty of Economics. I worked as an administrative officer at a school for the mentally handicapped for 10 years. Now, I'm running my own family business. This place has been running by our family as a pension for 23 years. My father started the business as a side-line. But my mother was the actual reason the business was recognized. We had 23-year-old guests who came only because of her food and the warm family environment of our business. But our business was quite outdated and needed to be renovated. However we were not able to afford it. I started digging. First I searched the internet. I found different sources. IPARD supports appeared to be the most viable option. I went to ARDSI and made an interview. I found out the terms and made my application.

The whole story started with my dream. That is why, I designed a lot of things. And there was no business around us of the quality that we would take as an example. I've only seen and reviewed one business on the internet. I wanted to create a nostalgic, natural products-themed business. I also thought of a concept that would continue our family environment and our success in local food here. Thus, I brought a business made of natural wood to tourism in Altındere Valley, surrounded by forests on four sides. Now you see my dream come true.

Our guest profile consists of families or young people but elite groups. We have a more selective guest group. As I mentioned before, we have 23-year-old customers who look for family warmth. We also work with tour companies. People also find us from internet. Still, the largest group of our guests consists of the ones who have known us from the old. Tourists come here

mostly because of the Sümela Monastery. In the meantime, there are also those who come to the Monastery for hiking purposes. Along with other historical places and natural beauties in the vicinity, Macka district of Trabzon is a rural tourism paradise. The main reason that those who prefer us is that we are the nearest accommodation point to Sumela and the warm environment and food we provide. We consider them as our guests, not the customers. Those who come here are welcome in a family environment. We do not serve any fabricated products to our guests. They don't eat restaurant food, they eat homemade food. You order dinner in the morning as if you asked your mother, and you'll see it at your table at night. Tea has always been free. Along with the complimentary chat as well.

As is well known, the local food of the Black Sea is very famous. We have many local dishes such as kuymak (special omelette of the region), cabbage wrap, trout, meat and chicken menu, pickle roasting, sugar beans. Anchovies, the symbol of the Black Sea, are not even turn to come here. Food is prepared by my mother. Guests order in the morning. Dinner is cooked on that order. Since our business has been here for a long time, our food is well known. We have guests who come just for my mother's food. The quality of the food and the regional nature of the products are known by the customers and are the reason for their preference. Greens, savoy cabbage and beans come from our own garden. Trout, butter and honey are bought from local businesses. The product is not purchased from the market. All products are provided from our region.

I am very grateful to ARDSI for bringing me and my family together with our dream and to everyone who contributed for their devoted work and guidance.



Laz Koyu Pension

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GÜLTEN CİNER

Due to the landslide in Trabzon in 1973, we, as 61 households and more than 300 people were settled in the village called "Sahinkaya" built by the government in Gökçeada. As we came from a different geography, we had a little difficulty at first, it was a completely different place for us with its cultivated plant species and nature; over time, some of us returned back and some people went to the metropolitan areas. Although it was difficult, we chose to stay here. We are engaged in farming activities such as beekeeping, sheep farming, agricultural production, as well as tourism.

When we decided to make a pension, we met with companies in Gökçeada and were informed about the support of ARDSI. Our application for IPARD support has been approved. We have experienced some difficulties and delays in setting up our business. Being separate from the mainland, created a number of disadvantages in the facility's construction works. For example, late arrival of materials, more expensive price, problem of finding workers, etc. are the main problems for those who establish businesses in rural areas. In addition to the island conditions, we have experienced the difficulties on the lack of project culture and advisors in our country. Finally, in 2016, thanks to IPARD Program supports, we had our 12-room accommodation facility, providing the necessary financing for construction expenses and expenses for machinery and equipment such as beds, cabinets, air conditioning, TV needed for the pension.

Our business is about 500 meters from Laz Bay, one of the most beautiful bays of Gökçeada. For marine tourism, which is one of the most basic tourism activities, the fact that we are bordering Laz Bay, one of the most beautiful bays available for swimming on the island, makes our business more attractive. The ancient Greek and Turkish villages in the region offer a very fun histo-

rical visual feast for people who want to go for a walk. Our guests staying in our business, 20 km away from the city center, can easily visit the historical sites in Gökçeada and return during the day. In the garden, which is quite spacious, there is a very large playground for the children of our guests. Children can safely spend time while adults rest. Our business also provides a comfortable working environment with a unique natural view and calmness. It hosts writers looking for a place to write a book. Since we are a 12-room facility, sometimes there are also those who want to keep our facility (for example, to do yoga) as a group. In addition, as Gökçeada is a very accessible and rich place for diving lovers and harpoon fishing and those who want to surf, we are preferred by those who do these sports.

We, at the same time do farming activities as well. Besides, local dishes that we offer in our kitchen and breakfasts that we prepare with our own products are very popular. We also use these products in our facility. We offer our natural breakfast, the majority of which is our own production, enriched with organic products, for example honey produced by our bees and cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes we grow to our guests. At the same time, our guests have the opportunity to eat Gökçeada's olives, olive oil, and organic products obtained from sheep and goat farming. Stuffed and stew cooked in tandoor with the meat of lamb and goats grown in the natural environment of the island are our most preferred and delicious dishes. Almost all of our guests who eat these rich and organic products are very satisfied and want to come again.

Thanks to the support of the IPARD Programme, we had the opportunity to make a profit by making a pension on our land close to Laz Bay, one of the most beautiful bays of Gökçeada, and to offer a place for people who come to stay.





Sarımeşe Otel



The natural wonders of the region we live in, which are worth seeing, motivated us to invest in the rural tourism sector. Since we have a love for rural tourism, we opened a business called "Şelale Gözleme" in Ilica Waterfall village compound in 2001. Then in 2008, we started hotel management under the name of "Sarimeşe Hotel". Over time, we planned to improve our hotel. We learned that rural tourism sector is supported in ARDSI promotional meetings and we submitted our project. In 2018, thanks to ARDSI supports, we restored and brought our business into service. With this project, we renovated our family-run hotel and turned it into a more modern and newer facility. Currently, we have a hotel in Pınarbaşı District of Kastamonu, consisting of 13 rooms and a capacity of about 40 beds.

Our region has an unquestionable potential in terms of its natural, historical, cultural values and accumulation. We are in the middle of an attraction center with Kure Mountains National Park and Valla Canyon, the most visited one among the natural beauties; Horma Canyon, Çatak Canyon, Ilgarini Cave, Mushroom Cave, Ilica Waterfall and oxygen storage plateaus. Many activities such as 3 km hiking trail, wildlife monitoring and nature observation, photography, rock climbing, mountain hiking, camping, canyon sports, fishing can also be carried out in our region. In addition, in our province, where cultural heritage is rich, there are many places that offer especially historical mansions and local life culture. Since all of these and the touristic places to be visited are very close to our business, our guests who want to relax by seeing the historical, cultural and natural beauties around pre-

fer us. In addition, we also have domestic and foreign guests who come in mass groups, especially in spring, summer and autumn, through tour companies.

At the boutique hotel, which we have opened as a family business, we welcome our guests with our local menu consisting of village breakfast and dishes and offer our local foods, which are handmade products we produce. We offer them drinks that we only make from fruits that grow in our region and that we gather from nature.

In our country and region, I see a reverse migration from the city to the countryside in recent years. Village lodgings are also growing rapidly depending on the demands. There are also many mansions here and we see that the old mansions have been renovated to serve rural tourism. Because of the excess of natural protected areas in the region and limited industrial investment, rural tourism will be an important source of income for the people living here. For this reason, I think that rural tourism projects that will be realized within the scope of the IPARD Programme will also contribute to employment. However, it will also be useful for entrepreneurs who will invest under the IPARD Programme to meet with people who have previously received support from ARDSI. Constant communication with staff of the Institution will prevent possible problems that they may face in the future. Thanks to the support of IPARD, which adds value to our business, I am very happy to contribute to the promotion of our region and rural tourism.





Hilal Doğa Oteli

Hilal Doğa Oteli

HİLAL KOÇ

I was born in 1993, in Istanbul but I am originally from Trabzon. I have a brother who runs a thermal hotel. As my father entered the thermal hotel sector in Çanakkale in the past years, my interest in the sector also raised. As a result of this interest, we learned about ARDSI's support for investments in rural areas. I thought it would be more useful to do this with IPARD support rather than to do it alone. Thus, as a young female entrepreneur, I took my first step into professional business life with the encouragement of my father and the support of ARDSI.

When establishing the business, we compared similar examples in the Black Sea region and abroad. Especially while working on the architectural project, we tried to create a different job by blending them. We also received professional advisory services while preparing our project.

To be recognized in the first place, we had ads and campaigns. Although we were in a rural area, far from the city and we had an exhausting road condition for being in Kaz Mountains, we created a regular customer profile that came here after being recognized. Our bungalow facilities generally catch the families' fancy. Most of our guests say they came here by escaping from the stress and crowd of İstanbul. Fortunately for us, we offer a calm and peaceful holiday to many people with this project.

Our hotel in Bayramic Kulculer Village is located in the Kaz Mountains, which are of great importance for our country and are the most abundant source of oxygen after the Alps. The hotel is built on an area of 15,000 square meters surrounded by pine forests

and consists of 25 wooden houses, restaurant, cafe, 2 Turkish Baths, 4 family pools, 4 spas and walking areas. We serve our guests with a team of 10 people. Thermal water with a PH of 9.03 is available at the facility. This alkaline water is good for many ailments. Besides, the location of our hotel meets the exact criteria for those who want to go hiking; it offers our guests the opportunity to walk with a unique view of the Kaz Mountains and fresh air. We also have suitable conditions for events such as meetings, seminars. We tried to create a quiet peaceful environment in the forest. We want to give our guests who come to our facility a unique experience with the rich facilities provided by the Kaz Mountains.

In our restaurant, we have a menu consisting of homemade foods that belongs to the Aegean culture and which we taste in the geography of Turkey in general. Our use of organic products grown in this region in our kitchen plays a big role in our guests buying fruits and vegetables from the surrounding villages before it is time to return home. Villagers around the hotel set up new stands and sell their products to our guests.

I think that IPARD Program supports in rural tourism sector are an opportunity for our country. Thanks to IPARD, I consider that increasing investments in rural tourism will increase the accessibility of people to such places that offer alternative tourism opportunities. Our cost was slightly higher than the cost of the project, but we benefited from the support for many equipment such as hotel accommodation, restaurant-kitchen equipment and in the construction area.



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