

# Rural Community's Capacity Building in the Context of Community-based Development of Tourism

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Abstract: Tourism is an activity that touches and involves public in direct way, so that it brings a variety of benefits to local communities and tourism. It even smashes an incredible energy, which is able to make local communities change in various aspects. Villagers - who incidentally are the current tour players – have such poor quality which are far from the ideal ones in running professional travel agents. If this problem can not be solved, the development of tourism would likely have an adverse impact on people's lives, owing to the lack of competitiveness of society in tourism businesses. This service programs used Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) methods in which the community will be actively involved in the empowerment program. The objective of this program is to improve community capacity in professional travel business management in the future.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a large archipelago inhabited by different races, tribes, and ethnic. Each different region has its own advantages – including the natural potentials. They are certainly advantageous for tourism. Indonesia is also a country with a wide-range of cultures and tourism, not only blessed with fertile land and natural beauty, but also endowed with culture and tourism, which have become its attraction. The abundant Indonesian cultures have substantial point to support the development of tourism.

Tourism is an activity that directly touches and involves public, so that it brings a variety of benefits to the local community and those surrounding areas. Tourism has even smashed tremendous energy, which is able to make local people's experience change in its various aspects. Tourism has many benefits to society, even for the country itself. The benefits of tourism can be seen from such various aspects: they are in terms of economic, social, cultural, environmental, social values, and science as well as opportunities and employment.

North Sumatra is one of the provinces in Indonesia with very abundant potentials to be developed into a tourist destination. We can not get

away from Lake Toba, a tourist destination in Samosir. One of the most popular destinations in North Sumatra, this region is always worth travelers' attraction, either domestic or foreign. No wonder if Lake Toba always attracts the attention of visitors, because it offers great views and beautiful natural scenery, vast expanse of the lake and the green mountains that surrounds.

One of the tourist sites that shows how Parmalim belief is still remaining from time to time can be found in Huta Tinggi Village, District Palipi, Samosir. Parmalim itself was better known as Ugamo Malim in its own town. Historically, Parmalim was first initiated by a *datu* named Guru Somaliang Pardede, a very close man to SISINGAMANGARAJA XII (the last king of Sisingamangaraja dynasty). This school was run by followers Sisingamangaraja (especially by two lieutenants, Guru Somaliang and His Majesty King Naipospos), with the aim to protect the beliefs and traditional culture of Toba Batak from the Christian, the Islam, and the Dutch colonialists' influences (Sidjabat 1983: 326).

Community-based tourism is not a brand new thing in Indonesia. Act No. 10 Year 2009 on Tourism gives an enough idea of how the community plays

role in the development of tourism business in Indonesia. One concept that describes the role of communities in tourism development is Community-Based Tourism (CBT). In conceptual way, the basic principle of community-based tourism is have people act as main actors through community empowerment in various tourism activities, so that the maximum benefit of tourism would be for the public community. In the context of tourism development, the community should run such independently assets mobilization. Hence, the value becomes a major attraction for travelers. Through the concept of Community Based Tourism, every individual in the community is directed to be part of the tourism-economic chain, for which individuals are given the skills to develop small businesses.

Presidential Decree No. 49 Year 2016 may actually be evidence that the central government is committed to the implementation of Lake Toba development. Therefore, improving the quality of the people in it should be encouraged. The Lake Toba tourism development will only be a mere ambitious project if the community in which quality improvement is not committed well. It is supported by the reality on the ground remains which are still many shortcomings, either in the form of lack of facilities and infrastructure, as well as the quality of the community.

## 2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Community Service activity was conducted using three approaches, namely:

### 2.1 Preparation

The socialization is a means to provide an understanding of related community phases of community service programs. As for some of the activities in the socialization phase are:

- Introduction of the concept of devotion  
In this section the team will explain the methods that will be used during the ongoing process of service.
- Related Concepts Understanding Strengthening Tourism  
In this section pengabdian team will provide insight into the various policies related to tourism in Indonesia. In addition, the team will provide various examples of case studies related to the concept of community-

based tourism which had been applied both in Indonesia and overseas.

### 2.2 Participatory Learning and Action (PLA)

This phase will involve the whole society in the village. This method helps improve the sensitivity of the community right to see the various problems they encounter. There are several activities in this phase include:

- Questionnaires  
Questionnaires will be conducted in two stages, before training and after training. Questionnaires were distributed to determine how the initial understanding and evaluation of activities.
- *In-class discussion*
  - ✓ Objective: to cultivate sensitivity (awareness) and build frameworks (framework of thinking)
  - ✓ Activity: exposure of each representative group of problems related to tourism in the village.
- *Case Study*
  - ✓ Objective: as a means to improve society's ability to solve problems encountered in the village communal.
  - ✓ Activity: creating a concept problem to be able to be completed by every stake holder in it according to their respective roles.
- English Language Training.
  - ✓ Objective: improve the ability of English Society.
  - ✓ Activity: the team will coordinate with the village to create a group to study English. The training was conducted for 3 months (according to the old training activities) with the intensity of twenty-seven meetings.

### 2.3 Repairing System (Improvement System)

This phase focuses on improving the planning system owned by the village.

- Objective: help the villagers in repairing its focus of development planning in the development of community-based tourism.
- Activity: facilitators create a SWOT analysis for the village and provide a discussion for and by the village government and its society. The village and the community then

create a scheme of repairing system that could solve this problem as long as they are natural.

### 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the observations made by the team, there are five prioritized problems that become obstacles in creating the community-based tourism in Huta Ginjang Village, District Palipi, Samosir. These problems are:

- The lack of public awareness of policies on tourism.
- Society that tends to be pessimism about the development of their tourism.
- Village development plans still do not have a clear concept.
- The lack of the villagers' English language skills in Huta Ginjang.
- System of travel location management is still using a very simple and unprofessional system.

Looking at the problems occurred in Huta Ginjang, there are some solutions that can be drawn from the highest priority. It is important to do an understanding of the concepts related public policy related to tourism in Indonesia. Then it must be recognized that economic activity in the field of tourism in Huta Ginjang can not significantly influence the economic improvement of rural communities. In this case, such comprehension on how to do professional tourism business must be made.

Development plan of Huta Ginjang is still not yet to place tourism development as priority in rural development. Observing Act No. 6 Year 2016 about village, it depends on a mandate that every village in Indonesia should be developed in accordance with its characteristics. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) will be seen about the vision and mission of the community and village government-related tourism, so the result of FGD can be used as reference in the future establishment of village development plans.

The lack of English language skills of the villagers' in Huta Ginjang make themselves difficult to communicate with the foreign tourists. This can be overcome by conducting English language training for rural society - at the same time improving the quality of the people in Huta Ginjang. Then, the tourism industry requires the attitude and commitment from all stakeholders. This approach of

case studies in various locations that has successfully implemented the concept of community-based tourism will be easier to show how tourism is also true and promising economic value and has a good impact on the community in various aspects.

On Wednesday, May 30, 2018, Institute of Community Services University of Sumatra Utara made a visit in Huta Tinggi headman's office. The presence of a team was to determine the implementation schedule for a series of community service. The team was welcomed by the headman of Huta Ginjang, Mr. Kornel Naibaho. Along with such warm talks, Mr. Kornel Naibaho revealed that the villagers in Huta Ginjang had been waiting for a team that had been previously planned at the time of proposal submission. The meeting agreed on the training and seminars in the framework of public service activities - undertaken by the Institute of Community Services, University of Sumatra Utara - which held 3 times in June 2018.

The team implemented Participatory Learning and Action (PLS) as an effort to increase the capacity of communities' to the concept of community-based tourism. There were several activities that had been carried out in the framework of PLA implementation, namely *In-class discussion* in the mean of seminar - held on June 5, 2018 at the St. Yosef Catholic Church of Huta Ginjang. The seminar was attended by 35 participants comprising representatives of the various groups.

During this seminar, the team enlightened a variety of materials related to the role of rural communities in travel industry such as tourism. The team explained that tourism is one source of foreign exchange, apart from oil and gas potential. It also has a larger share in building the economy within its currently slow growth. The material was submitted to give a stimulus to the people to look back at the social, cultural, political, and legal condition around them in order to establish a tourism business. The people's sensitivity in viewing such social, cultural, political, and legal condition will ease the team to bring up public awareness.

The following phase of the evaluation team of servants:

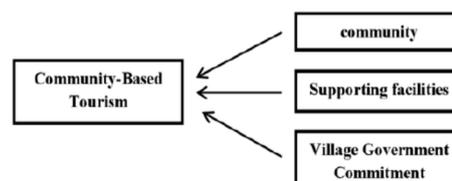


Figure 1: Phase of the evaluation team of servants.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

Implementation of community service carried out by the Institute of Community Services, University of Sumatra Utara received overwhelming response from the public and the rural government of Huta Ginjang. This is evidenced by the participation of rural communities for a series of activities carried out. It was concluded that the lack of understanding of the policy on tourism and a lack of English proficiency will have a negative impact on tourism in Huta Ginjang.

Commitment to the community in implementing the concept of community-based tourism began to take shape. This is evidenced by their commitment to the formation of a tourism-conscious group in Huta Ginjang. Therefore, people should distribute a plenty of aspirations they have to be more active in interacting with the local village government and village administration Huta Ginjang must demonstrate its commitment to support the development of tourism in by forming various regulatory support to improve their tourism.

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