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Article

Empowerment of Pokdarwis (Tourism Awareness Groups) in Developing Ecotourism Sarasah Waterfall Banda Lasuang, Lubuk Kilangan Sub-District, Padang City

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Article Information	Abstract
Received : 2024-01-04 Revised : 2024-02-05 Accepted : 2024-03-11 Published: 2024-04-18	This service aims to provide assistance to members of the tourism awareness group (POKDARWIS) in Batu Gadang Village, Lubuk Kilangan District, Padang City regarding the management and management of ecotourism, which includes the concept of ecotourism, governance, physical maintenance of ecotourism, promotion and analysis of the potential of community social resources. This service begins with social analysis and then continues with the Appreciative Inquiry method which includes the Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny stages. The targets of this community service activity are members of the Batu Gadang Urban Village tourism awareness group (POKDARWIS) who are actively involved in the management of nature tourism villages. Tourism Awareness Groups are given socialization, training, assistance and empowerment regarding the management and management of ecotourism. The results of this dedication show the excellent enthusiasm and motivation of the tourism awareness group in planning ecotourism management, developing ecotourism through fulfilling facilities and infrastructure according to needs, maintaining tourism assets, and promoting and empowering the economy of the community around tourist attractions.
Keywords Keyword: Tourism Awareness Group, Nature, Batu Gadang, Ecotourism, Community *Corresponding Author rahmiawalina@ae.ac.unand.id	

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an activity carried out by a person or group of people by visiting certain places for the purpose of recreation, self-development, or studying the uniqueness of tourism visited in a temporary period. Tourism can be carried out with a variety of tourist activities supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, entrepreneurs or government. While tourist attraction is everything that has uniqueness, beauty and value in the form of diversity of natural, cultural and man-made wealth which is the target and purpose of tourist visits (Widagdyo, 2017).

Tourism is an industry engaged in the field of services and services that are the mainstay of the Indonesian nation with the aim of increasing the country's foreign exchange earnings. The development of tourism in Indonesia, which is very large, diverse and complex, can be developed into an attractive tourist destination and become the main destination for world tourism. Currently, tourists prefer natural tourism combined with community participation in social culture (Ridlwani, 2017). Tourism can be a very promising business sector in global developments including those in Indonesia.

Along with the development of time with many emerging community-based tourism (nature tourism), namely tourism that presents all natural resources that not only develop environmental aspects in terms of conservation, but also involve cultural and social communities around tourist sites so as to provide benefits to the community around the tourist area. Ecotourism is expected to be able

to develop the economy of the surrounding community where they are the main controllers of the tourism sector (Tanaya, 2014).

Batu Gadang Village, is one of the villages or villages in Lubuk Kilangan District, Padang City, West Sumatra Province. Batu Gadang Village is one of the areas directly adjacent to the limestone hills that are explored as a source of raw material for making cement by the Semen Padang Company. Batu Gadang Village has an area of 19.28 square kilometers. It consists of hills and land with an altitude of 25-1,853 meters above sea level with an average rainfall of 384.80 mm/month and a temperature of 28.5°C - 31.5°C. The potential in Batu Gadang Village is more dominant in agriculture, besides natural attractions and agro-tourism including three waterfalls, but the more popular waterfalls are Sarasah Banda Lasuang, Ngalau (Cave) Bat, Ngalau Baba. Apart from natural tourism, Batu Gadang Village is currently being developed into a Thousand Crackers center (center of souvenirs or culinary) in Padang City.

The majority of the livelihoods of Kelurahan Batu Gadang residents are rice field and garden farmers. There are several plantation commodities such as durian, areca nut and other secondary crops. However, the community has not been able to distribute their garden products optimally. The results obtained from rice fields and gardens are only limited to being able to meet the needs of the community. In addition, the results of the production of rice fields and plantations in terms of quality have not been able to compete in the market.

The Faculty of Agricultural Technology with the Thematic Village Service program, tries to encourage and initiate the formation of Pokdarwis in Batu Gadang Village. This is motivated because the Batu Gadang area has a lot of natural tourism potential that can be developed later. This is the background for the formation of the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) in Batu Gadang Village, but the lack of experience and access makes natural tourism management not optimal.

Based on the above background, it is necessary to assist and empower tourism awareness groups (pokdarwis) in Batu Gadang Village as an effort to increase members' understanding of tourism management, improve tourism services, improve governance and increase tourism promotion. Thus the natural tourism potential of Batu Gadang Village is expected to improve the economy of the local community.

METHODS

In carrying out service activities in the thematic village of Batu Gadang Village, the main target and target is the community, because the community has full legitimacy in advancing its environment. In this case, it is necessary to approach both emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, so that the program implemented is right on target and relevant to the needs that exist in the community as a manifestation of the needs analysis (Need Assessment) that has been studied. This service was carried out from July to November 2022 in Batu Gadang Village, Lubuk Kilangan District, Padang City. Assistance activities are carried out at the Pokdarwis secretariat and action activities are carried out at several points of existing tourist locations such as the Sarasah Banda Lasuang waterfall location and Ngalau Baba.



Figure 1. Map of Batu Gadang Village

RESULTS

Ecotourism Development Planning

Assistance activities in designing ecotourism development in Batu Gadang Village with representatives of stakeholders involved in ecotourism activities. This activity begins with the formation of the pokdarwis management structure then continues with the preparation of the pokdarwis work program for the next year. This activity is very important to direct concrete steps and work so that ecotourism management can run in accordance with common goals and desires. Planning activities are made more effective, right on target, and minimize the negative impact of ecotourism development.



Figure 2: Formulation of pokdarwis structure and pokdarwis work program

Development of Supporting Facilities

The availability of supporting facilities is the key to successful management of ecotourism areas. Facilities contribute to the attraction of visitors to a tourist spot. Therefore, ecotourism development steps are carried out by fulfilling supporting facilities such as tourist destination plan signboards, directions, selfie spots, location descriptions and so on.

Maintenance of Ecotourism Assets

This activity is intended to maintain and maintain all ecotourism assets with the community. All elements of the community must be involved in efforts to maintain the tourist area, including the participation of visitors. So that maintenance campaign activities, provision of cleaning facilities, and rules must be developed in an effort to preserve ecotourism.

Community Economic Empowerment

In accordance with the concept of ecotourism, empowerment of the surrounding community must be carried out. Primarily in providing a positive impact on the community as an example of empowerment in the community's economic sector. The economic empowerment activities carried out in this service are training in making local or typical food from Batu Gadang Village. Skills are given to increase income and revive the economy of the community around the ecotourism area. It is hoped that the products produced can help the economy while promoting ecotourism in the Batu Gadang Village area.

Promotion of Tourism Through the Media

Tourism promotion activities are carried out to expose tourist destinations in Batu Gadang Village through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and YouTube. This training was given to all members of the Pokdarwis, as the front guard as managers in developing ecotourism in Batu Gadang Village.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Ecotourism development is one of the mainstays in efforts to improve the community's economy today. Ecotourism development must involve the surrounding community and can have a positive impact on each perpetrator. Ecotourism development activities in Batu Gadang Village include: 1) Ecotourism development planning, 2) Development of Facilities, 3) Maintenance of ecotourism assets, 4) Community economic empowerment, 5) Promotion of tourism through the media.

Suggestion

Further work needs to be done on community assistance and empowerment so that they are ready to receive tourists and are able to introduce regional potential, as well as offer services and sell community products. It is also necessary to conduct further analysis of the potential and opportunities

for economic development for communities that occupy areas around tourism and the involvement of all parties so that the development of ecotourism can run well by minimizing the ecological impact caused.

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