

## STRENGTHENING CULTURE-BASED TOURISM BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM IN PURBAYAN TOURISM VILLAGE: IMPACT OF INDONESIA-THAILAND COLLABORATION 2024

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### ABSTRACT

This community service program aims to strengthen culture-based tourism rooted in local wisdom in Purbayan Tourism Village through a collaborative partnership between Indonesia and Thailand. This service was held in the purbayan tourism village and the kings of Mataram who lived near Purbayan. This event was attended by 25 people from the management of Purbayan tourist village and representatives from Thailand. This community service activity lasted for 3 days, from May 20 to 23, 2024. Utilizing a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, the program was designed to empower local communities in identifying, developing, and promoting their unique cultural assets as sustainable tourism products. The activities included community capacity building workshops, development of experiential cultural tourism packages, international cultural exchange events, and digital marketing training. As a result, the community demonstrated increased awareness and participation in preserving and promoting their cultural heritage. Four thematic tourism packages were developed, integrating traditional arts, crafts, culinary experiences, and spiritual heritage. The collaboration with Thai tourism practitioners enriched local insights on sustainable tourism management and inspired innovations in storytelling and community-based governance. In addition, the program improved the digital competencies of local youth, leading to enhanced online visibility of the village. This initiative successfully illustrates how integrating local wisdom with international collaboration can foster inclusive, sustainable, and culturally rich tourism development. It also serves as a replicable model for other cultural villages seeking to build resilient tourism ecosystems grounded in community empowerment.

**Keywords:** *Community-Based Tourism, Local Wisdom, Cultural Heritage, International Collaboration, Purbayan Village, Sustainable Tourism*

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most strategic sectors for driving economic growth, cultural preservation, and social empowerment in many countries. In recent decades, the paradigm of tourism development has shifted from mass tourism to more sustainable, community-

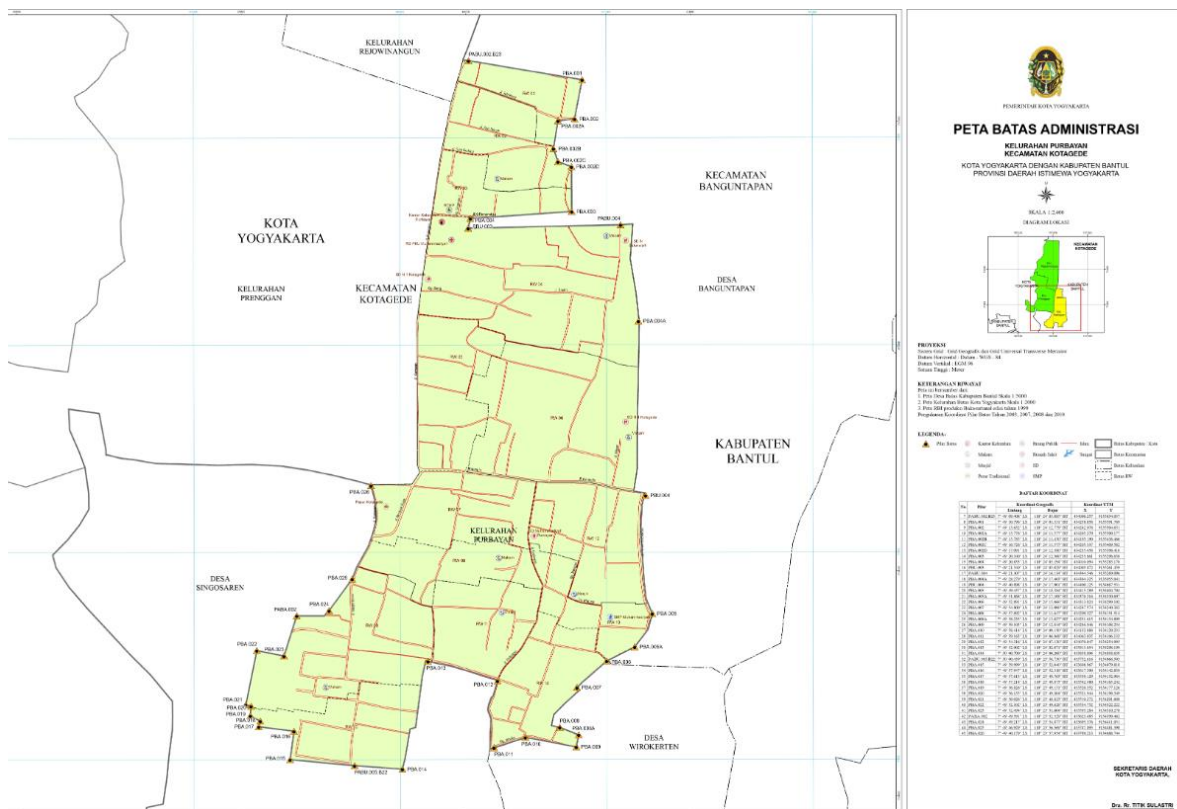
based, and culture-oriented approaches. Culture-based tourism offers an alternative that not only generates economic benefits but also fosters cultural pride, identity preservation, and local empowerment (Richards, 2018). This approach is especially relevant for countries with rich cultural diversity such as Indonesia and Thailand.

Indonesia has more than 80,000 villages, many of which possess distinct cultural features that can be transformed into tourism assets. One of these villages is Purbayan, located in Central Java, Indonesia. Purbayan is known for its strong cultural traditions, including batik-making, gamelan performances, traditional culinary practices, and religious rituals. However, like many other cultural villages, Purbayan faces challenges in managing and promoting its tourism potential due to limited human resources, lack of marketing knowledge, and absence of integrated tourism planning (Yuliana & Sugiarti, 2020). At the same time, Thailand has successfully implemented community-based tourism (CBT) in many of its rural areas, incorporating local wisdom into structured tourism activities. Initiatives such as the CBT-I Thailand model highlight the importance of community ownership, cultural authenticity, and inclusive development (Suansri, 2013). The collaboration between Indonesia and Thailand through this program is expected to promote knowledge sharing, cultural exchange, and innovation in managing village tourism.

Local wisdom, or *kearifan lokal*, refers to the collective knowledge, traditions, and practices that have been passed down through generations and are closely tied to the local environment and belief systems. It is widely recognized that local wisdom plays a vital role in cultural tourism, as it reflects the community's identity and values (Sartini, 2004). By embedding local wisdom in tourism development, the community can maintain cultural sustainability while responding to the demands of the tourism industry. Furthermore, studies by Nuryanti (1996) and Salazar (2012) emphasize that cultural tourism must strike a balance between preservation and commodification. Without proper community involvement and planning, tourism can lead to cultural erosion, commercialization of rituals, and socio-economic inequalities. Hence, an integrative model that combines local participation, international collaboration, and strategic capacity building is essential to ensure the sustainability of cultural tourism.

The success of cultural tourism also depends on the ability of communities to develop attractive tourism packages, provide quality hospitality services, and leverage digital platforms for promotion (Setiawan & Suryani, 2021). In this context, collaboration with Thai tourism experts and institutions becomes valuable, offering insights into

effective branding, service design, and visitor management. Through cultural diplomacy and South-South cooperation, Indonesia and Thailand can co-develop sustainable tourism strategies rooted in shared Asian values. Therefore, this community service program seeks to strengthen culture-based tourism in Purbayan Tourism Village by integrating local wisdom with international best practices through collaboration with Thailand. The program aims not only to develop tourism products and services but also to build the capacity of local actors and promote intercultural understanding. This initiative contributes to the broader agenda of sustainable rural tourism, cultural resilience, and regional cooperation in Southeast Asia.



**Picture 1.** Purbayan Area in the Spatial Unity of Kotagede Area

Source: Preservation Guidebook for Homeowners, UNESCO Bangkok-Jakarta, 2007.

Based on the above conditions, this community service activity is carried out in order to provide strengthening for tourism based on local and cultural policies. This activity is also an international collaborative service with Thailand. This activity is also an effort to promote the Purbayan village tourism area to the international world.

## **METHOD**

This service was held in the purbayan tourism village and the kings of Mataram who lived near Purbayan. This event was attended by 25 people from the management of Purbayan tourist village and representatives from Thailand. This community service activity lasted for 3 days, from May 20 to 23, 2024. This community service program was implemented using a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach that emphasizes active collaboration between the implementation team and the local community as the subject and partner of the activity. This approach is considered appropriate in the context of developing a tourism village based on local culture and wisdom because it allows for two-way dialogue, community empowerment, and adaptation of strategies based on local conditions and needs (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005).

The activity implementation process was divided into five main stages, namely: (1) identification of community potential and needs, (2) implementation of training and workshops, (3) development of cultural tourism products, (4) cultural exchange and promotion activities, and (5) program monitoring and evaluation. In the first stage, local potential mapping and needs analysis were conducted through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving community leaders, tourism village managers, art groups, local MSMEs, and village youth representatives. The results of this stage became the basis for designing appropriate and contextualized interventions. Such participatory techniques have proven effective in formulating community-based development solutions (Chambers, 1994).

The second stage was the implementation of capacity building workshops that included training in tourism village management, cultural tourism package packaging, cultural narrative-based tour guide training, and digital marketing training. In this training, the service team involved resource persons from Indonesian and Thai tourism practitioners, including representatives from the Community-Based Tourism Institute in Thailand. This collaboration aims to transfer knowledge and best practices from Thailand's experience in managing cultural tourism villages. Furthermore, in the third stage, cultural tourism product development was carried out. Together with the community, a tour package was developed that integrated local activities such as batik making, gamelan training, and traditional culinary presentation. This package was developed with the principles of authenticity and cultural continuity, as recommended in the development of cultural

tourism (Richards & Wilson, 2007). Adjustments were also made so that the tour packages could answer the needs of the domestic and international tourist markets.

The fourth stage is cultural exchange and promotion, which includes collaborative art performances between Indonesian and Thai cultural actors, as well as local culinary and craft exhibitions. In addition to strengthening international networks, this activity also serves as a medium for promotion and education for the community regarding the importance of cultural preservation as a tourism asset. Finally, the monitoring and evaluation stage was carried out for the entire series of activities. The evaluation was conducted quantitatively and qualitatively through questionnaires, interviews, and field observations to measure the impact of the program on community capacity building, youth involvement, and sustainability of tourism products. This participatory-based evaluation model is designed to be used sustainably by the village after the program ends (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998). With this methodological approach, the service program not only serves as a short-term intervention, but also builds a long-term foundation for strengthening cultural tourism villages based on local wisdom and international collaborative networks. The service data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The data obtained was analyzed using descriptive qualitative methods.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Increased Cultural Awareness and Community Participation**

One of the main achievements of this program is the increased awareness of Purbayan community towards the importance of cultural preservation as a sustainable tourism asset. Before the implementation of the program, most residents viewed cultural activities such as gamelan performances, batik making, or traditional ceremonies as mere routine activities or had even begun to be abandoned by the younger generation. Through focus group discussions (FGDs) and trainings involving practitioners from Thailand, the community began to understand the economic and symbolic value of local culture if properly packaged and promoted.

Community participation also increased significantly. Youth groups that were previously not actively involved in the management of the tourism village now form a special working unit for social media management and welcoming guests. This is in line with the findings of Mitchell and Ashley (2010) who emphasized that the involvement of

local communities, especially the younger generation, is a key indicator of the success of community-based tourism village development.

### **Transformation of Cultural Tourism Products**

The program successfully initiated the development of four cultural tourism packages based on local activities, namely: (1) batik tourism with a historical narrative of typical Purbayan motifs, (2) basic gamelan and traditional dance training, (3) local food-based culinary tourism such as jadah tempe and klenyem, and (4) religious tourism with a narrative of local spiritual figures. These four packages were developed together with the community and formatted using an “experiential tourism” approach, where tourists are not only spectators, but also actively involved in cultural activities (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).



**Picture 2.** Batik’s Activity at purbayan tourism village  
(Cultural Tourism Products)

Compared to the initial condition, tourism products in Purbayan are now more structured, have a strong narrative flow, and offer in-depth and authentic experiences for visitors. The addition of educational elements in the tour package also increases its selling value, especially for the educational tourism market. This is in line with the results of research by Richards and Raymond (2000), which confirms that cultural tourism packaged in an educational manner has a high attraction for domestic and international tourists.

### **Impact of International Collaboration: An Indonesia-Thailand Perspective**

Collaboration with Thai partners has had a significant positive impact. Practitioners from Thailand's Community-Based Tourism Institute (CBT-I) shared successful experiences in homestay management, cultural storytelling, and a fair profit-sharing system between managers and communities. Cultural exchanges through art performances and

interactive discussions also opened the Purbayan community's minds to the potential of local culture-based innovations.

Moreover, this collaboration forms cross-cultural relationships that strengthen regional solidarity in Southeast Asia in developing tourism based on local wisdom and shared values. Such collaboration supports the South-South Cooperation approach as proposed by Scheyvens (2002), which is cooperation between developing countries that share similar socio-cultural contexts in sustainable tourism development.

### **Human Resource Capacity Strengthening and Digital Promotion**

One of the main challenges in the development of tourism villages is the limited capacity of human resources in the field of tourism services and promotion. This program responds to this issue through tour guide training, tourism photography and videography training, and social media usage training. As a result, Purbayan now has an official social media account managed by a youth team, as well as more professional visual promotional materials. This effort strengthens the findings of Wahab and Cooper (2021), which state that digitalization is an important element in expanding market access for village tourism, especially after the pandemic. With digital marketing, Purbayan tourism products can reach tourists from outside the region and even abroad.



**Picture 3.** Indonesian and Thailand delegation activity community services at Purbayan Sustainability and Model Replication

This program proves that the integration of local wisdom and global innovation can create an inclusive and sustainable tourism village development model. Through a participatory, collaborative, and transformative approach, the program not only provides short-term benefits in the form of increased tourism visits, but also builds a long-term

foundation in the sustainable management of cultural resources. This model has the potential to be replicated in other tourism villages by adjusting the local cultural context. Successful replication requires cross-sector partnerships (government, universities, communities, and international partners) as suggested in the quadruple helix approach (Carayannis & Campbell, 2009).

## **CONCLUSION**

The community service program that focuses on strengthening tourism villages based on culture and local wisdom in Purbayan Tourism Village has shown significant results in encouraging community participation, developing culture-based tourism products, and strengthening international cooperation networks between Indonesia and Thailand. The participatory and collaborative approach used has succeeded in increasing community awareness of the potential of local culture as a tourism asset with economic and symbolic value. This activity was also able to transform various cultural potentials that were originally sporadic into structured, attractive, and educational tour packages. Collaboration with institutions and practitioners from Thailand provides inspiration and new insights that are relevant in the context of community-based tourism village management in Southeast Asia. In addition, increasing the capacity of local human resources in the field of tourism services and digital promotion is an important asset for the sustainability of Purbayan tourism village management. Overall, this program not only has an impact on increasing the number of tourists and the existence of local culture, but also on strengthening the social and economic capacity of the community. The success of this activity shows that the integration of local wisdom and global innovation through international collaboration can be an effective strategy in developing inclusive and sustainable tourism.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

For the sustainability and replication of this model in the future, several strategic recommendations can be made as follows: 1) Strengthening local institutions through the establishment of a professional tourism village management body that involves multi-stakeholders (village government, art groups, youth, MSMEs, and traditional leaders). 2) Sustainable development of international networks, especially with ASEAN countries, in the form of cultural exchange programs, joint training, and cross-country promotion to

increase the competitiveness of tourist villages at the regional level. 3) Integration of the local education curriculum with cultural wisdom values so that the younger generation increasingly has a sense of pride and responsibility for cultural preservation. 4) Optimal utilization of digital technology, both for promotion, tour package booking, and visitor feedback systems to improve the quality of services and tourism experiences. 5) Implementation of further research to monitor the social, cultural, and economic impacts of the tourism village program, and develop community-based sustainability indicators. With these strategies, it is hoped that Purbayan Tourism Village can become an example of best practice in the development of a culture-based tourism village that is competitive, sustainable, and contributes to the preservation of the nation's cultural heritage.

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