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LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SUMBERWANGI HAMLET DESTINATION, EAST JAVA, INDONESIA

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Abstract

The Mountainous area of Arjuno, located in east Java with its beautiful natural scenery and cultural historical situs has significant potential for tourism development. In the slopes of Mount Arjuno, there is one traditional settlement, Sumberwangi hamlet. It has nice view and cool climate that is typical of the the highlands. This hamlet also produce Javanese coffee such as a

Arabica and Robusta. Since 2015 the forest manage by University of Brawijaya (UB) under supervised of Ministry of Environment. Besides its potential, Sumberwangi hamlet has possibility of strong wind attack. This study examines the level and model of local community participation in ecotourism facility development. The form of empowerment was determined for every step of destination planning. The data were collected using documentation and interview. The result of the study indicates that the community involvement is at passive level. The form of empowerment was determined for every step of destination planning. The model of community participation in Sumberwangi is community empowerment in the project. The citizen is involved in three area of development. In the planning stage, community is given the information and identify the potential of Sumberwangi together with the companion. In the development stage, community is involved in master planning and tourist accommodation design. In the final stages, community is involved in program evaluation together with the research team. Ecotourism is expected to be the best development model as it empowering local community whilst conserving the nature and local wisdom. This study hopefully could give significant contribution for ecotourism development in Sumberwangi hamlet, UB forest.

Keywords

Local Community, Participation, Ecotourism Development, Tourist Destination

1. Introduction

1.1 The Potential of Sumberwangi Hamlet to Become Tourism Destination

Sumberwangi hamlet is a traditional mountainous hamlet located in Arjuno Mountain in Donowarih village East Java. Mount Arjuno has been known as a mountainous tourist destination, as place for climbing, camping, trail for adventurers. Many adventure tourism activities were already existed in Mount Arjuno. The hamlet located closed to important natural tourist destinations on the slopes of Mount Arjuno.

Brawijaya University (UB) manage one forest area in Mountain Arjuno as living laboratory, supervised by Indonesia Ministry of Environment. The management includes three hamlets, on of it is Sumberwangi hamlet. It closed to other UB forest Village (Sumpersari Village). The highlands topography give specific characteristic to the hamlet and the cool climate like typical highlands. The forest produce Javanese coffee such as *Arabica* and *Robusta*. These attractiveness make Sumberwangi hamlet feasible to be developed as rural ecotourism.

Sumberwangi hamlet located closed to Pinus village, that will be developed as tourist attractions. It is proposed to provide tracking and hiking tourism, camping, also education tourism activity such as habitat watching. Hopefully various visitor community groups such as family group, students, government and foreign tourists usually spend their holiday travel in Arjuno area.

Being in Brawijaya University (UB forest) forest makes this village become stopover area for visitors who come to UB forest for educational or research purposes for UB's researchers and other institution's researcher both from within and outside the Malang city. Besides that, UB forest is often visited for business purposes such as the regional and central government as well as the UB forest management team which has an interest in managing UB forest. While the object is a conservation area, and also the places for the field of research, it is important to develop the Sumberwangi village area.

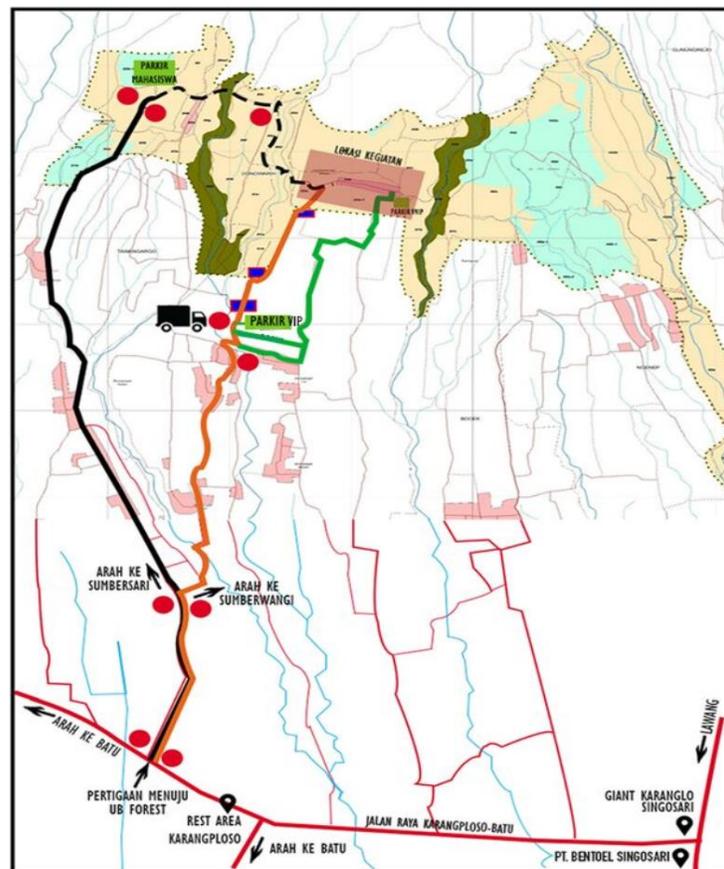


Figure 1: Location and Accessibility Map of Sumberwangi Hamlet

Besides its potential, Sumberwangi has a possibility of being hit by strong wind. In 2004 this village had been ravaged by a tornado and all house were destroyed. After the disaster,

residents were assisted by the government to reconstruct their houses in a short time. However, the structure and construction of new houses has not yet met the standards of strong wind resistant homes. In addition, with the increasing number of visitors coming to this village for research purposes such as researchers, students and coffee enthusiasts, both local and international visitors, this village needs a place to stay for visitors. Usually visitors stay at residents' homes. Therefore, UB Forest manager and UB researchers make research and community service in designing and structuring lodging houses by utilizing people's houses in order to provide accommodation for visitor while developing the hamlet as ecotourism destination that has tourism attraction complex.



Figure 2: *Resident's House Condition at Sumberwangi Hamlet*

1.2 Community Participation in Sumberwangi Ecotourism Development

The World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 defined Sustainable Development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Dumbraveanu, 2007). It refers to the meaning of lower economy people needs, the limitation of technology utilization and the limitation the social ability to meet present and future needs. Sustainable tourism defined by WTO as a form of tourism that considers the current and future economic, social and

environmental impacts to meet the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and the host communities (Mendez, et. al, 2018). However sustainable tourism need a comprehensive, responsible and well-managed destination. (Butler, 1999; Conaghan et. al, 2015; Mowforth & Munt, 2003).

Sustainable tourism must include three area of development. First is environment. Enhance tourist satisfaction must followed by nature and socio-culture conservation. The sustainable tourism concept that apply this approach is ecotourism. Ecotourism according to Fandeli (1999) in Giriwati et al (2018) is a form of tourism or travel to a natural environment for recreational purposes as well as environmental preservation. Besides that, ecotourism according to Page and Dowling (2001) in Giriwati et al (2018) is also defined as tourism activities that have criteria: 1). Nature-based, 2). Activities and management involving the community, 3). Contribute to nature conservation, 4). Educational activities about nature, 4). Give visitors experience and satisfaction.

According to Rasoolimanesh and Jaafar (2016), A community is a group of people who share a geographic area and are bound together by common culture, values, race, or social class. In terms of social sustainability, it refers to the ability of a community to absorb inputs, such as extra people, for short or long periods of time, and to continue functioning either without the creation of social disharmony or by adapting its functions and affairs so that the disharmony created can be alleviated or mitigated (Mowforth and Munt, 2003). Cultural sustainability refers to the ability of people to retain or adapt elements of their culture which distinguishes them from other people (Mowforth and Munt, 2003). In the terms of economy, tourism must give economy benefit for local people.

Ecotourism accommodation should provide by local community. Usually they occupy their house as community homestay. The concept of ecotourism village could be catalisator for local people to be active in tourism development. Inskeep (1991) in Wahyuni (2016) stated that a tourism village is the type of tourism where a number of tourists live in and close to traditional life style or stay in an isolated village by learning its life style and its environment. Another definition of tourism village is an integration between attractions, accommodation and supporting facilities that are presented in a structure of community life that is integrated with prevailing procedures and its attached traditions (Nuryanti, 1993).

In the ecotourism development, it is important to empowering local people in all development process. Without community involvement in tourism planning and manage some

degree of control by local community over tourism resources and the revenue generated, tourism development will not differ from community exploitative model which is not in accordance with the principles of community-based development. The importance of community participation is addressed by Sebola and Fourie, (2006) that the local communities participation are an indispensable and giving impact on ecotourism destination development. Moreover, Dangi and Jamal (2016) described that empowerment and resident participation on community based-tourism (CBT) are significant principles, an approach that community's good and resources should be locally controlled, community-based and community-driven. The communities must have valuable control over decisions, including management of economy investment.

According to Denman (2001), Community-based Tourism (CBT) is defined as namely a form of tourism where the local community has an important role in the development and management and to benefit from these activities. One approach for ecotourism that involving local community is Community-based ecotourism (CBE). Ecotourism takes the social dimension a stage further in ecotourism development. CBE is a form of ecotourism where the local community has substantial control over, and involvement in, its development and management, and is a major proportion of the benefits within the community (WWF International, 2001). By ecotourism, the community has a role to be involved or empowered in its development and management while the benefits derived from managing ecotourism go back to the local community.

Wearing (2003) describes that there are 5 benefits in CBT, namely: 1). Increasing demand for accommodation, housing, food and beverages and increasing the feasibility of building hotels, motels, guest houses, farm stays and others. 2). Providing additional income for traders or local businesses such as health, finance, vehicle rental, lodging industry, souvenir center or souvenirs, and tourist attraction. 3). Improve marketing for local products, 4). Use or empower local workers as tour guides, shopkeepers, restaurant waiters, builders or construction workers, and others, 5). Providing additional sources of income for the protection and maintenance of natural resources as a natural tourist attraction and historical heritage on the site.

Community involvement in development according to Drake (1991) in Giriwati et al (2018) is divided into 3 stages: 1). Positioning the community as the subject of development that plays an active role in the planning process, 2). The active role of the community in the implementation and development of programs and their management, 3). The role and position of the community in obtaining the value of significant (economic and socio-cultural) benefits,

both individually and collectively. The scheme of community involvement in community empowerment is divided into three important stages:

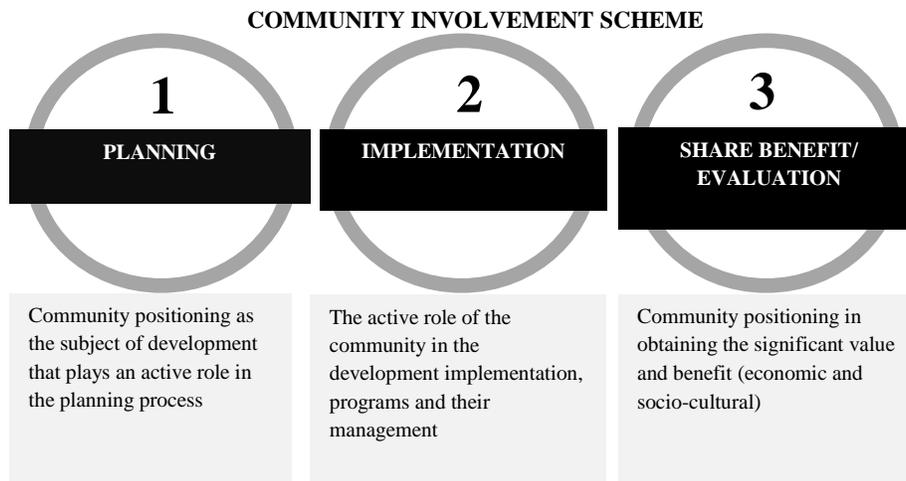


Figure 3: *The Area of Community Participation in Ecotourism Development through Empowerment*

The theoretical literature on typologies of participation has derived from Arnstein's (1969) influential ladder citizen engagement. Arnstein argued that to ensuring the sustainability of any development, it is crucial to increase user involvement. Arnstein (1969) in Tritter (2006) classified the level of citizen participation into seven categories: 1). Manipulation, 2). Therapy, 3). Informing, 4). Consultation. 5). Placation, 6). Partnership, 7). Delegated power, 8). Citizen Control. The citizen engagement in this study assumed similar concept with people participation.

According to Mowfort and Munt (2003), there are seven typologies of community participation: 1). Manipulative participation, 2). Passive participation, 3). Participation by consultation, 4). Participation for material incentives, 5). Functional participation, 6). Interactive participation, 7). Self Mobilization.

Most of the studies in community based-tourism showed the community's involvement in development planning and implementation especially in tourism management but rarely in the point of tourism facility planning and design of tourism. In this study, the community participation are empowered and guided by academic institution and practitioner includes student, lecturer, architect and village planner.

Previous study showed understanding of how to develop sustainable tourism destination based on stakeholder engagement model and its challenges (Prayudi, 2018) that involving private

sector, government, community, NGO and University. This paper focuses on local community participation in the development of ecotourism destination. The local community participation are guided by academic institution. It is based on a case study of a proposed community-based ecotourism development in the rural area of Sumberwangi. The paper explores the level of community participation in the context of community-based ecotourism development. These include local level awareness, support and capacity as well as engagement with external parties that does not restrict community participation or undermine the process of local level empowerment.

2. Research Method

This study applied descriptive research design. The approach used in this study is a qualitative approach. This approach was chosen to emphasize the interpretation of the community participation of the villagers in Sumberwangi. According to Wahid & Widyawati (2018), this approach focus on the method of searching for the phenomena's meaning, concepts, characteristics, symptoms, symbols, or descriptions.

In qualitative research, there is the possibility that the predetermined problem may change when it is in the field, as there are more important and urgent things than what has been set or can limit a fraction of what has been previously formulated. Similarly, when conducting observations and in-depth interviews. Because the social situation has special characteristics, actors, places, and activities, it allows the appreciation of the researcher as the research instrument itself to be different in interpreting the meaning obtained. Therefore, it is necessary to check the validity of data collected so that no interpretation is incorrect or not following the concept, so it takes a credibility test. Test credibility can be done by extending the time of participation of researchers in the field, increasing diligence in observation, as well as data triangulation (Wahid & Widyawati, 2018).

2.1 Location of the Research

The research location was in Sumberwangi hamlet, Donowarih village, Karangploso, Malang region. It is located about 600 meters to 900 meters above sea level. The research began in June 2018 and still in progress until the end of 2018.

2.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection in this study consists of primary and secondary data collection. The Secondary data is done through UB forest management data and Karangploso district, Malang regional local government. The field survey, in-depth interviews, and participatory process are conducted to obtain primary data. Participatory is decided as effective method for involving the community into ecotourism development as it provide good result in community participation. According to Sanof (2000) the idea of participation can be traced to preliterate societies, and community participation is of a more recent origin. The approach is commonly associated with the idea of involving local people in social development. The community should not excluded from the development process. Sanof (2000) utilized Alinsky's participation approach that trust in participatory democracy and utilized methods that endeavored to make it a reality rather than a trite phrase. In emphasizing the importance of citizen action, particularly at the neighborhood level, he stimulated the movement toward decentralization, local control, and consumer power.

The informant for in depth-interview decided by snowballing, as it is the valuable way to confirm informant's answer through literature review, field observation result, and another informant's answer about the same topic (Wahid & Widyawati (2018)). The community discussion participant in participatory process are selected from people who are homeowner. The analytical method that used for this study is descriptive qualitative. It was utilized to analysis the level and model of community participation.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Social and Cultural Dynamics

The existing settlement area in Sumberwangi hamlet area has recognizable from the characteristics of rural communities. This process took place since Sumberwangi hamlet started its construction. The characteristics of the population and the socio-cultural dynamics of the population can be seen from its forms of interaction between citizens and type of settlements. Socially, the development of the Sumberwangi hamlet becomes an attracting force for immigrants living in the region, or for investors to develop the region. The local people have increased income from UB Forest development. Since the end 2015, UB forest management involved local community to manage the natural resource in UB forest such as forest, coffee gardens, and vegetable gardens.

3.2 Ecotourism Development Concept in Sumberwangi

The main concept of the UB forest development is ecotourism. Sumberwangi Hamlet planned as a tourist accommodation area in UB forest that could provide homestay for the visitor, offers tourist attraction, and conduct nature and culture conservation. Sumberwangi hamlet development as Ecotourism Village must be able to accommodate educational needs as well as leisure for tourist. As ecotourism that defined by Fandeli (1999) in Giriwati et all (2018) as a form of tourism or travel to a natural environment for recreational purposes as well as environmental preservation. Besides that, ecotourism according to Page and Dowling (2001) in Giriwati et all (2018) also defined as tourism activities that have five criteria: 1). Nature-based, 2). Activities and management that involving the community, 3). Contribute to nature and culture conservation, 4). Educational activities about nature, 5). Give visitors experience and satisfaction. This approach was used to formulate the specific concept of Sumberwangi, proposed as a community-based Ecotourism Hamlet that has ecology, economy, and social criteria.

In terms of Social criteria, there are three main concepts: 1). Utilizing existing Hamlet residents' houses to be developed into rural homestays, 2). Involving the community from the planning stage to the evaluation stage to minimize friction that occurs or conflict of interest between Sumberwangi Hamlet residents and the Serving Doctoral Team (UB) and managers of UB forest. While in the Economic criteria, there are two concept: 1). Equitable income. Going forward with the development of Ecotourism Hamlets should be able to maximize the equity of income distribution in its management, 2). Clear the revenue management.

3.3 Community Participation in Ecotourism Development iniTiation

Numerous previous studies focus on local participation in Ecotourism development. The case of Maleholo Nature reserve Ecotourism development with local participation addressed by Sebola & Fourie (2006); the community participation in the forest-sanctuary ecotourism and how its participation model also studied (Mensah & Ernest, 2013); the study on social aspect in sustainable tourism as a valuable type of development (Dangi & Jamal, 2016); the study on stakeholder engagement and communication in developing sustainable tourism in Indonesia by Prayudi (2018). Moreover, the community participation in Ecotourism development still a sense of pride.

Community participation in the development of Sumberwangi tourist village is conducted by involving the community (community empowerment) through participatory process. The

empowerment program in the development of community-based Ecotourism as mentioned in Giriwati et al (2010) are involving the local community in three stages of the development process, namely the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

By several discussion result that we conducted in Sumberwangi, we proposed the role of the community in Sumberwangi Hamlet ecotourism development: 1). Formulating the development goal and define the problem, 2). Enabling its residents to understand about the ecotourism development, 3). Reconciling program objectives with community priorities. The local community determines collective needs and priorities, and assumes responsibilities for the decisions.



Figure 4: *Community Involvement in Three Areas of Community Empowerment*

The involvement of the local population in Sumberwangi ecotourism initiation mainly in the decision making process. The local community involvement in the decision making process were limited to attending meetings and giving ideas and opinions only. The community determines collective needs and priorities, and assumes responsibilities for the decisions. Several person were enthusias in giving their idea about making wind-proof resilience house. The main barriers to participate in UB forest development discussion were related to their limited knowledge about tourism, lack of human capital, lack of information about wind resilience building, and limited incentives or support from the government for conservation and infrastructure development in Sumberwangi.

This community support program to guide Ecotourism development in Sumberwangi Hamlet is proposed in three years program began on 2018. On the first year, we propose an ecotourism masterplan. On the second year we will develop the infrastructure and community homestay. The Ecotourism management will be guided on the third year.

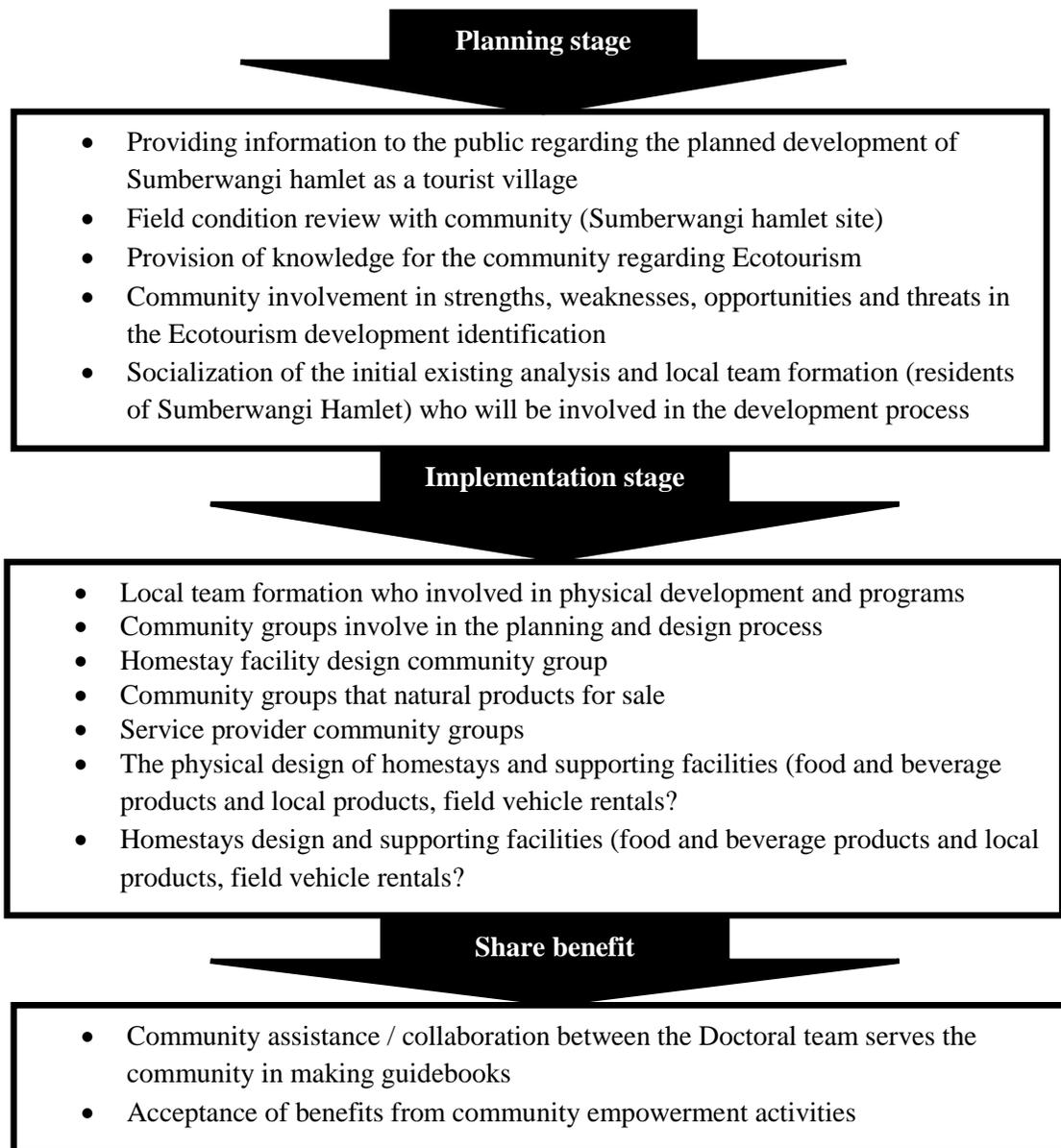


Figure 5: *Scheme of Sumberwangi Ecotourism development in Three Years*

On first year, we focus on making the masterplan and the homestay design, together with the community. The local community involvement in the masterplan's decision making process that were limited to attending meetings and giving design ideas. The community determines collective needs and priorities, and assumes responsibilities for the decisions.

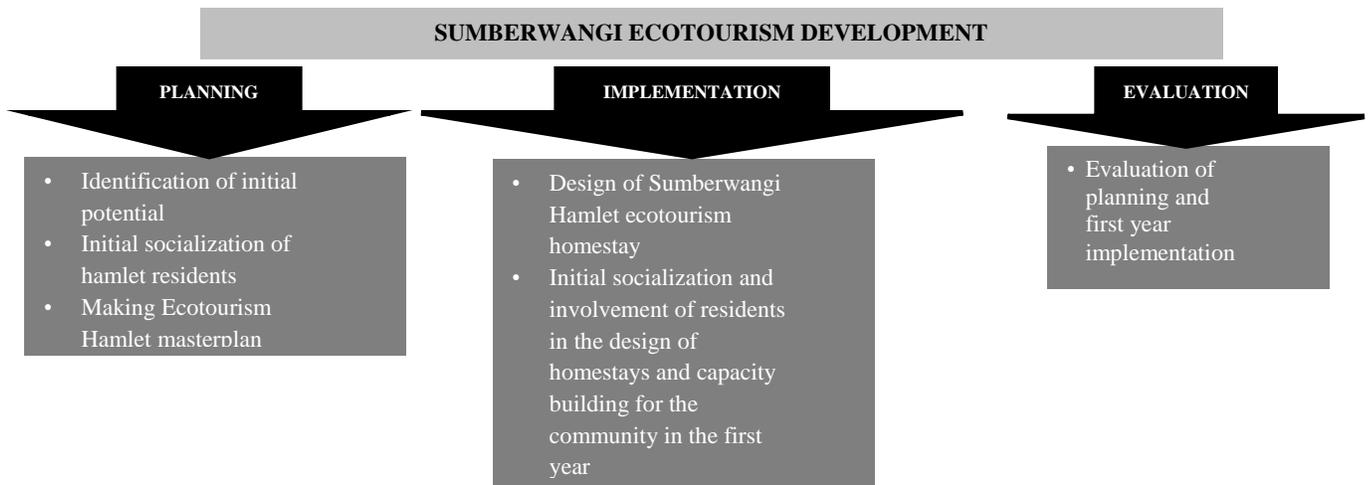


Figure 6: *Scheme for Developing Sumberwangi Ecotourism Hamlets in the First Year*

From the result we got about how community participate in Sumberwangi ecotourism development initiation process, the level of local community participation is in participation by consultation. Several meeting and focus group discussion are conducted to get design and development decision. Most residents had little confidence in government support for them to participate in ecotourism.



Figure 7: *Community Participation in Decision Making Support Conducted at Resident's House*

Based on several focus group discussion with local community, several design and development decision are have been proposed. The Sumberwangi hamlet ecotourism masterplan and community homestay design are have been done together with community. The ecotourism masterplan adopt environment-friendly concept with wind resilience consideration in outdoor

space, hardscape, and softscape arrangement. The community homestay building utilized wind resilience and Javanese traditional architecture concept that implemented in building style, construction, and interior arrangement.



Figure 8: *Tourist's Accommodation Design Result*

Based on this community research program, we found that participation has several benefits: 1). Increase program acceptance, ownership; 2). Ensure programs meet with local needs; 3). May reduce cost using local resources; 4). The problem solving mechanism more efficient.



Figure 9: *Community Participation in Stakeholder's discussion conducted at Resident's House*

5. Conclusion

The involvement of the local population is in the decision making and implementation of development projects. The role of the community involvement in Sumberwangi Hamlet are: 1). Formulating the development goal and define the problem 2). Enabling its residents to understand about the ecotourism development, 3). Reconciling program objectives with community priorities. In Sumberwangi development, the community determines collective needs and priorities, and assumes responsibilities for the decisions. The level of local community participation is in participation by consultation. Several meeting and focus group discussion are conducted to get design and development decision.

Based on this community research program, we found that participation has several benefits: 1). Increase program acceptance, ownership; 2). Ensure programs meet with local needs, 3). May reduce cost using local resources, 4). The problem solving mechanism more efficient.

As this research still in progress until 2021 with local community involvement and empowerment, the succesfull program could not only measured by this result. This is only a preliminary result that would be reviewed, tested and improved together with local community in parcipatory process in order to achieved the main goal. The sustainable tourism destination that promote the appropriate natural and cultural tourism attraction while doing conservation to the environment.

Based on the local participation engagement model, it is important in developing sustainable tourist destination to consult and to involve primary community in the process, so that the programs for the tourist destination will gain support from all stakeholders. Most residents had little confidence in government support for them to participate in ecotourism.

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