

# THE ROLE OF TOURISM ASSISTANT IN PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM VILLAGE IN LEMBATA REGENCY

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## **Abstract**

*Lembata Regency is known as a cultural attraction of whale hunting which is well known internationally. Moreover, the government wants to introduce Lembata's potential product by establish Tourism Village so that tourist visits can increase and can improve the welfare of the community through tourism. Because of the target, the government collaborates with tourism assistants in managing 26 Tourism Villages in Lembata Regency. This study aims to describe the role of tourism assistants in accompany development of 26 Tourism Villages in Lembata Regency. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Data obtained from observations, interviews with key informants, and documentation during the activities. The results showed that the role of tourism companion consists of various contributions summarized in four roles, namely as a facilitator, as an educator and motivator, as a liaison as well as a coordinator and mediator, and as an implementer of monitoring and evaluation of each mentoring program being implemented. Some of the obstacles found in the mentoring process were distance, time, and strict health protocols that were sometimes neglected due to the pandemic covid 19*

## **Keywords:**

*Tourism assistance role, companion, tourism, Lembata, rural tourism*

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## **Abstrak**

Kabupaten Lembata dikenal sebagai dengan atraksi budaya perburuan ikan paus yang sudah terkenal di kancah internasional. Lebih dari itu, pemerintah ingin mengenalkan potensi Lembata dengan mengemasnya menjadi Desa Wisata agar kunjungan wisatawan meningkat dan dapat menyejahterakan masyarakat melalui pariwisata. Dalam pengembangannya, pemerintah bekerjasama dengan pendamping pariwisata dalam mengelola 26 Desa Wisata di Kabupaten Lembata. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan peran pendamping pariwisata dalam mengembangkan 26 Desa Wisata di Kabupaten Lembata. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Data diperoleh dari observasi, wawancara dengan informan kunci, dan dokumentasi selama kegiatan pendampingan berlangsung. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa peran pendamping pariwisata terdiri dari berbagai kontribusi yang dirangkum dalam empat peran yakni sebagai Assistant, sebagai Educator dan motivator, sebagai penghubung sekaligus koordinator dan mediator, dan sebagai pelaksana monitoring evaluasi setiap program pendampingan yang dijalankan. Adapun beberapa hambatan

ditemukan dalam proses pendampingan adalah jarak, waktu, dan protocol kesehatan ketat yang terkadang abai akibat pandemic covid 19

**Kata Kunci:**

*Peran pendamping pariwisata, pendampingan, pariwisata, Lembata, desa wisata*

## INTRODUCTION

One form of community empowerment in the village is the Tourism Village. In pursuing the target of the number of tourist visits, the Government of Indonesia through the Ministry of Tourism has begun to develop rural areas (Rahmawati, 2019). This initiation was carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Villages of the Republic of Indonesia, which began in 2019. This government movement inspired policy makers at the provincial and district and city levels to make similar activities, namely developing tourism in their respective regions. One of them is in East Nusa Tenggara Province which makes tourism one of the missions carried out to be developed until 2022. This mission is implemented in most administrative areas of East Nusa Tenggara Province by starting to identify tourism potential to developing tourism human resources to prepare tourism as the leading sector driving the economy in NTT. One of the regencies that are serious in developing tourism is Lembata Regency. This district is known for its worldwide whaling attractions and has been passed down from generation to generation. This tradition is still maintained its authenticity and often attracts tourists both domestic and foreign to come to visit.

Tourism is a field that is in accordance with Lembata's development mission to accelerate development through sustainable tourism activities. This activity is expected to increase market and promotion. Local governments continue to carry out management of tourism potential, both natural and cultural resources so that Regional Original Income (PAD) increases in line with tourism development. From 2017 to 2022, the

Lembata Regency RPJMD sets tourism as a leading industry, with fisheries and agriculture as the main drivers. This development concept has been standardized and formulated to cover the attractiveness of the area, namely the Grand Line Tourism Development model. The Lumbarta Regency Government divides the island into three development zones which are also called development clusters, with development zones one, two, and three with growth points and points.

The first point is the attraction of the Coal Volcano which erupts every 20 minutes which can be observed and provides a unique attraction experience. The second is that Lamalera is used as an attraction, especially in the hunting tradition carried out by the local community, so the main focus of humans becomes the object, not the whales. Third, travel fishing where this activity starts from the Buyasuri and Omesuri sub-districts. Among the three development clusters or three points of tourism growth, it can be a supporting attraction in Lembata Regency. The development of community-based tourist attractions is integrated with the "Triangle line Tourism" development model (Volcano Batutara, Lamalera Whale Catching, Travel Fishing). One of the strategies is carried out with the concept of "digital tourism" which synergizes with the tourism policies of the provincial and central government.

Not only that, Lembata Regency has many attractions that the government feels must be developed optimally. Therefore, there has been a serious initiation of tourism village development in Lembata Regency with 26 tourism villages as partners spread throughout Lembata Regency. Tourism village is one form of village development that is an important factor in improving community

welfare (Suswanto, et al, 2019). In addition, village development is the key to state development, especially in the context of the welfare of the community at the village level (Sulaiman et al, 2016). In realizing this, there must be a community empowerment program that can realize the success of the government in increasing tourist visits while improving the welfare of the community. The tourist village was chosen as a program that is considered capable of developing the village as a tourist destination by maximizing the participation, knowledge, and management of the local community. Therefore, during the process of forming a tourist village, it is necessary to have stages of planning, implementing, and monitoring evaluation, one of which is carried out by the presence of a companion (Suswanto, et al, 2019).

The role of village assistants has been stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Villages for Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration No. 3 of 2015 entitled Village Assistance. Briefly mention that community empowerment (in the form of any program or activity in the village) is an effort to develop community independence and welfare by increasing knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviour, abilities, awareness, and utilization of resources through the establishment of policies, activities, programs and assistance. following the priorities of existing problems and the needs of the village community. This is related to assistance efforts in implementing the paradigm of people-centred development or community-centred development (Chambers, 1995).

However, efforts to develop 26 tourist villages through tourism assistance in the field are not without obstacles. The number of field

assistants with a tourism bachelor's background, professionals, or tourism actors is very limited. This causes the number of experienced tourism assistants to be very limited. This limited number has the responsibility to assist the development of 26 Tourism Villages throughout Lembata Regency during 2020. So it takes a long time for each tourist village to get assistance with sufficient intensity. Tourism assistants also face various obstacles while in the field but have a very important role in developing tourist villages in Lembata Regency. This study seeks to map the role of tourism assistants in the field during the tourism mentoring process to support the government's program to build 26 Tourism Villages in Lembata Regency.

This research will be discussed using a community empowerment mentoring approach from several previous experts. The term mentoring according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) comes from the word damping which means close, intimate, meeting. While mentoring is a process, a way of accompanying or accompanying actions. (Depdiknas, 2020:291) Mentoring is social assistance which is a strategy that will determine the success of community empowerment programs. (Suharto, 2006:93). In community empowerment programs, the role of social workers is very much needed, even though it is realized only as a companion, not as a healer. However, their role as companions is those who have positive and useful strengths in the process of solving social problems that occur in society, especially in this case children.

The term mentoring is closely related to community development. The emergence of this term is a critique of the work methods of

extension workers who previously only carried out information and technology delivery activities to the public. From these criticisms, there has been an expansion from the term conventional extension worker to the term field extension officer (PPL) which not only provides theory and information but develops wider than just extension activities, but also in the form of field assistance (eg coaching and formation of organizations such as groups farming or weaving). The government currently uses the term "field extension officer/PPL" for officers involved in extension work.

According to Ife (1995), the role of the facilitator is divided into three, namely facilitator, educator, community or community representative, and the technical role of the community they assist.

1. Facilitator. Roles related to providing motivation, opportunities and support to the community. Some of the activities associated with this role include providing information, mediating and negotiating, providing support, building mutual consensus, and organizing and using resources.
2. Educator. This role means that facilitators play an active role as agents of change, provide positive and instructive opinions based on community knowledge and experience, and exchange ideas with the knowledge and experiences of the people they assist. Public awareness-raising, information sharing, confrontation, and training for the community are tasks related to the role of educators.
3. Community representatives. This role is carried out in the interaction between facilitators and external institutions on behalf of the potential beneficiary

community. The social worker's job is to find resources, advocate, use the media, improve public relations, and build networks.

4. Technical role. Refers to the application of practical skills. Facilitators must not only be able to become "change managers" in a local community but also must be able to perform technical tasks of various basic skills, such as: conducting social analysis, managing group dynamics, building relationships, negotiating, communicating, providing consultation and finding and managing resources. fund.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of Agriculture (2004), mentoring is a community empowerment activity by placing assistants who act as facilitators, communicators and dynamists. In Suharto (2006), social assistance focuses on four areas of responsibility or function, in the abbreviation of 4P, namely: enabling or facilitating, strengthening, protecting, and supporting.

According to Sumodiningrat (2009: 106) mentoring is an activity that is considered capable of encouraging low-income communities to obtain the best empowerment. The motivation for assisting is due to a gap in understanding between the aid provider and the targeted aid recipient. Inequality can be caused by differences and limitations of social, cultural and economic conditions. In carrying out their duties, assistants position themselves as planners, mentors, information providers, motivators, liaisons/coordinators, facilitators, and evaluators. Furthermore, Sumodiningrat (2009: 104-106) explains that social workers in the field can empower through a process of social assistance. The process of field

assistance in various planning activities by officers or coordinators or community assistants on the spot. In practice, assistance is primarily aimed at economic development and improving the welfare of the poor, accompanied by strengthening local organizations and leadership.

The core meaning of mentoring is that there is a creative change process initiated by the rural community itself, it is clear that there is an active process of initiative and action in rural communities, without any external influence. Therefore, the main purpose of assistance is the independence of community groups. Independence means that people have autonomy, can act according to their own decisions and choose their way of acting, without being influenced by outside influences or the requirements of others. In realizing this independence, a combination of material, intellectual, organizational and management abilities is needed.

Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia No. 3 of 2015 concerning Village Assistance. In the Village Ministry regulation it is explained that the Village assistant has seven main tasks that must be carried out, namely:

1. Assisting the Village in planning, implementing, and monitoring Village development and Village community empowerment.
2. Assisting the Village in implementing the management of basic social services, developing village economic enterprises, utilizing natural resources and appropriate technology, developing village infrastructure, and empowering the village community;

3. Carry out capacity building for the Village Government, Village community institutions in terms of development and empowerment of the Village community;
4. Organizing in Village community groups;
5. Carry out capacity building for Village Community Empowerment Cadres and encourage the creation of new Village development cadres;
6. Assisting the Village in the participatory development of rural areas; and
7. Coordinate mentoring at the sub-district level and facilitate reports on the implementation of assistance by the Camat to the Regency/City Regional Government.

**Table 1. Development of the Facilitator Role of Several Experts in the Field of Community Empowerment**

No.	The Assistant Roles				
	Ife (1995)	Deptan (2004)	Suharto (2006)	Sumodiningrat (2009)	Ministerial Regulation No. 3 years. 2015 About Village Assistance
1	Facilitator	Facilitator	<i>Enabler</i>	Planner	Assist in planning, implementation and monitoring
2	Educator	Communicator	<i>Empowering</i>	Advisor	Assist when managing social services
3	Community Representative	Dynamist	<i>Protecting</i>	Information Giver	Increase village government capacity
4	Technical Roles		<i>Supporting</i>	Motivator	Organizing community groups
5	-	-	-	Coordinator	Increasing the capacity of community empowerment cadres
6	-	-	-	Facilitator	Encouraging participatory development
7	-	-	-	Evaluator	Coordination

Source: Research preparation, 2021

**METHOD**

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach, namely by filtering information based on actual conditions in an object that is connected with problem-solving, both theoretical and practical (Arikunto, 2019). The research location was in Lembata Regency, in 26 Lembata Regency Tourism Villages that receive tourism development assistance. Informants in this study were divided into several clusters, namely formal figures represented by representatives of 3 village officials, informal figures namely representatives of 10 tourism awareness groups formed as a result of mentoring activities, and key research informants were tourism assistants in Lembata Regency totaling 3 people.

The focus of this research is related to the role of tourism field facilitators in encouraging the development of 26 Tourism Villages in Lembata Regency including extracting information about activities that

have been carried out during mentoring, factors that appear as obstacles and obstacles to mentoring activities. The type of data in this study is qualitative in the form of words, sentences, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2015:23). Sources of data in this study are divided into two, primary data obtained directly from observations and interviews with all informants of this study, secondary data obtained from other sources such as notebooks, government documentation, and village or regional government reports. The analysis technique in this study is interactive analysis with the stages of (1) presenting data from observations, interviews, and documentation, (2) reducing data, (3) compiling based on clusters and indicators, (4) categorizing, (5) examining the validity of the data according to the research requirements, (6) analyzing the data based on the theory described previously, (7) presenting the research data, and (8) concluding.

## RESULT

### Overview of Lembata Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province



Figure 1. Position of Lembata Island in East Nusa Tenggara Province (marked with arrows) (source: google maps)

Lembata is an island that since 1999 has been designated as an administrative area based on government regulation Law number 52 of 1999 concerning the Establishment of Lembata Regency. Previously, this island known as Lomblen Island, is part of the East

Flores Regency which is now separated and has existed in social life since 1965. Until now, Lembata Regency is one of the 22 regencies and cities in the province. East Nusa Tenggara. Astronomically, Lembata Regency is located at the position: 8°10'12"- 8°35'24" South Latitude and 123°12'1" - 123°55'48" East Longitude. Geographically, Lembata Regency has the following boundaries: to the north: the Flores Sea, to the side: the Savu Sea, to the east: the Pepper Strait, to the west: the Boleng Strait and the Lamakera Strait. Currently, Lembata Regency consists of 9 sub-districts covering 144 villages and 7 sub-districts consisting of a land area of 1,266.39 km<sup>2</sup> or 126,639 ha and a sea area of 3,353.995 km<sup>2</sup>. The following is a breakdown of the land area as follows::

Table 2. Details of the name of the sub-district, the number of sub-districts/villages, and the area of the Lembata Regency

No	Sub-district	Number of Villages	Area Measure	
			(Km <sup>2</sup> )	(%) Thd Total
1	Nagawutun	18	185,70	14,66
2	Atadei	15	150,42	11,88
3	Ileape	17	96,86	7,65
4	Lebatukan	17	241,90	19,10
5	Nubatukan	11 hamlet dan 7 villages	165,64	13,08
6	Omesuri	22	161,91	12,79
7	Buyasuri	20	104,26	8,23
8	Wulandoni	15	121,44	9,59
9	Ile Ape Timur	9	38,26	3,02
Total		144 hamlet dan 7 villages	1.266,40	100

Source: *Lembata in numbers, Department of Culture and Tourism, 2016*



Topographically, Lembata Regency consists of coastal areas, mountains and volcanoes named Ile Ape as the highest peak at an altitude of 1,423 meters above sea level in the east of Lewoleba City. Lembata Regency has low rainfall so that it is included in the dry area with the highest rainfall of 230 mm in March.

The Central Statistics Agency in 2018 recorded that the population of Lembata Regency was 140,390 people with a population density of 68 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The livelihood of the residents of Lembata Regency is mostly farming, with a percentage of 74% of all existing jobs, and the rest work as civil servants, entrepreneurs, workers, craftsmen, TNI/POLRI and religious leaders. The income per capita of the residents of Lembata Regency on average per year is Rp. 497,685. Diversity in Lembata Regency is well maintained, especially with the harmony of religions in Lembata, BPS data in 2018 noted that the majority of Lembata Regency residents embraced Christianity with a total of 72.97% and the rest 26.97% Islam and 0.06 Hindu. %.

Two alternatives can be used to get to Lembata Regency. The first access that can be passed is air transportation, and the second is sea transportation. Air transportation includes using Trans Nusa aircraft with flights 4 x a week on the Kupang - Lewoleba route (available every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday). In addition to air transportation, visitors can use ships such as PELNI ships (KM. Bukit Siguntang, KM. Umsini and KM. Sirimau). In addition, there is also a crossing

from Lewoleba – Larantuka (round trip) every day.

### **Tourism Assistance for Tourism Village Development in Lembata Regency**

Known to have rich tourism potential to be developed, the Government of the Lembata Regency Culture and Tourism Office is serious about developing tourism with various work programs. One of the government's work programs in contributing to building tourism in Lembata Regency is through the development of Tourism Villages in Lembata Regency. The Lembata Regency Government through the Department of Tourism and Culture is increasingly focusing on the development of Tourism Villages in 26 villages that have unique tourism potential and products. The chosen approach is to use community-based tourism to support sustainable tourism.



Figure 2. Lembata Landmark as a Tourism Icon in Lewoleba City Center, Lembata Regency (research documentation, 2020)

Of course, local governments cannot work alone in developing the development of tourist villages. The government recruits tourism companions to help realize Lembata Regency tourism villages that can manage and develop tourism potentials that exist in each village. The assistants who can register are those who have an educational background in

S1 Tourism or are in the tourism field for a certain period. This recruitment resulted in 3 tourism assistants with professional backgrounds in tourism in education and daily work. The three district tourism companions.

Lembata is tasked with assisting in planning to evaluation that focuses on the

management and development of tourist villages. The assistance will take place in 2020 with direct monitoring by the Lembata Regency Culture and Tourism Office. The following is a list of the 26 Tourism Villages in Lembata Regency that received assistance during 2020

Table 3. List of Tourism Villages and Tourism Potentials Based on Regional Government Decrees of the Culture and Tourism Office of Lembata Regency

No.	Tourism Village	Location	Tourism Potential
1	Lamalera A	Lamalera A	- Traditional Whaling, House of Slayers, Whale Rock Site, Whale Bones. - Homestay: 10 units - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary - Most tourist visits
2	Lamalera B	Lamalera B	- Traditional Whaling, House of Slayers, Whale Rock Site, Whale Bones - Homestay: 15 Units - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary - Most tourist visits
3	Lauwayang	Weuwayang, Omesuri	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
4	Belabaja	Belabaja, Nagawutung	- Nature Tourism, namely Coffee Plantation - Owns an Art Studio
5	Pasir Putih	Pasir Putih, Nagawutung	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
6	Tewao Wutung	Tewao Wutung, Nagawutung	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
7	Lolong	Lolong, Nagawutung	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
8	Petuntawa	Petuntawa, Ile Ape	- Nature Tourism, namely

				Mangrove Forest - Owns an Art Studio
9	Jontona	Jontona, Ile Ape Timur		- Nature Tourism, Lewohala Old Village, Whale Bones - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
10	Bour	Bour, Nubatukan		- Nature and Hatchling Breeding - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
11	Waijarang	Waijarang, Nubatukan		- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
12	Dikesare	Dikesare, Lebatukan		- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
13	Balurebong	Balurebong, Lebatukan		- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
14	Balauring	Balauring, Omesuri		- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
15	Bean	Bean, Buyasuri		- Natural tourism and white sand beach - Culture tour - Have Local Culinary
16	Waowala	Waowala, Ile Ape		- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
17	Lamawolo	Lamawolo, Ile Ape Timur		- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
18	Atakore	Atakore, Atadei		- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
19	Lusilame	Lusilame, Atadei		- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
20	Dulir	Dulir, Atadei		- Wisata Alam - Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio

			- Have Local Culinary
21	Wulandoni	Wulandoni, Wulandoni	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
22	Riang Bao	Riang Bao, Ile Ape	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
23	Atawai	Atawai, Nagawutung	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
24	Lerek	Lerek, Atadei	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
25	Kolontobo	Kolontobo, Ile Ape	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary
26	Hingalamengi	Hingalamengi, Omesuri	- Natural tourism - Culture tour - Owns an Art Studio - Have Local Culinary

Source: Data from the Department of Culture and Tourism Lembata Regency, 2021

## DISCUSSION

### 1. The Role of Tourism Assistances as Facilitators for People in Tourism Villages

The role of facilitator has been suggested by (Ife, 1995; Ministry of Agriculture, 2004; and Sumodiningrat, 2009) as one of the roles played by social assistants to provide support for local communities in carrying out planned changes. The role of the facilitator carried out by the tourism companion for the development of the Lembata Regency Tourism Village includes initiating with the government of the Lembata Regency Culture and Tourism Office to initiate mentoring efforts for each tourist village so that the development of tourist villages can be measured and monitored properly. This

effort was conveyed by one of the assistants who saw that the success of the tourism village governance training that had been carried out so far could not be measured. So the assistant started a discussion forum with the government which was finally implemented as a program to accelerate the development of tourist villages in 26 areas of Lembata Regency.

The role of tourism assistants is to provide support to the local community by facilitating local human resources spread across 26 Tourism Villages of Lembata Regency to be able to form tourism awareness groups. Several villages have already formed tourism awareness groups but stopped because they did not understand what to do. Tourism assistants are here to encourage residents to reactivate the group as well as create an annual

tourism activity program of at least 2 activities per year which are included in the village government budget program. The reactivation of tourism awareness groups is carried out through focused discussions and coaching to create work programs. Ideas are given from tourism assistants who have a tourism education background and work as educators in tourism schools. So that people who want to develop tourist villages have ideas in making tourism programs according to the characteristics of their respective regions.



Figure 3. The Process of Guiding Tourism Awareness Group Discussions (research documentation, 2020)

In addition, the tourism assistant also facilitates the tourism awareness group (pokdarwis) that has been formed to determine the time for discussion and discussion of the main problems faced. This flexible time is intended to increase the motivation of the local community to always be enthusiastic so that enthusiastic people remain motivated. Tourism assistants also facilitate tourism awareness groups to be independent in approaching village governments so that in budgeting the next year's budget, Pokdarwis can participate to contribute aspirations and develop tourism work programs for the next year. Examples of programs that have been

planned are the provision of tourism supporting facilities and infrastructure to tourist destinations so that access is easy to pass in several Tourism Villages.

Tourism assistants also facilitate the process of implementing tourism events in one of the tourist villages by assisting in planning the Night Paradise Festival Event, starting from planning, preparing events, to the execution of the implementation which will be held on February 14, 2021.

### **1. Tourism Assistant as Educator and Motivator in Tourism Village Development Training**

The role of an educator is related to increasing the knowledge of the local community in the tourist village. In carrying out this role, the facilitator acts as an agent of change and provides positive and instructive opinions based on the experience and level of knowledge of the local community. The tourism assistants hold many discussions to exchange ideas with the tourism village community they are accompanied. One example of its activities is to educate the public as appropriate to eliminate the stigma that has been formed about pokdarwis (tourism awareness groups). The role of an educator is related to increasing the knowledge of the local community in the tourist village. In carrying out this role, the facilitator acts as an agent of change and provides positive and instructive opinions based on the experience and level of knowledge of the local community. The tourism assistants hold many discussions to exchange ideas with the tourism village community they are accompanied. One example of its activities is to educate the public as appropriate to eliminate the stigma

that has been formed about pokdarwis (tourism awareness groups).



Figure 4. Educational Process Through Food and Beverage Presentation Training (research documentation, 2020)

In the past, people assumed that Pokdarwis was an independent body separate from government support so that each activity had to be carried out independently. This causes the tourism awareness group to not work because of limited funds and ideas in forming a good village tourism program. Currently, almost all Pokdarwis in 26 tourist villages work in synergy with the village government, BKD, and BUMDES, so that the tourism work program in the village can be executed by Pokdarwis in the form of various activities. Pokdarwis is now included in the village structure because of the assistance through education to the village government and the local community.

Several times the tourism assistants also conducted training to educate village communities with knowledge of tourist destination governance, homestay management, knowledge of tourist characteristics, souvenir handicraft training, excellent service, and knowledge on how to

maintain local culture according to the authenticity and uniqueness that exists.

Facilitators also form communities to help tourist villages to be active and can assist in the inauguration of tourism village activities, train managers to prepare and serve food and drinks, educate people about tourism awareness, help prepare content for online marketing. Not only that, but the role of tourism assistants is also to prepare young cadres as tour guides in tourist villages as well as cadre management of tourism awareness groups in all Lembata Regency Tourism Villages. Encouraging homestay owner groups, artisan groups, and artists to become members of pokdarwis. By joining tourism business actors in village pokdarwis, it will be easier for the pokdarwis program to target tourism activities.

## **2. Tourism Assistant as Liaison with Various Tourism Stakeholders in Lembata Regency**

The liaison or known as the Coordination function was delivered by (Sumodiningrat, 2009). This is in line with field findings of the role of tourism assistants who carry out various coordination efforts, one of which is as a representative of the local government to mediate with the village government to explain the objectives of the tourism village assistance program and strive for tourism-based programs to be accommodated by the village budget. In addition, tourism assistants also coordinate with village governments to prepare local communities to be in charge of Pokdarwis in their respective villages. The aim is to prepare tourist villages so that they can be managed well by the local community.

Another routine thing in coordinating is to communicate regularly with the village

government, especially when going on field visits. Tourism assistants are also often an extension of the village community to communicate the expectations of the tourism village community to hold regular training in the field of tourism skills. The assistant who is an educated professional also coordinates three parties between the local government, village government, and educational institutions in terms of preparing children for field practice so that the target of assisting tourist villages is accelerated through local government approval.

In some cases, tourism assistants build communication between tourist villages to cooperate in implementing joint programs such as in the Wulandoni Tourism Village and Lamalera Tourism Village to carry out the cooperation program for the Ritual Cultural Festival of Boat Building for the legendary and international whaling ritual. In some tourist villages, assistance is carried out in coordination with the village government for tourism development through BUMDES. The assistant seeks to advocate so that in the BUMDES an area has a tourism development sub-section in charge of managing village tourism directly. This shortens the process of government administration and tourism sub-sections can directly plan and implement tourism programs and are directly responsible to BUMDES.



Figure 5. Coordination Process with one of the local Tourism Actors (research documentation, 2020)

### **3. The Role of Tourism Assistants as Monitoring and Evaluation of the Implementation of the Tourism Village Development Program in Lembata Regency**

The Monitoring and Evaluation process is stated by (Sumodiningrat, 2009) as one of the roles of community facilitators. As with the tourism assistants of Lembata Regency, after carrying out various activities of visits, training, and the formation of tourism awareness groups, an evaluation process was carried out. The evaluation process is carried out through different methods depending on the responsible tourism facilitator.

Evaluation is carried out periodically related to mentoring materials regarding what is still lacking and needs to be improved. Usually, evaluations are carried out such as using a questionnaire instrument directly or through online media such as through the use of the chat feature on online media. The obstacle in conducting the evaluation is that the local community is sometimes shy to convey criticism and comments directly so that online media is created to facilitate 2-way communication between the community and the facilitator.

Table 5. Summary of the Role of Tourism Assistants in Developing Tourism Villages in Lembata Regency

No	Role	Findings
1	Assistant	Facilitating at the planning stage, preparation of events, up to the execution of promotional activities for tourism village events.
2	Assistant	Facilitating local communities spread over 26 Tourism Villages of Lembata Regency to form tourism awareness groups and create tourism activities.
3	Assistant	Facilitating the Pokdarwis to determine the time for discussion, planning and discussion of the main problems encountered.
4	Assistant	Reactivate the vacuum Pokdarwis through focused discussions to start making tourism programs.
5	Assistant	Facilitating the community in forming a better perception that Pokdarwis must also work side by side with the government.
6	Educator	Educate village communities with knowledge of tourist destination governance, homestay management, tourist characteristics, souvenir crafts, and excellent service.
7	Educator	Preparing young cadres as tour guides in every tourist village
8	Educator	Forming a tourism village community to be active in launching tourism development events, training in serving food and drinks, socializing tourism awareness, and marketing online.
9	Liaison/Coordination	Coordinate three parties between local governments, village governments, and Educator institutions to prepare fieldwork practices in Tourism Villages.
10	Liaison/Coordination	Build communication between tourist villages to cooperate in implementing the program
11	Liaison/Coordination	Coordinate with the village government for tourism development through BUMDES, and advocate that in BUMDES there is a tourism development sub-section in charge of managing village tourism directly.
12	Liaison/Coordination	Coordinate with the village government to appoint the local community as the person in charge of Pokdarwis in tourist villages desa
13	Liaison/Coordination	Become an extension of the tourism village community to convey aspirations to the local culture and tourism office
14	Liaison/Coordination	Communicating regularly with the village government, especially when going on field visits
15	Liaison/mediator	Conduct mediation to explain the objectives of the village tourism assistance program and strive for tourism programs to be included in several village budget items.
16	Motivator	Encouraging groups of homestay owners, craftsmen, and artists to become members of pokdarwis.
17	Motivator	Encouraging the formation of tourism-aware groups and supporting tourism-aware groups to build programs following the potential of tourism villages with their respective characteristics.
18	Evaluator	Conducting periodic evaluations related to mentoring materials.

Summary of Research Results, Source: Processed Research, 2021



#### **4. Obstacles of Field Tourism Assistant in Developing Tourism Villages in Lembata Regency**

Providing tourism assistance in developing a tourist village is not an easy thing. Some of the challenges found in this study following the experience of field facilitators are the large distances between villages. The tourism village development target set by the local government is 26 tourist villages. So that each field facilitator is responsible for assisting approximately 8 tourist villages to be developed. The challenge increases when there are social restrictions regulations during the pandemic so that the mentoring process is hampered because some villages need more effort to reach because of the distance.

The second obstacle is related to the short visit time. This obstacle arises due to the distance between several villages so that when the tourism assistant arrives, there is not much time for training and mentoring. Sometimes people's enthusiasm is not accommodated due to time constraints. The third is the busyness of the local community who has the main profession as a farmer. Sometimes when the tourism companion comes, many local people are still in the garden and work.

The last obstacle is the pandemic condition that forces tourism assistants in the field to apply strict health protocols together with the local community they are accompanied. Several violations of health protocols always occur and assistants must always remind local people to comply with health protocols for the smooth development of tourist villages.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The role of the facilitator is very important in developing the village. Especially in this research is tourism assistance to build a tourist village in Lembata Regency. Based on the local government's decision, 26 Tourism Villages have been established in Lembata Regency. Therefore, a companion role is needed so that the implementation of tourism village development can run according to the plan with results that can be monitored and measured. This assistance has been running for one year in 2020 and resulted in the formation of tourism awareness groups in each tourist village. In addition, based on the results of this study, there are four main roles of a tourism assistant in building a tourist village in Lembata Regency, the first role is as an assistant, the second role is as an educator and motivator, the third role is as a liaison/coordinator, and the last role is as an evaluator in tourism village development activities. The obstacles faced by the facilitators are related to the distance between villages, the busyness of the community with their main jobs as farmers and fishermen, the relatively short visit time so that the enthusiasm of the community often cannot be fulfilled. Implementation of assistance through socialization with health protocols is also a challenge considering that many villagers have not implemented health protocols.

This study aims to describe the importance of the role of field assistants with a background of experience in the tourism sector to support government programs to form tourist villages in 26 villages in Lembata Regency. This research is a preliminary study that needs to be studied more deeply on various aspects other than the role of tourism assistants such as research on the perspective of the people who receive tourism assistance services. The

enthusiasm of the local community needs to be described to find the needs of the community in the field so that there is harmony between the local government, local communities, and assistants who both promote tourism in Lembata Regency.

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