



Digipreneur 101: Regenerative Tourism and Bilingual Promotion for Local Community Empowerment in Gorontalo

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ABSTRACT

The community service program aims to empower the local community with a focus on sustainable and regenerative tourism development. This program focuses on two main aspects: environmental preservation and sustainable promotion of local potential. The program's objectives are: 1) Prioritizing a tourism concept that not only promotes sustainability but also strives to restore and improve local ecosystems, 2) This program provides training to the Dunggala community on promoting local tourism potential in two languages (Indonesian and English), 3) Towards Digipreneur: Through digital entrepreneurship training, the Dunggala community is taught how to use digital technology to promote their tourism destinations. The implementation method for the program is designed systematically to effectively achieve the expected goals and outcomes. The activities planned for August and September 2024 aim to empower local communities, especially in rural areas like Dunggala, by combining digital entrepreneurship, sustainable tourism, and creative economy development. The outcomes of this program are: the community becomes capable of managing and promoting tourist destinations with a regenerative approach, improved English communication skills to welcome foreign tourists, enhanced digital literacy, enabling them to become digipreneurs who can adapt to the digital era, and the preservation of the local environment and culture through responsible tourism management.

ABSTRAK

Program pengabdian masyarakat bertujuan untuk memberdayakan masyarakat lokal dengan fokus pada pengembangan pariwisata berkelanjutan dan regeneratif. Program ini bertumpu pada dua aspek utama: preservasi (pelestarian) lingkungan serta peningkatan promosi potensi lokal yang berkelanjutan. Tujuan lainnya program ini adalah 1) Regenerative Tourism: Mengedepankan konsep pariwisata yang tidak hanya berkelanjutan; 2) Promosi Potensi Lokal Berbasis Bilingual: Program ini memberikan pelatihan kepada masyarakat Dunggala untuk mempromosikan potensi wisata lokal dalam dua bahasa (Bahasa Indonesia dan Bahasa Inggris); 3) Menuju Digipreneur: Melalui pelatihan kewirausahaan digital, masyarakat Dunggala diajari cara menggunakan teknologi digital untuk mempromosikan destinasi wisata mereka. Metode pelaksanaan program dirancang secara sistematis untuk mencapai tujuan dan hasil yang diharapkan secara efektif. Kegiatan yang direncanakan untuk Agustus dan September 2024 bertujuan untuk memberdayakan komunitas lokal, terutama di daerah pedesaan seperti Dunggala, dengan menggabungkan kewirausahaan digital, pariwisata berkelanjutan, dan pengembangan ekonomi

kreatif. Hasil yang diperoleh dalam program ini adalah masyarakat mampu mengelola dan mempromosikan destinasi wisata dengan pendekatan regeneratif, peningkatan kemampuan komunikasi dalam bahasa Inggris untuk menyambut wisatawan asing, peningkatan literasi digital masyarakat, sehingga mereka dapat menjadi digipreneur yang mampu beradaptasi dengan era digital, dan terlestarikannya lingkungan dan budaya lokal melalui pengelolaan pariwisata yang bertanggung jawab.

1. Introduction

The community service program is based on the significant potential held by the Dunggala community, particularly in the tourism and local cultural sectors. The Dunggala area, located around Tomini Bay, holds valuable cultural, natural, and historical heritage. Unfortunately, this potential has not been fully optimized to become a sustainable local economic strength.

This program focuses on the preservation and promotion of regenerative tourism, utilizing digital technology and bilingual language skills as steps toward local community self-reliance in the digital economy era. The tourism and cultural potentials of the Dunggala community include several cultural attributes, namely: 1) Blongkod King's Tomb: This is an important historical site in Dunggala. King Blongkod is a respected figure in local history, and his tomb is an attraction for tourists interested in the history and culture of Gorontalo. Unfortunately, this site is not widely known by external tourists and lacks attention in tourism promotion. This historical tourism potential could become a key attraction for both domestic and international visitors; 2) Dunggala Nature House: In addition to historical sites, Dunggala boasts extraordinary natural beauty, including the Dunggala Nature House, which offers a unique nature tourism experience. This destination is highly suitable for development under the concept of regenerative tourism, which focuses not only on sustainability but also on restoring ecosystems. The Tomini Bay area, where Dunggala is located, has rich biodiversity and has the potential to become a fascinating marine tourism attraction; 3) Karawo Embroidery: This is a traditional Gorontalo handicraft requiring high skills and holding great cultural value. This embroidery not only has aesthetic value but also carries deep cultural significance. However, this craft's potential has not been fully maximized in the creative industry or tourism. With the right promotion and marketing strategy, such as introducing the product to the international market, this craft could become a new source of income for the Dunggala community.

The challenges faced include: 1) Lack of Effective Promotion: Despite Dunggala's rich cultural and natural heritage, the lack of effective tourism promotion is a major obstacle to the development of a tourism-based economy. The promotion conducted by the community is still very limited and has not used a bilingual approach to reach international markets. 2) Low Digital Literacy: The Dunggala community still faces difficulties in utilizing digital technology to promote their tourism and cultural potential. In the digital era, the ability to use social media, websites, and other online platforms is crucial for developing the tourism and creative economy sectors. 3) Need for Sustainable Tourism: The rise of tourism without sustainable planning can lead to environmental degradation. Therefore, the regenerative tourism approach becomes highly relevant. Regenerative tourism not only preserves environmental beauty and sustainability but also restores existing ecosystems. This program aims to address these challenges by actively involving the Dunggala community in the management of their tourism and culture. The regenerative tourism approach prioritizes environmental preservation while restoring ecosystems through responsible management. Meanwhile, the Towards Digipreneur 101 training will help the community utilize digital technology to expand promotional reach, while bilingual skills will enable them to interact with international tourists, strengthening the appeal of local tourism.

With a background rich in culture, nature, and history, as well as the challenges faced, this program is expected to be a strategic step in improving the welfare of the Dunggala community, preserving their cultural heritage, and developing sustainable regenerative tourism potential.

2. Literature Review

In 2024, the literature review surrounding the topic of regenerative tourism, local potential promotion, and digipreneurship in the context of community development, such as in Dunggala, Gorontalo, would encompass several key themes

and bodies of research. Below are the primary areas likely covered in such a literature review:

1) **Regenerative Tourism**

The concept of regenerative tourism has evolved from traditional sustainable tourism. Literature in 2024 increasingly focuses on how tourism not only minimizes negative impacts but actively improves and restores local ecosystems and communities.

The concept of regenerative tourism encompasses multiple dimensions, emphasizing environmental regeneration, community empowerment, and real-world applications. Research and articles explore strategies not only to sustain but also to revitalize natural habitats, demonstrating how tourism can aid in healing ecosystems degraded by past activities (Mangkusubroto et al., 2023). Additionally, studies highlight the role of local communities in engaging with regenerative tourism to foster long-term socio-economic benefits while preserving and enhancing their cultural and natural heritage (Kiss & Mitchell, 2022). This is further illustrated through case studies from various regions, including remote and indigenous communities like Dunggala, Gorontalo, showcasing both the successes and challenges of integrating regenerative approaches into tourism (Pereira et al., 2023).

2) **Bilingual Promotion of Local Potential**

The role of language in tourism growth highlights the transformative power of bilingual communication in promoting destinations. Research underscores how bilingualism enables communities like Dunggala to access broader markets, enhancing their appeal to both domestic and international tourists (Sultan, 2023). Furthermore, studies reveal that integrating local cultural heritage, such as historical sites and traditional crafts like Karawo embroidery, into bilingual promotion fosters cultural exchange and enriches tourists' experiences (Harun et al., 2023). With the rise of digital platforms, literature emphasizes the potential of social media, websites, and other tools to support bilingual marketing efforts, enabling local communities to showcase their cultural assets to a global audience effectively (Sharma & Patel, 2022).

3) **Digital Literacy and Digipreneurship**

Digital transformation is reshaping rural communities, with a growing focus on how digital literacy and entrepreneurship (digipreneurship) empower areas like Dunggala to engage in tourism promotion, enabling local residents to become

digipreneurs (Williams & Zheng, 2024). Research increasingly highlights the importance of training and capacity-building programs in rural regions, analyzing the effectiveness of digital skills training in leveraging tools like social media, e-commerce platforms, and content creation to enhance local tourism promotion (Munoz et al., 2023). Social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok play a pivotal role in tourism development, enabling communities to share stories about their culture, natural beauty, and attractions, thereby boosting visibility and tourism traffic (Chen et al., 2024). Furthermore, case studies from rural regions worldwide illustrate successful digipreneurship models, demonstrating how communities have transformed into entrepreneurial hubs through digital literacy and strategic tourism promotion (Nishimura & Wong, 2023).

4) **Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development**

As the global focus shifts toward sustainability, literature increasingly addresses the need to balance tourism growth with environmental protection. Researchers explore how regenerative tourism can mitigate issues like pollution and ecosystem degradation, particularly in highly biodiverse areas such as Tomini Bay (Jenkins et al., 2023). Additionally, studies examine the socio-economic impacts of local tourism promotion, highlighting both the benefits, such as increased local incomes, and the challenges, including managing over-tourism, preserving cultural integrity, and ensuring that all community members share in the benefits inclusively (Ostrom & Wilson, 2022).

5) **Regenerative Tourism in Indonesia and Southeast Asia**

Regenerative tourism is gaining momentum in Southeast Asia, with growing literature examining initiatives across the region, including Indonesia. Scholars focus on efforts to adopt regenerative practices, particularly in rural areas like Gorontalo, offering valuable case studies on sustainable development (Rahman & Juwita, 2023). Research also highlights the critical role of government policies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international agencies in supporting regenerative tourism and digital literacy programs. These studies underscore the importance of collaboration between local governments and international bodies in driving sustainable tourism development (Smith et al., 2024).

6) Tourism and Environmental Conservation in Tomini Bay

Tomini Bay's exceptional marine and terrestrial biodiversity is a focal point in environmental studies, highlighting its potential to support tourism while emphasizing the need for protection through regenerative practices (Ginting & Sari, 2024). Research explores the bay's potential as a premier marine tourism destination, examining the benefits of eco-friendly tourism models, sustainable fishing practices, and coral reef conservation. These studies balance the opportunities for economic growth with the imperative to preserve the ecosystem, ensuring that tourism contributes to long-term environmental and community well-being (Dewi et al., 2023).

3. Method

The implementation method for the program is designed systematically to effectively achieve the expected goals and outcomes. The activities planned for August and September 2024 aim to empower local communities, especially in rural areas like Dunggala, by combining digital entrepreneurship, sustainable tourism, and creative economy development. The program will kick off with Socialization and Initial Approach, which will include Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and community outreach sessions from August 5 to 7, 2024. These discussions will serve as an introduction to the program, gathering input from community members and ensuring their active participation. This will be crucial for establishing a shared understanding of the goals and strategies for community development, particularly in relation to tourism and local entrepreneurship.

Following this, Digital Entrepreneurship (Digipreneurship) Training will be held from August 12 to 14, 2024. Through a series of workshops and intensive training sessions, participants will learn how to leverage digital tools and platforms to create and promote businesses. This training will focus on e-commerce, online marketing strategies, and social media management, providing essential skills for local entrepreneurs to build a digital presence and engage with a wider audience. The inclusion of local mentors alongside expert trainers will ensure continuous skill development, creating a sustainable ecosystem of digital entrepreneurs within the community.

The program will also include Bilingual and Digital-Based Promotion of Local Potential, which focuses on enhancing the community's ability to promote its cultural and natural resources through digital content creation and strategic marketing.

This component will teach participants how to create engaging content, such as videos, blogs, and social media posts, that highlight the unique aspects of their local environment, culture, and heritage. These skills will be directly applied to Bilingual English Training, which will take place from August 28 to 30, 2024. Interactive English classes will equip community members with the language skills needed to communicate effectively with international tourists, enabling them to act as guides and facilitators in promoting local attractions, including the biodiversity of Tomini Bay and cultural practices like Karawo embroidery.

In parallel, the program will emphasize the development of the Creative Economy by focusing on Creative Product Marketing, particularly for Karawo embroidery. From product design to marketing strategies, participants will learn how to bring their traditional crafts into the modern market through digital channels. This training will cover aspects such as branding, packaging, online sales platforms, and effective storytelling to connect with global customers, fostering the growth of the local creative economy.

The program's core focus will be on Regenerative Tourism Development, taking place from September 2 to 4, 2024. This component will provide environmental education and hands-on field practice, teaching community members how to integrate sustainable tourism practices into their local tourism industry. By focusing on regenerative tourism, the initiative will promote not only environmental conservation but also socio-economic benefits for the community. Participants will learn strategies to balance tourism growth with the preservation of local ecosystems, such as coral reefs, and explore sustainable tourism models that encourage responsible visitor behavior and economic diversification.

Finally, Assistance and Monitoring will be a continuous part of the program. Regular supervision and evaluation will ensure that the community is progressing towards its goals and that the strategies being implemented are effective. This ongoing support will provide feedback and adjustments as needed, ensuring the sustainability and success of the initiatives in the long term. By combining digital literacy, creative economy development, and regenerative tourism practices, the program will empower the community to thrive in a sustainable and economically inclusive manner.

These methods are expected to ensure the program runs effectively and efficiently, providing a sustainable impact on the Dunggala community,

especially in regenerative tourism and digital-based creative economy sectors.

4. Result

The implementation of this community service program has produced various positive impacts for the Dunggala Village community, in terms of skills, economy, and environmental conservation. Below are the outcomes and results achieved through the program's execution.

1) Profile of Dunggala Village, Bone Bolango

a. Location and Geography:

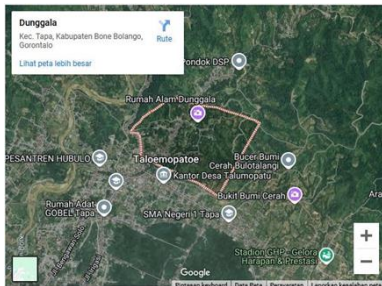


Figure 1: Map of Dunggala Village, Tapa District

Dunggala Village is located in the northern part of Tapa District, Bone Bolango Regency, approximately 0.02 km from the district center. The village sits at an elevation of 95 meters above sea level, with a land slope of up to 30°. The climate in Dunggala Village tends to be stable, with rainfall occurring according to specific seasons. The average daily temperature reaches 31°C, with distinct seasonal patterns. The dry season runs from September to March, while the rainy season begins in April and lasts until August.

With an area of approximately 410 hectares, Dunggala Village is divided into three hamlets: Tibawa Hamlet, Biluanga Hamlet, and Biawu Hamlet. The village is bordered by several areas within Tapa District:

- To the north, it borders Langge Village,
- To the east and south, it borders Talumopatu Village, and
- To the west, it borders Kramat Village.

This territorial division offers strategic potential that can be developed across various sectors, particularly agriculture and residential areas.

Land use in Dunggala Village includes:

- Yard land: 168 hectares,
- Dry land or fields: 105.24 hectares,
- Residential land: 136.76 hectares.

With these substantial land resources, the village has a significant opportunity to develop a more structured agricultural and residential sector. The combination of significant yard space, extensive fields, and a climate conducive to crop growth provides a solid foundation for sustainable economic development in Dunggala Village.

b. Demographics:

The total population of Dunggala Village can be described as follows:

Table 1: Population of Dunggala Village

Hamlets	KK	Population					
		M			F		
		2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Tibawa	379	680	685	688	690	695	700
Biluanga	383	690	695	700	686	688	701
Biawu	391	706	708	715	700	705	710
Total		2076	2088	2103	2076	2080	2111

Based on the population data of Dunggala Village from the three hamlets—Tibawa (Hamlet I), Biluanga (Hamlet II), and Biawu (Hamlet III)—there have been changes in the number of households (KK) and total population from 2021 to 2023. The number of households in Tibawa Hamlet has remained relatively stable over the past three years, with slight fluctuations. The population in Tibawa Hamlet has gradually increased, with a total rise of 18 individuals over the three years. This growth indicates stable population development.

Similarly, the number of households in Biluanga Hamlet shows stability with minor fluctuations. Biluanga Hamlet has experienced a more significant increase in population compared to Tibawa. There was an addition of a total of 25 individuals during this three-year period, with relatively even growth between males and females.

The number of households in Biawu Hamlet has remained consistent over the past three years, with no changes. Biawu Hamlet recorded the most significant population growth compared to the other hamlets, with a total increase of 19 individuals over three years. This indicates that Biawu continues to experience stable population growth.

Overall, the three hamlets in Dunggala Village demonstrate a trend of stable population growth from 2021 to 2023. There has been no significant decline in the number of households, while the population—both male and female—continues to increase. This rise reflects stable social development, even in a remote area, with Biawu being the hamlet that has experienced the highest population growth.

2) Result in Program

The results achieved from the implementation of the program "Towards Digipreneur 101: Preservation of Tourism Based on Regenerative Tourism through Bilingual Promotion of Local Potential for the Community in the Tomini Bay Region, Gorontalo" encompass several important aspects related to community empowerment, capacity building, and the development of tourism and the creative economy. Here are the results achieved:

a. Improvement of Community Skills in Digital Entrepreneurship



Figure 2: Digital Entrepreneurship Training for the Community

The community, particularly groups of youth and local entrepreneurs, successfully acquired fundamental skills in using digital platforms to promote tourism potential and local products. Several social media accounts and websites have been created by the community to support digital promotion. More than 70% of training participants are capable of creating and managing social media accounts for the purposes of tourism and creative economy promotion.

b. Bilingual Skills in Serving Tourists



Figure 2. English Training

Participants in the English training program are now able to engage in basic conversations to serve foreign tourists. The bilingual training modules have been tailored to meet local needs, and community members have begun actively interacting with tourists in English. More than 50% of training participants are capable of conducting basic conversations in English related to tourism services. This newfound ability enhances their confidence and contributes to a more welcoming

atmosphere for international visitors, ultimately supporting the growth of tourism in the area.

c. Development of Regenerative Tourism Destinations



Figure 3. Environmental Cleanup at the Tomb of Raja Blongkod

The Dunggala community has begun to implement the concept of regenerative tourism through activities such as environmental cleanups and tree planting. Tourist destinations like the Tomb of Raja Blongkod and Rumah Alam Dunggala are being developed with a focus on ecological sustainability. There are concrete actions in place to protect and restore the ecosystems surrounding these tourist sites, including the implementation of waste management policies. These efforts not only enhance the natural beauty of the area but also promote a culture of environmental responsibility among community members and visitors alike.

d. Global Promotion of Local Potentials



Figure 4. E-Commerce for Ain Karawo SMEs

Through digital marketing training, the community has successfully promoted tourist destinations and local products, such as Sulaman Karawo, to a broader market. Promotional content, including photos, videos, and articles in both Indonesian and English, has been consistently uploaded to social media platforms. This bilingual digital promotion has significantly increased the visibility of Dunggala's tourist destinations,

beginning to attract interest from international travelers. The implementation of e-commerce strategies has allowed local artisans and entrepreneurs to reach new audiences, showcasing their crafts and enhancing their economic opportunities.

Overall, these efforts contribute to the sustainability of local tourism and the creative economy in Dunggala.

5. Discussion

The community service program "Towards Digipreneur 101" not only focuses on tourism development but also encompasses various aspects of community empowerment, sustainability, and social innovation. By integrating relevant theories, this program is expected to provide sustainable positive impacts for the Dunggala community and its surroundings. The use of these theoretical approaches supports the effectiveness and success of the program's implementation, while also creating a model that can be replicated in other regions.

Theoretically, this program is related to community empowerment that supports the generative management of tourism enterprises. Laverack (2007) argues that community empowerment focuses on enhancing the capacity of individuals and communities to participate in decision-making that affects their lives. In the context of this program, training in digital skills and bilingual communication empowers the Dunggala community to be more independent in managing tourism enterprises. This program empowers the Dunggala community by providing training in digital skills and bilingual communication. With these skills, the community becomes more self-reliant in managing their tourism businesses, thereby boosting their confidence and ability to make decisions related to local economic development.

Furthermore, if examined in more depth, this program can be associated with sustainable tourism initiatives. Through a regenerative tourism approach, the program aims to preserve local culture and protect the environment while developing the tourism sector. By promoting local potentials, such as the tomb of Raja Blongkod and Sulaman Karawo, the program encourages the community to actively participate in the sustainable management of their resources. Dodds & Holmes (2019) link this program to sustainable tourism theory, emphasizing the need for balanced tourism development that considers social, cultural, and

environmental aspects. This program promotes tourism that values and preserves local culture while safeguarding the environment. In this community service program, the implementation is linked to social entrepreneurship, particularly through training in Karawo embroidery. The program seeks to create business opportunities for the community through digital entrepreneurship training and the promotion of local potentials. By leveraging technology and introducing local products to a broader market, the community gains not only financial benefits but also supports the preservation of culture and the environment. When related to Light's (2014) theory, social entrepreneurship focuses on creating social value through business activities. This program aims to create business opportunities for the community while maintaining cultural and environmental values.

Merriam & Bierema (2014) explain that this community service program can be linked to Malcolm Knowles's adult education theory, which emphasizes the importance of experience and motivation in adult learning. This program prioritizes learning relevant to the participants' needs. It applies participatory learning methods tailored to the local community's requirements. By involving participants in training that fits the local context, they are more motivated and able to apply the knowledge and skills gained in their daily lives.

This program emphasizes tourism practices that not only generate profits but also improve and restore environmental and social conditions. Through conservation activities such as tree planting and waste management, the community is encouraged to contribute to environmental sustainability while enhancing tourism appeal. Gossling & Hall (2020) and Danial et al. (2023) describe regenerative tourism as emphasizing creating greater positive impacts for the environment and society. This program focuses on practices that repair and restore environmental and cultural conditions. This theory emphasizes creating greater positive impacts for the environment and society through sustainable tourism practices.

The bilingual training provided in this program aims to enhance the Dunggala community's ability to communicate with tourists from diverse cultural backgrounds. With good communication skills, the community can create better experiences for visitors and build positive relationships that can enhance the region's reputation as a tourist destination. Chen & Starosta (1998) explain that this program can be linked to intercultural

communication theory, which emphasizes the importance of intercultural understanding in social interactions. The bilingual training in this program aims to improve the community's ability to communicate with tourists from various cultural backgrounds. This theory emphasizes the importance of intercultural understanding in social interactions, especially in the context of globalization and tourism.

By integrating these theories, the "Towards Digipreneur 101" community service program creates a synergy between community empowerment, sustainability, and social innovation. These theories provide a strong foundation for the program's implementation, enabling the Dunggala community to not only develop tourism enterprises but also maintain and preserve their culture and environment. This theory-based approach can serve as an effective and replicable model in other regions with similar contexts.

6. Conclusion

This community service program successfully created a synergy between community empowerment, cultural preservation, and sustainable tourism development in Dunggala. Through training in digital skills and bilingual communication, the community has been equipped with the necessary capabilities to manage tourism enterprises independently and competitively. The main impacts achieved in this community service program are the Dunggala community has gained the confidence and capacity to make informed decisions regarding tourism development and the management of local resources, empowering them to take charge of their own future. Through a focus on regenerative tourism, the program promotes not only economic development but also the preservation of cultural values, such as the tomb of Raja Blongkod and Sulaman Karawo, while ensuring environmental sustainability. The initiative has also sparked entrepreneurial innovation, creating new business opportunities that allow the community to leverage local resources effectively, contributing positively to the regional economy. Additionally, bilingual training has enhanced the community's ability to communicate with tourists, fostering better interactions and ensuring more enriching and satisfying experiences for visitors.

Overall, this program not only provides direct benefits to the Dunggala community but also creates a model that can be replicated in other regions with similar potential. With ongoing

support and further development, it is hoped that this initiative can become a key driver in the sustainable and inclusive tourism development of the Tomini Gulf region in Gorontalo.

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