

Tourism Village Concept Assistance and Mentoring in Karawang

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Abstract

Purpose: The goal of this community service is to develop a tourist village in Karawang. Karawang, with its significant tourism potential, does not yet have a tourist village officially recognized by the local government through a Regent's Decree on Tourist Villages.

Method: In this community service, the community service team provides assistance to villages with tourism potential that meet the criteria. The methods used include outreach, training, and mentoring to develop them into tourist villages.

Practical Applications: This process is carried out with the involvement of Pokdarwis and tourism managers as well as the tourism office.

Conclusion: The results of the community service stated that eight villages in Karawang were declared as tourist villages, each with its own criteria and unique tourism characteristics.



Introduction

The advancement of tourism industries in the country of Indonesia greatly contributes to the national revenue from foreign exchange. Under Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism, the regency and municipal governments are the primary planners and managers of tourism activities in the area. Local authorities are to work in a deregulatory fashion toward competing in boosting the balanced potential of the area for the well-being of the population and the improvement of the public services and the empowerment and participation of the society. All the assets of a tourist area, including tourism villages, are encompassed in the potential for tourism development. It denotes the resource that is capable of being harnessed and effectively contributes to the arena of tourism.

Tourist villages are emerging as new on the tourism map and expanding very quickly in almost every region. The reason for this development is the uniqueness and novelty of the place, the warmth and hospitality of the people, the insightful experience, and the active role of the community in its development. The villages are, by nature, part of every district or city and therefore, have the potential to contribute to the development of the region and the country. The tourism potential of the village's centers on cultural activities in close association with nature and the community. This is tourism intertwined with cultural activities of the community. The cultural activities have their economic aspects and the tourism offers ecologically clean accommodation away from the city, for example, homestays. These tourist villages should have additional facilities and value adding management ((Lia Afriza, 2020). Karawang is one regency in West Java with massive tourism potential, from nature, culture, religion, history, and even industry. However, the reality is that tourism villages in Karawang are still to be formally acknowledged as the instruments and criteria set by the Ministry of Tourism have not been met.

The growth of tourism is crucial to the economy and income of the region. For Karawang, tourism is notified in the regional regulations like Regional Regulation No. 3 of 2016 on the Master Plan for the Development of Regional Tourism and Regional Regulation No. 18 of 2016 on the Administration of Tourism Management in Karawang Regency. These regulations are aimed at helping Karawang further develop the tourism opportunities in the region. According to Rachmat Astiana (2021), a tourism village is defined as a rural area that provides a complete setting characteristic of rural life, including social and cultural elements, customs, daily activities, distinctive forms of architecture, and particular patterns of village layout, or rural economic endeavors. Such areas are capable of supporting the development of a number of tourism elements like attractions, accommodation, food and beverages, souvenirs, and other tourist services. A tourism village is a rural area that is original and distinctive in terms of the environment and way of life, social, economic, and cultural life, local customs, community daily activities, architectural styles, and a certain spatial arrangement, all of which are potential for development (Dinar, 2022).

Integrated supporting facilities with attractions and accommodation embedded in the social structures, customs, and traditions of communities are what support tourism villages. The offered alternative tourism in the form of tourism villages allows for growth in the tourism industry while preserving the uniqueness, authenticity, and originality of the tourism products offered in such villages (Dewa, 2022). Considering the abundant tourism potential in Karawang, the development of tourism villages is practicable. These villages, however, need to comply with the benchmarks and criteria established by the Ministry of Tourism, as the tourism development process must have quantifiable and definable targets. Rural community empowerment through increased alternative tourism and tourism villages is based on the assumption that village tourism will spur economic activity in the area. In this context, Karawang is expected to continue to improve the economic development of the region through the development of the tourism industry”.

Method

The community service method implemented to address the partners' problems combined both applicative and implementative research approaches. Applicative research, which includes pure and applied studies, was utilized to ensure that theoretical knowledge could be effectively translated into practical solutions (Neni Sumarni, 2025). The implementation process consisted of two main stages: preparation and execution. During the preparation stage, a comprehensive survey was conducted across all villages in Karawang with tourism potential, resulting in eleven villages agreeing to participate in the development of Tourism Villages. Following this, consolidation and coordination were carried out together with the Department of Tourism and Culture (Disparbud) to establish a shared understanding of the Tourism Village concept. Subsequently, materials were prepared and tasks were clearly distributed between the academic team and Disparbud—academics served as the primary facilitators by delivering educational content on tourism awareness and the Tourism Village framework, while Disparbud acted as a government representative to support and facilitate implementation. The implementation stage was divided into two steps. The first step involved socializing the concept of tourism awareness and introducing the Tourism Village model to the participating communities. The second step focused on providing training and mentoring to assist villages in developing their own Tourism Village concepts, aligned with the guidelines and instruments provided by the Ministry of Tourism. This structured approach ensured active community engagement and sustainable development in line with national standards.

Result

The implementation of community service during this semester was carried out in several stages. The first stage, related to the dissemination of tourism awareness, was categorized as an initial step to emphasize that Karawang possesses significant tourism potential and holds the opportunity to establish Tourism Villages. Although Karawang has numerous tourist attractions, there is no officially recognized Tourism Village within the regency. The establishment of a Tourism Village requires specific criteria to be formally acknowledged as a Tourism Village in Karawang Regency. Several criteria must be fulfilled in developing a Tourism Village. These include the existence of a Village-Owned Enterprise (Bumdes), a Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), and either a proposal letter or an integrity pact from the village to declare its potential for designation as a Tourism Village.

The first stage of this community service involved direct dissemination and engagement with stakeholders at the village level. The initial dissemination activities consisted of tourism awareness campaigns, which were conducted multiple times over a consecutive four-month period. The targets of the campaigns included village heads, Pokdarwis, and Bumdes. Additionally, the tourism awareness programs were extended to rural and urban communities across Karawang, women's organizations such as PKK groups at the village, sub-district, and regency levels, as well as associations of women legislators. These activities were conducted separately to ensure that each target group could better comprehend and focus on the concept of tourism awareness.

The next step was to identify several villages with potential for development into Tourism Villages. Following this, the service team, in collaboration with the Department of Tourism and Culture, assisted villages in completing the readiness assessment forms for Tourism Villages. As the community service team and evaluators of potential Tourism Villages, we classified and assessed the villages based on the qualifications established by the Ministry of Tourism. Two categories of Tourism Villages were identified in Karawang: pioneering villages and developing villages. Upon completion of the evaluation process, the subsequent step was to formalize the designation of Tourism Villages through an official decree (SK) issued by the Regent of Karawang.

Discussion

At the initial stage of identifying tourism potential in Karawang, the service team conducted comprehensive data collection across 87 villages, which was later narrowed down to 11 villages that demonstrated significant tourism potential. These 11 villages exhibited strong prospects for development as Tourism Villages, primarily due to the presence of village-based tourism objects and destinations. It is important to distinguish that, conceptually, a Tourism Village differs from general village-based tourism, as it emphasizes integrated development grounded in local identity and sustainable community participation.

Figure 1. Dissemination and Technical Guidance on Tourism Awareness



Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

The recommendation to establish these areas as Tourism Villages was driven by the goal of fostering inclusive and comprehensive economic growth within rural communities. A Tourism Village is defined as an administrative village with distinctive tourism attractions that offer visitors an authentic experience of rural life, local traditions, and community-based potentials. To qualify as a Tourism Village, several criteria must be met: possession of tourism potential—encompassing natural, cultural, and creative/artificial attractions; the existence of an active community; availability of local human resources capable of participating in tourism development; establishment of a dedicated management institution; access to adequate facilities and basic infrastructure supporting tourism activities; and potential for market development. In developing such villages, key product development principles are applied, including authenticity—ensuring that attractions reflect genuine community practices—alongside the centrality of the local community, whose daily life and traditions form the core of the tourism experience.

Active community involvement, preservation of local values and social norms, and a commitment to conservation and environmental carrying capacity are also essential to ensure sustainable and socially responsible tourism. Tourism Villages not only contribute to economic empowerment in rural areas but also help reduce rural-to-urban migration by creating local job opportunities, while simultaneously serving as platforms for preserving and revitalizing local wisdom and cultural heritage.

There are four main types of Tourism Villages that can serve as models: those based on the uniqueness of natural resources, such as mountains, rivers, beaches, and scenic landscapes; those centered on local cultural resources, highlighting traditional livelihoods, rituals, and community customs; creative tourism villages that showcase local creative economies, including handicrafts and performing arts; and integrated tourism villages that combine multiple resources—natural, cultural, and creative—into a cohesive tourism offering. Following discussions and consensus among village leaders, the Department of Tourism and Culture (Disparbud), and the regional government, it was agreed that the formal establishment of the Karawang Tourism Village would be enacted through a Decree issued by the Regent of Karawang, providing institutional recognition and support for its ongoing development.

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Figure 2. Karawang Tourism Village based on the Decree of the Regent of Karawang



FORDESTA KARAWANG

Penilaian Kelas Desa Wisata
Berdasarkan Peraturan Gubernur Jawa Barat No. 113 Tahun 2022
Peraturan Bupati Karawang Nomor 50 Tahun 2023
Perda Kabupaten Karawang nomor 8 Tahun 2020 Tentang Desa Wisata

Nama Desa	Skor	Kelas
1. Desa Wisata Karangjaya	2,78	Berkembang
2. Desa Wisata Sedari	2,63	Berkembang
3. Desa Wisata Kamojing	1,99	Rintisan
4. Desa Wisata Muarabaru	1,99	Rintisan
5. Desa Wisata Citalaksana	1,96	Rintisan
6. Desa Wisata Curug	1,94	Rintisan
7. Desa Wisata Cicinde Utara	1,88	Rintisan
8. Desa Pangulah Utara	1,88	Rintisan

Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

Conclusion

The community service program for this semester was successfully implemented. The activities, which consisted of socialization, data collection, training, and mentoring, were carried out smoothly and achieved the targeted outcome, namely the establishment of tourism villages. However, out of the eleven villages that were expected to complete the tourism village registration form, only eight were able to do so. Consequently, only these eight villages were officially designated as tourism villages by the Regent of Karawang. The remaining villages that had been previously identified are expected to be processed by the Department of Tourism and Culture next year to obtain official designation.

There is a need for intensive and integrated collaboration among government agencies, academics, local communities, and tourism village managers to ensure the sustainability of these tourism villages. This effort should not be limited to their establishment but must also extend to aspects such as marketing, promotion, and the spatial development of the villages, so that their operation aligns with the expectations of the wider community. Collaboration through a hexa-helix approach can further support this sustainability, enabling each stakeholder to contribute positively. In this way, the vision of advancing Karawang can be achieved equitably across all regions of the district.

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This community service is expected to have a positive impact and contribution for both tourism village managers and the Karawang community in general. We extend our deepest gratitude to the Karawang Tourism Office for their willingness to accept the input and ideas of our community members, enabling the establishment of tourism villages in Karawang Regency.

We urge the tourism groups (Pokdarwis) in each tourism village to remain enthusiastic about developing their tourism potential so that Karawang's tourism villages become even more advanced and renowned. With this collaboration between academics, local government and tourism village managers, it is hoped that the development of tourism villages in Karawang Regency will be more rapid and will be able to provide an economic impact for all village communities.

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