



Strengthening Halal Ecotourism and Community MSMEs through Asset-Based Community Development toward Community Empowerment in Timampu, East Luwu

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Abstract:

Timampu in East Luwu has rich lakefront and cultural assets, yet its potential for halal ecotourism and community-based MSMEs remains underutilized, with weak local institutions and fragmented collaboration among village government, university, and industry partners. This community service program aimed to strengthen halal ecotourism governance and community MSMEs through an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to promote more inclusive and sustainable community empowerment. Participatory ABCD stages—inkulturasi, discovery, dream, design, and implementation—were applied using focus group discussions, asset mapping, village dreaming workshops, mentoring for halal MSMEs, and reflective evaluation with youth, women's groups, and village institutions. The intervention produced a collectively agreed village dream map, a draft governance structure and work plan for a tourism group, initial standard operating procedures for services and cleanliness, strengthened halal MSME business practices, and a more synergistic partnership between Timampu Village, UIN Palopo, and PT Vale.

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A. Introduction

Timampu, located on the periphery of Lake Towuti in East Luwu, possesses a rich constellation of natural and socio-economic assets. The village is endowed with attractive lakefront landscapes, including the Lamapu sunrise viewpoint, as well as cultural traditions and communal spaces that are potentially valuable for halal-oriented ecotourism. Socially, Timampu has active youth groups, women's groups, and village institutions, alongside emerging community-based micro and small enterprises (MSMEs), particularly in food and beverage production. However, these assets remain underutilized: tourism activities are sporadic, destination management is weak, promotion is limited and largely informal, and local MSMEs are not yet systematically integrated into a coherent halal ecotourism value chain. Collaboration

between the village government, community groups, universities, and industry partners also tends to be ad hoc, resulting in fragmented initiatives rather than a jointly planned and sustainable development pathway.

Against this backdrop, the central issue addressed by the community service program is the weak governance and embryonic institutionalization of halal ecotourism development around Lamapu–Towuti. The Lamapu sunrise point and surrounding lakefront areas have not yet been managed under a clear tourism governance structure, and there is no established mechanism to ensure that services and attractions comply with halal-friendly principles. At the same time, community-based MSMEs—particularly those producing food, beverages, and other potential halal products—are not yet prepared, either in terms of product quality, branding, or halal assurance, to be integrated as part of the destination’s value chain. Village-level institutions such as the tourism awareness group (Pokdarwis), the village-owned enterprise (BUMDes), and youth organizations remain at an early stage of formation and coordination. Accordingly, the primary subjects of devotion in this program are the village government, BUMDes, youth groups, women’s groups, and local MSME actors, who are supported through a collaborative partnership involving UIN Palopo as the university partner and PT Vale as an industry stakeholder.

Many village development initiatives in Indonesia have historically been designed and implemented through top-down, needs-based approaches that emphasise community deficits—such as poverty, lack of infrastructure, or limited skills rather than recognising and mobilising existing strengths, which often leads to low ownership and weak sustainability of outcomes.¹ In contrast, the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach starts from mapping and leveraging local assets—natural, social, economic, and institutional to drive citizen-led change and more durable forms of empowerment.² This perspective aligns with evidence that community-based ecotourism can enhance rural livelihoods when it is rooted in local participation and control over tourism resources.³ At the same time, the rapid growth of halal tourism highlights the need for destinations to integrate halal principles into governance, services, and value chains.⁴ Within such destinations, community MSMEs play a pivotal role in providing locally embedded products and services that can capture tourism spillovers, provided

¹ H. Nel, “A Comparison between the Asset-Oriented and Needs-Based Community Development Approaches in Terms of Systems Changes,” *Practice* 30 (2018): 33–52, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09503153.2017.1360474>.

² A. Mathie et al., “Asset-Based and Citizen-Led Development: Using a Diffracted Power Lens to Analyze the Possibilities and Challenges,” *Progress in Development Studies* 17 (2017): 54–66, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993416674302>; Liam Maclure, “Augmentations to the Asset-Based Community Development Model to Target Power Systems,” *Community Development* 54 (2022): 4–17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2021.2021964>; Ulfatun Najiha, “Community Economic Empowerment Through Asset Based Community Development Method (Study of the Role of Fatayat NU in Bawean Island, Gresik),” *GREENOMIKA* 5, no. 2 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.55732/unu.gnk.2023.05.2.6>.

³ E. Djuwendah et al., “Community-Based Agro-Ecotourism Sustainability in West Java, Indonesia,” *Sustainability*, ahead of print, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151310432>; Marin Kim et al., “Sustainable Transformative Economy: Community-Based Ecotourism,” *Sustainability*, ahead of print, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11184977>.

⁴ M. Battour and M. Ismail, “Halal Tourism: Concepts, Practises, Challenges and Future,” *Tourism Management Perspectives* 19 (2016): 150–54, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2015.12.008>; E. Boğan and M. Sarıışık, “Halal Tourism: Conceptual and Practical Challenges,” *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, ahead of print, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1108/jima-06-2017-0066>; Rusyaida Darlis, “Local Wisdom as Halal Tourism Model in West Sumatera: An ‘Urf Perspective,” *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, ahead of print, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v14i2.259-287>.

they are adequately supported in terms of capacity, branding, and market access.⁵ These strands of literature collectively point to the importance of combining ABCD with community-based halal ecotourism and MSME development, within a structured partnership between village government, universities, and industry stakeholders, a configuration that remains underexplored in lake-based rural contexts such as Timampu.

Existing studies increasingly demonstrate that asset-based and participatory approaches can effectively strengthen community capacity and local governance when they deliberately mobilise community knowledge, relationships, and material resources rather than focusing solely on deficits.⁶ In the tourism field, community-based tourism and ecotourism have been shown to contribute to rural welfare when local institutions are robust, decision-making is inclusive, and communities retain meaningful control over tourism resources.⁷ At the same time, the literature on halal tourism and halal value chains highlights both the growing market for halal-friendly destinations and the centrality of community enterprises in providing authentic products and services within such destinations.⁸ However, there remains limited empirical documentation of community service programmes that integrate an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach with halal ecotourism and community MSME development in lake-based rural villages, particularly within a structured partnership linking village government, universities, and industry actors.

Building on this context, the community service program in Timampu was designed to strengthen halal ecotourism governance and community-based MSMEs through an Asset-Based Community Development approach that foregrounds local assets and citizen-led planning. The expected social changes include enhanced community ownership of tourism development, stronger village-level institutions for managing halal ecotourism, and improved readiness of

⁵ Heriyanni Mashithoh et al., "The Development Strategy Of Halal Nature Tourism Based On The Empowerment Of Bangka Belitung Coastal Community," *Integrated Journal of Business and Economics*, ahead of print, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.33019/ijbe.v5i2.363>; Matthew McPherson et al., "Mapping the Interrelationships between Community Assets," *International Journal of Social Economics*, ahead of print, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijse-04-2020-0206>.

⁶ Hao Chen et al., "Assessing the Impact of Asset-Based Community Development Approach on Rural Poverty Alleviation in Ghana: The Moderating Role of Government Policies," *SAGE Open* 14 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231226020>; Li-Hsin Chuang et al., "Asset-Based Community Development and Happiness in Community Residents in Taiwan," *Community Development*, ahead of print, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2025.2451361>; Muhammad Azmi et al., "Community-Driven Institutional Strategies for Ecotourism Development: A Case of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) in South Kalimantan, Indonesia," *International Journal of Research and Review*, ahead of print, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20250622>.

⁷ J. Chan et al., "Local Community Participation and Responsible Tourism Practices in Ecotourism Destination: A Case of Lower Kinabatangan, Sabah," *Sustainability*, ahead of print, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132313302>; Djuwendah et al., "Community-Based Agro-Ecotourism Sustainability in West Java, Indonesia"; Minh-Phuong Thi Duong et al., "Community-Based Ecotourism and the Challenges of Local Participation: Insights from an Ecotourism Venture in Cat Tien National Park, Vietnam," *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, ahead of print, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09640568.2024.2428257>.

⁸ Battour and Ismail, "Halal Tourism: Concepts, Practises, Challenges and Future"; Darlis, "Local Wisdom as Halal Tourism Model in West Sumatera: An `Urf Perspective"; Zilal Afwa Ajidin et al., "Best Practice Of Sustainable Halal Tourism In Rubiah Island, Sabang, Indonesia," *IQTISHADUNA: Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Kita*, ahead of print, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.46367/eqtishaduna.v13i2.2125>; Faisal Efendi et al., "The Implementation of Sumedang Jaya Wisata (Sjw) Management in Supporting the Development of Halal Tourism in Ranah Pesisir, West Sumatra," *Amorti: Jurnal Studi Islam Interdisipliner*, ahead of print, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.59944/amorti.v4i3.459>; Irham Falahudin et al., "Opportunities and Challenges for Assisting MSMEs with Halal Products in Sungsang Village in Banyuasin Regency as a Halal Tourism Destination," *Journal of Halal Science and Research*, ahead of print, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.12928/jhsr.v6i1.10657>.

local MSMEs to participate in a halal-oriented value chain. Accordingly, this article aims to: (1) describe how the ABCD approach was applied to map community assets and co-create a shared “village dream” for halal ecotourism and MSME development in Timampu; (2) analyse how the facilitation process contributed to the emerging governance arrangements and organisational capacities of village institutions related to tourism and MSMEs; and (3) examine early indications of social change, particularly in youth and women’s participation, halal business practices among community MSMEs, and the evolving partnership dynamics between the village government, UIN Palopo, and PT Vale.

In doing so, this community service initiative contributes not only to the immediate needs of Timampu Village but also to broader debates on how rural, lake-based communities can harness halal ecotourism and MSMEs for sustainable livelihood improvement. Understanding the process and outcomes of this programme is important because it offers a concrete example of how village institutions, youth, and women’s groups can be repositioned as key actors in governing tourism resources and practising halal-based entrepreneurship within a multi-stakeholder partnership. The remainder of this article first outlines the methodological design of the ABCD-based facilitation and the actors involved, then presents the main results in terms of institutional strengthening, enhanced participation, and the initial integration of community MSMEs into the halal ecotourism value chain. The discussion section reflects on these findings in light of existing literature and considers their implications for village–university–industry collaboration, before the conclusion highlights key lessons and recommendations for sustaining and scaling the observed social changes.

B. Method

1. Community Service Approach and Design

The community service program was designed as a participatory intervention grounded in the principles of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). Rather than starting from deficits or needs, the facilitation explicitly sought to identify and mobilise the existing strengths of Timampu Village its natural assets around Lamapu–Towuti, its social networks among youth and women’s groups, and its emerging community-based MSMEs—as the primary drivers of change. Within this framework, the programme was conceptualised as a collaborative process in which villagers, supported by university and industry partners, co-defined priorities for strengthening halal ecotourism and MSMEs. The design integrated the core ABCD stages into a structured cycle: community asset mapping served to surface and organise local resources relevant to halal ecotourism and entrepreneurship; a “village dream” process enabled residents to articulate a shared future vision for Lamapu–Towuti and halal MSMEs; and subsequent planning sessions translated that vision into concrete action plans and early implementation steps. This approach positioned the community service not as external project delivery, but as a facilitation of citizen-led planning and experimentation aimed at building more resilient, halal-oriented ecotourism governance and locally rooted economic initiatives.

2. Setting and Participants

Timampu Village is situated in Towuti Subdistrict, East Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi, in the lake basin area of Lake Towuti, with Lamapu as one of its main sunrise viewpoints and access nodes to the lakefront landscape. The village is administratively

structured into several hamlets and supported by formal village institutions, including the village government and a village-owned enterprise (BUMDes), alongside community-based organisations such as youth groups and women's groups. The primary participants in this community service programme were the village government (head of village and apparatus), the BUMDes management, youth and/or *karang taruna* representatives, women's group leaders, and local MSME actors engaged in food, beverage, and other potential halal products. They were accompanied by a facilitation team consisting of lecturers and students from UIN Palopo, working in coordination with PT Vale as an industry partner with an existing commitment to community development in the Towuti area. Timampu was purposively selected as the programme site because it combines significant, yet underutilised, halal ecotourism potential around Lamapu–Towuti with an emerging but still fragile institutional landscape, and because it already lies within the outreach area of PT Vale's community development initiatives, making it a strategic locus for piloting a collaborative village–university–industry partnership model.

3. Stages of ABCD-Based Facilitation

The facilitation process in Timampu was operationalised through a series of stages that adapted the classic ABCD cycle to the local context. While presented here as a sequence, the stages were implemented in an iterative and overlapping manner, allowing for continuous learning and adjustment. The stages comprised: (1) incubation and trust-building, (2) discovery of community assets, (3) village dreaming for halal ecotourism and MSME development, (4) participatory design of joint action plans, and (5) implementation and early “destiny” through quick-win interventions and reflective review.

In the incubation and trust-building stage, the facilitation team conducted preliminary visits, informal conversations, and introductory meetings with the village government, BUMDes, youth and women's groups, and MSME actors. These encounters were used to clarify expectations, discuss roles and responsibilities, and agree on a collaborative framing of the programme. The discovery stage involved focus group discussions, participatory mapping, and simple inventory exercises to identify natural assets (such as the Lamapu sunrise point and lakefront areas), social and cultural resources, economic activities, and existing institutions relevant to halal ecotourism and MSMEs. Building on this, the dream stage was organised as a village-level dreaming workshop in which residents articulated a shared vision for Timampu as a halal ecotourism village, including aspirations for improved visitor facilities, strengthened MSMEs, and stronger youth and women's leadership.

During the design stage, this vision was translated into more concrete joint action plans. Community members and facilitators worked together to prioritise feasible interventions, identify “quick wins” (such as basic clean-up of the sunrise spot, simple signage and cleanliness SOPs, and improved presentation of halal food products), assign responsibilities among village institutions, and outline tentative timelines. Finally, the implementation and early destiny stage focused on carrying out selected quick-win activities and piloting elements of the agreed plans. This included community workdays at Lamapu, initial application of cleanliness and service standards, small-scale branding and documentation efforts, and mentoring sessions with MSMEs. Short reflection meetings

were held to review progress, capture lessons, and strengthen commitments for continued collaboration beyond the formal programme period.

Table 1. Stages of ABCD-Based Facilitation and Early Outputs in Timampu Village

ABCD Stage	Main Objectives	Key Activities in Timampu	Main Outputs / Early Changes
Incubation & Trust-Building	Build relationships and clarify roles	Introductory visits; meetings with village government, BUMDes, youth and women's groups, MSMEs	Shared understanding of programme goals; agreed roles of village, university, and industry partners
Discovery of Community Assets	Identify and organise local assets	FGDs; participatory asset mapping; simple inventories of natural, social, economic, and institutional assets	Community asset map related to Lamapu–Towuti and MSMEs; clearer picture of existing strengths and resources
Village Dreaming (Dream)	Co-create a shared vision for halal ecotourism and MSMEs	Village dreaming workshop; group discussions on future scenarios; prioritisation of themes	Collective “village dream” for halal ecotourism and MSMEs; initial agreement on priority directions
Participatory Design (Design)	Translate vision into actionable plans and quick wins	Joint planning sessions; identification of quick wins; task allocation; basic scheduling	Draft action plan for halal ecotourism and MSME strengthening; list of quick-win interventions and task owners
Implementation & Early Destiny	Pilot priority actions and consolidate emerging commitments	Community clean-up at Lamapu; basic signage and cleanliness SOPs; MSME mentoring; documentation and review	Visible improvements at the sunrise point; initial application of halal-oriented practices; strengthened collaboration among village institutions, UIN Palopo, and PT Vale

4. Data Collection and Reflection Procedures

Data on the process and outcomes of the programme were generated through a combination of qualitative and simple quantitative techniques integrated into the facilitation cycle. Throughout the discovery, dream, design, and implementation stages, the facilitation team conducted focus group discussions with village government representatives, BUMDes, youth and women's groups, and MSME actors to explore perceptions of assets, challenges, and desired futures. These were complemented by informal and semi-structured interviews with key informants, including the village head, BUMDes managers, and selected community leaders, to gain deeper insight into institutional dynamics and decision-making processes. Participant observation was carried out during community meetings, workdays at the Lamapu sunrise point, and mentoring sessions with MSMEs, with fieldnotes documenting interactions, participation patterns, and emergent practices. Programme activities were also documented through photographs, short video recordings, and

administrative records. In several key activities, simple feedback forms or short evaluative questions were used to capture participants' reflections on perceived benefits, constraints, and suggestions for follow-up.

The analysis and reflection process combined ongoing, in-situ sense-making with more systematic post-activity review. Data from focus group discussions and interviews were organised into brief summaries and subjected to thematic reflection by the facilitation team, focusing on recurring patterns related to community assets, perceived priorities, and institutional change. Observation notes and visual documentation were used to triangulate these patterns and to identify concrete indicators of change, such as shifts in youth and women's participation, the emergence of draft governance arrangements for tourism and MSMEs, and early adoption of halal-oriented practices among local enterprises. Periodic reflection meetings between the village actors and the facilitation team served as a space to present and verify these emerging interpretations, adjust action plans, and agree on how to consolidate or scale promising changes beyond the formal programme period.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Asset Mapping and the Co-created Village Dream

The discovery stage of the facilitation process generated a shared map of community assets that became the foundation for articulating Timampu's collective dream as a halal ecotourism village. Through participatory discussions and simple mapping exercises, residents identified and organised the resources they considered most important for future development, shifting the focus from external needs to locally available strengths. This asset mapping not only clarified what the village already possessed in terms of natural, social, economic, and institutional resources, but also stimulated dialogue on how these assets could be strategically linked to halal-oriented tourism and community-based enterprises.

The mapping highlighted several categories of key assets. Natural assets included the Lamapu sunrise point overlooking Lake Towuti, accessible lakefront areas, and the surrounding landscape that offers scenic views for visitors. Social and cultural assets comprised active youth groups and women's groups, religious activities centred on local mosques, and periodic cultural events that reflect local identity. Economic assets were found in existing food and beverage micro and small enterprises, as well as informal services such as parking management, boat rental, and small-scale trading near the lake. Institutional assets encompassed the village government, the village-owned enterprise (BUMDes), and other community organisations that, while varying in capacity, provided organisational structures for coordinating activities and decisions.

Building on this asset map, villagers co-created a "village dream" for Timampu as a halal ecotourism destination. The dream emphasised Lamapu as a well-managed sunrise viewpoint and primary gateway for halal-friendly ecotourism around Lake Towuti; the integration of local halal MSMEs into visitor experiences through curated food, beverage, and souvenir offerings; and the positioning of youth and women as frontliners in welcoming guests, managing services, and promoting the village through digital media. The dream also envisioned stronger village institutions—particularly the village government, BUMDes, and a tourism-oriented community group—working in a coordinated manner to

govern the destination, uphold halal principles, and ensure that benefits are fairly distributed among residents. From the dreaming workshop, residents agreed on several priority directions, including basic physical improvements and cleanliness at the Lamapu site, the development of simple but recognisable branding and information for visitors, initial strengthening of halal MSME products, and clearer task-sharing among village institutions and community groups in managing tourism-related activities.

Table 2. Community Assets and Village Dream Priorities in Timampu

Asset domain	Key examples	Potential roles in halal ecotourism & MSMEs	Related village dream priorities
Natural	Lamapu sunrise viewpoint; lakefront access points; surrounding landscape	Core attractions for sunrise viewing, lake-based activities, and nature appreciation	Lamapu developed as a clean, organised, and recognisable main halal ecotourism spot in Timampu
Social & cultural	Youth groups; women's groups; mosque-based activities; local cultural events	Human resources for guiding visitors, organising events, and ensuring halal-friendly conduct	Youth and women positioned as frontline hosts, guides, and promoters of the halal ecotourism village
Economic	Food and beverage MSMEs; informal parking services; boat rental; small traders	Providers of halal food, snacks, and services integrated into visitor packages	Local halal MSMEs included in visitor routes and packages, with improved product quality and presentation
Institutional	Village government; BUMDes; community organisations (e.g. youth organisations)	Governance of tourism activities, coordination of stakeholders, management of shared assets	Village institutions working in a coordinated structure to manage Lamapu–Towuti as a halal ecotourism destination

2. Strengthening of Village Institutions for Halal Ecotourism

Prior to the programme, institutional arrangements for managing tourism activities in Timampu were fragmented and largely informal. There was no clearly defined tourism awareness group or village tourism committee, and the potential role of the village-owned enterprise (BUMDes) in managing tourism-related services around Lamapu–Towuti had not been explicitly articulated. Basic governance instruments such as written standard operating procedures for cleanliness, visitor management, or the regulation of economic activities at the Lamapu site did not exist. Coordination between the village government, BUMDes, youth organisations, women's groups, and MSME actors tended to be sporadic and event-based, with limited joint planning or shared accountability for the development of halal ecotourism.

During the facilitation process, the community service programme supported village actors in sketching and testing more structured institutional arrangements. Through a series of discussions and planning meetings, participants drafted an initial organisational structure for a tourism-focused group or team—linked to existing village institutions—in which youth and BUMDes representatives were assigned specific roles related to site management, visitor services, and economic coordination. Alongside this, the team worked with village stakeholders to formulate simple written SOPs covering key aspects of halal

ecotourism management at Lamapu, including cleanliness routines, basic service standards for welcoming visitors, and guidelines for organising economic activities in the area. These developments were reinforced by multi-stakeholder coordination meetings that brought together the village government, BUMDes, youth and women's groups, and MSME actors to discuss halal tourism agendas, agree on task-sharing, and schedule joint activities. Concrete manifestations of these changes included more regular community clean-up events before sunrise meet-ups, clearer division of responsibilities among groups during tourism-related activities, and the preparation of simple information boards or signage at the Lamapu site.

Table 3. Institutional Changes in Halal Ecotourism Governance in Timampu

Institutional aspect	Condition before the programme	Changes observed during/after the programme	Evidence/notes (e.g. draft document, meeting minutes, observation)
Organisational structure	No clearly defined tourism awareness group or village tourism committee; roles not specified	Draft structure for a tourism-oriented group/team linked to village institutions, with designated roles for youth and BUMDes members	Sketch of organisational chart; meeting notes from planning sessions; observations during activities
Role of BUMDes	BUMDes role in tourism management not explicitly defined	BUMDes identified as key actor for managing selected services and supporting MSMEs at the Lamapu site	Statements in meetings; inclusion of BUMDes in task allocation; BUMDes participation in activities
SOPs for cleanliness and services	No written SOPs for cleanliness, visitor management, or halal service standards	Simple SOPs drafted for regular clean-up routines, basic visitor reception, and halal-oriented conduct at Lamapu	Draft SOP documents; photographs of clean-up activities; observation of implemented routines
Coordination mechanisms	Coordination among village government, BUMDes, youth, women's groups, and MSMEs was sporadic	Multi-stakeholder coordination meetings held to plan halal tourism activities and agree on task-sharing	Meeting invitations and minutes; attendance lists; reports of agreed plans
Community roles in events	Roles during tourism-related events informal and ad hoc	Clearer division of tasks during sunrise meet-ups and other activities; youth and women taking more structured responsibilities	Observation of events; testimonies from participants; visual documentation (photos, videos)

3. Changes in Participation and Halal MSME Practices

The programme also contributed to noticeable changes in the participation of youth and women in planning and implementing halal ecotourism activities. In the early meetings, many young people and women tended to attend primarily as listeners, with discussion dominated by village officials and a small number of community leaders. As the facilitation

progressed through the discovery, dream, and design stages, a core group of youth and women began to take on more active roles by helping to document activities, present the results of group discussions, and volunteer as coordinators for specific tasks such as organising clean-up days at the Lamapu site or preparing simple content for social media promotion. By the time quick-win activities were implemented, youth and women were not only present but were increasingly recognised by other villagers as initiators and informal facilitators of particular components of the programme, reflecting a gradual shift from passive attendance towards more substantive engagement and leadership. As one youth member expressed during a reflection session, “Previously we were just invited to attend; now we feel that we are trusted to take responsibility for making the village cleaner and more attractive for visitors.”

Parallel to these shifts in participation, the programme supported incremental changes in halal MSME practices among local entrepreneurs. Mentoring sessions and joint reflections encouraged MSME actors to pay greater attention to basic aspects of halal-friendly service, including cleanliness of production and serving areas, more orderly product presentation, and clearer communication about the halal status of ingredients and processes. Several food and beverage vendors began experimenting with improved packaging and more consistent labelling, while others adjusted their way of serving to be more responsive to potential visitors’ expectations, for example by preparing simple menus or ensuring that eating areas near Lamapu were tidied before sunrise events. Some MSME owners also started to articulate their products in terms of local identity and halal values when interacting with guests, signalling an early shift towards more conscious halal branding. A woman MSME owner noted that, through the mentoring, she realised that “small changes in cleanliness, packaging, and how we tell our product story can make visitors more confident that what they consume here is truly halal and prepared with care.”

4. Emerging Village–University–Industry Partnership Dynamics

The community service programme in Timampu also catalysed an emerging partnership configuration between the village, the university, and an industry actor. In practice, the village government and community organisations functioned as the primary agenda setters and local decision-makers, determining priorities for halal ecotourism and MSME development and providing the social space and labour for implementation. UIN Palopo played the role of knowledge facilitator and process companion, introducing and adapting the ABCD framework, moderating participatory meetings, and supporting documentation and reflection. PT Vale, already engaged in community development in the wider Towuti area, acted as an industry partner that provided legitimacy, linkage to broader programmes, and potential channels for sustaining and scaling selected initiatives. Rather than substituting for local leadership, the external partners were positioned to complement village capabilities by contributing technical insight, networking, and visibility.

Several concrete collaborative activities marked the gradual consolidation of this village–university–industry relationship. Multi-stakeholder meetings were convened in which representatives of the village government, BUMDes, youth and women’s groups, UIN Palopo, and PT Vale jointly reviewed the asset mapping and village dream outputs and discussed their implications for the future of Lamapu–Timampu. These forums led to

shared understandings about the strategic importance of Lamapu as a halal ecotourism node and to preliminary agreements on follow-up actions, including the intention to align village planning documents and PT Vale's community development or CSR/PPM schemes with the emerging vision for halal ecotourism and community MSMEs. Over time, interaction patterns that had previously been episodic and project-based began to show features of a more structured partnership, characterised by clearer role differentiation, mutual recognition of contributions, and a stronger sense of joint ownership over the development trajectory of Timampu as a halal-oriented ecotourism village.

Figure 1. Village–University–Industry Partnership Model for Halal Ecotourism and MSMEs in Timampu can be depicted as a three-node diagram in which the village government and community, UIN Palopo, and PT Vale form interconnected points around a central focus labelled “Halal Ecotourism & Community MSMEs in Timampu,” with arrows indicating flows of local leadership and community ownership from the village, knowledge facilitation and reflective learning from the university, and resource and network support from the industry partner.

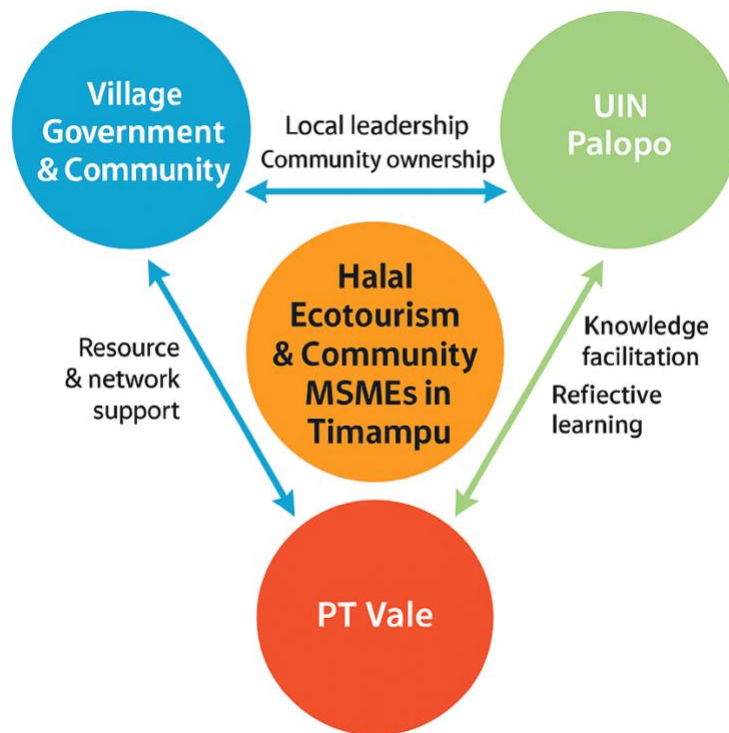


Figure 1. Village–University–Industry Partnership Model for Halal Ecotourism and MSMEs in Timampu

The asset mapping and village dreaming processes in Timampu collectively reframed how villagers, local authorities, and external partners understood “development” in the village. Instead of starting from lists of problems—lack of infrastructure, limited capital, or weak promotion the discovery stage invited residents to name and locate the natural, social, economic, and institutional resources they already possessed, from the Lamapu sunrise viewpoint and lakefront areas to youth and women’s groups, MSMEs, and village institutions. The subsequent dreaming workshop then used this asset map as the springboard for imagining Timampu as a

halal ecotourism village in which those resources are deliberately linked and mobilised. This sequence shifted the discourse from “what Timampu does not have” to “what Timampu already has and can connect,” and in doing so, repositioned villagers as agents capable of defining priorities and crafting a shared future vision for halal ecotourism and MSME development.

This trajectory is consistent with core principles of Asset-Based Community Development, which emphasise citizens as subjects rather than objects of intervention, local assets as the starting point of change, and a collectively articulated vision as the engine of mobilisation. In Timampu, the facilitation did not merely produce technical inventories of resources; it created spaces where youth, women, MSME actors, and village leaders could recognise themselves in the village story and see their roles in a longer-term transformation. The “village dream” for halal ecotourism and community MSMEs thus functioned as more than a planning tool: it became a narrative device that aligned individual aspirations with a broader communal direction, echoing ABCD studies that show how shared visions can strengthen motivation, trust, and willingness to collaborate.

The Timampu experience expands the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) literature by situating the reframing process within a unique context: a lake-based rural village historically impacted by extractive industries, now aiming to develop halal ecotourism and MSMEs through a village–university–industry partnership. Unlike prior ABCD studies that often focus on urban neighborhoods or agricultural communities, Timampu demonstrates how asset-based thinking can be adapted to ecotourism settings where natural landscapes, religious values, and small enterprises are integrated into a halal-oriented value chain. This approach positions ABCD not only as a tool for asset mapping but also as a way to reshape the village’s development vision—from reliance on external projects toward a locally rooted, halal-conscious framework that guides institutional strengthening, capacity building, and collaboration with external stakeholders. Such a model highlights the importance of leveraging local cultural and religious assets alongside natural resources to foster sustainable and community-driven halal ecotourism development.⁹ This integration supports empowerment of local small businesses and enhances competitiveness in halal tourism markets by aligning economic activities with Islamic values.¹⁰ Consequently, ABCD in this context serves as both a development methodology and a transformative process that reimagines rural livelihoods through a halal ecotourism lens.

The institutional changes observed in Timampu—drafting an initial tourism group structure, formulating simple SOPs for cleanliness and visitor services, and convening multi-stakeholder coordination meetings—represent the early formation of a halal ecotourism governance embryo. What began as fragmented and largely informal arrangements around the Lamapu site gradually evolved into a more recognisable governance configuration in which specific actors (village government, BUMDes, youth and women’s groups, MSME representatives) were assigned roles and responsibilities. The drafting of SOPs, although modest in scope, provided a first set of written rules governing how the site should be maintained, how

⁹ A. Ambariyanto et al., “Empowering Halal SMEs: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Development of Halal Ecosystem,” *KnE Social Sciences*, ahead of print, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v10i5.18097>.

¹⁰ Ambariyanto et al., “Empowering Halal SMEs: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Development of Halal Ecosystem.”

visitors ought to be welcomed, and how economic activities should be organised in ways that are consistent with halal principles. Regular coordination meetings, in turn, created arenas where these rules and roles could be negotiated, clarified, and monitored. Together, these elements mark a shift from ad hoc, event-based organising towards a nascent system of shared rules, roles, and routines—key ingredients of governance in any community-based tourism setting.

From an ABCD perspective, the emergence of these institutional arrangements can be interpreted as a downstream effect of participatory planning rooted in local assets and a shared village dream. Because community members were centrally involved in defining priorities and envisioning Timampu as a halal ecotourism village, they developed a stronger sense of ownership over both the opportunities and the responsibilities associated with tourism development. This heightened ownership made it more legitimate and meaningful to discuss “who should do what” and “how things should be done” at Lamapu, leading to the co-creation of draft structures and SOPs rather than their imposition from outside. At the same time, experience in community-based tourism and ecotourism consistently underscores that without clear local institutions and agreed rules of the game, initiatives are vulnerable to conflict, elite capture, or rapid decline once external facilitation ends. The Timampu case reflects these insights: institutional strengthening was not an optional extra but a necessary condition for translating the village dream into more enduring practices of halal ecotourism governance.

The Timampu case is distinctive compared to many community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives because its institutional strengthening arose from a village–university–industry partnership rather than a government- or NGO-driven program. The facilitation by UIN Palopo and involvement of PT Vale supported local leadership by creating a space for experimenting with governance models tailored to the lake-based, halal-oriented tourism context, rather than replacing village authority. This hybrid approach offers a potential model for rural destinations in early stages of tourism development, where community service programs using an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) framework link local assets, participatory planning, and multi-stakeholder collaboration to catalyze institutional design. Early investments in halal ecotourism should therefore focus not only on physical infrastructure or marketing but also on establishing simple, locally owned governance structures and standard operating procedures that evolve with experience. Such an approach aligns with findings that successful CBT depends on strong local participation, adaptive governance, and multi-actor collaboration to ensure sustainability and community empowerment.¹¹ This model highlights the importance of fostering locally rooted governance to support sustainable, culturally appropriate tourism development in rural areas.

The results also point to meaningful shifts in how youth and women participated in village decision-making and practice around halal ecotourism. Initially, many young people and

¹¹ Rachel Dodds et al., “Mobilizing Knowledge: Determining Key Elements for Success and Pitfalls in Developing Community-Based Tourism,” *Current Issues in Tourism* 21 (2018): 1547–68, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2016.1150257>; Tek Dangi and T. Jamal, “An Integrated Approach to ‘Sustainable Community-Based Tourism,’” *Sustainability* 8 (2016): 475, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su8050475>; Seweryn Zielinski et al., “Factors That Facilitate and Inhibit Community-Based Tourism Initiatives in Developing Countries,” *Current Issues in Tourism* 23 (2018): 723–39, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2018.1543254>; A. Manaf et al., “Community-Based Rural Tourism in Inter-Organizational Collaboration: How Does It Work Sustainably? Lessons Learned from Nglanggeran Tourism Village, Gunungkidul Regency, Yogyakarta, Indonesia,” *Sustainability*, ahead of print, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10072142>.

women attended meetings as passive participants, sitting at the back of the room and rarely speaking, while key discussions were dominated by village officials or a few senior community leaders. Over the course of the asset mapping, village dreaming, and action-planning sessions, however, a core group of youth and women began to step into more active roles—facilitating small group discussions, presenting group outputs, coordinating clean-up activities at Lamapu, and experimenting with content creation for social media promotion of the village. These shifts were not dramatic in numerical terms, but they signalled a qualitative movement from “being present” to “initiating and facilitating,” suggesting that the programme opened up safer and more enabling spaces for youth and women to exercise agency in shaping Timampu’s halal ecotourism agenda. Such developments resonate with empowerment perspectives that emphasise the importance of participation opportunities, recognition of local actors’ contributions, and the gradual building of confidence and leadership skills.

Parallel to these participation shifts, small but significant changes emerged in halal MSME practices. Through mentoring sessions and joint reflections, MSME owners were encouraged to scrutinise everyday aspects of their operations—cleanliness of production and serving spaces, the appearance and hygiene of packaging, and the clarity with which they communicated the halal status of their products. Several entrepreneurs responded by tidying and reorganising their stalls, adopting more consistent packaging, and beginning to label or verbally emphasise the halal qualities of their food and beverages. In some cases, vendors experimented with simple storytelling about the local ingredients they used and their commitment to preparing food in ways that align with Islamic values. These adjustments are modest compared to full certification processes, but in the context of a village that has yet to become an established destination, they represent early steps toward embedding halal value chain awareness at the micro-enterprise level. The provision of a supportive mentoring environment, where MSME actors could ask questions and reflect on their practices without fear of judgement, was critical in triggering this awareness and willingness to experiment with change.

Shifts in community-based tourism (CBT) that involve meaningful participation of youth and women are widely recognized as enhancing social sustainability and inclusiveness, while expanding local leadership capacity to sustain tourism agendas. This aligns with broader CBT literature emphasizing that empowerment through participation fosters more equitable and resilient tourism development.¹² In halal tourism and halal MSMEs, studies highlight the critical role of cleanliness, transparency, and trust-building in attracting visitors sensitive to halal standards, even without formal certification, underscoring the importance of everyday practices in maintaining halal integrity.¹³ The Timampu case is distinctive because these changes occur in a lakeside village at an early stage of tourism development, where limited resources and visitor

¹² E. Gutierrez, “Re-Examining the Participation and Empowerment Nexus: Applications to Community-Based Tourism,” *World Development Perspectives*, ahead of print, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wdp.2023.100518>; Quang Dai Tuyen et al., “How Has Community-Based Tourism Evolved Over Three Decades (1995–2025): A Bibliometric and Systematic Literature Review on Evolution and Future Research Directions,” *Sustainable Development*, ahead of print, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.70118>; Yudan Hermawan et al., “Learning From Goa Pindul: Community Empowerment through Sustainable Tourism Villages in Indonesia,” *The Qualitative Report*, ahead of print, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.5865>.

¹³ Dodds et al., “Mobilizing Knowledge: Determining Key Elements for Success and Pitfalls in Developing Community-Based Tourism.”

flows require low-cost, high-impact modifications such as cleaner environments, improved packaging, and clearer halal narratives. This suggests that community service programs can catalyze incremental but meaningful improvements in participation and halal business practices, supporting sustainable growth in emerging rural destinations.¹⁴ Overall, the evidence supports that empowerment and inclusive participation, combined with culturally appropriate practices, are key to advancing socially sustainable and halal-oriented community tourism.

Despite the encouraging changes observed in Timampu, this community service programme and the resulting article are subject to several limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, the duration of facilitation was relatively short, meaning that most of the documented outcomes represent early-stage changes rather than consolidated, long-term impacts. The draft institutional structures, simple SOPs, and shifts in participation and MSME practices may still be fragile and vulnerable to reversal if not followed up by continued local commitment and supportive policies. Second, the data used in this article are predominantly qualitative, drawn from focus group discussions, interviews, observation, and participatory reflection, without systematic quantitative measurement of economic or tourism indicators such as changes in household income, visitor numbers, or MSME turnover. As a result, while the analysis can credibly speak to processes and perceived changes, it cannot yet provide robust evidence of economic impact or broader welfare outcomes.

At the same time, the Timampu experience offers several lessons for the design of similar programmes. One key lesson is the critical role of trust-building and relationship work at the outset of community service: without careful incubation, it would have been difficult to foster genuine participation of youth, women, and MSME actors or to negotiate new institutional arrangements. A second lesson concerns the importance of embedding emergent structures and practices into more formal frameworks, such as village regulations, official decrees (SK), or integration into village development plans and corporate community development or CSR/PPM schemes. Formalisation can help protect gains made through participatory processes and anchor them in routines and budgets. A third lesson is the need for more targeted and sustained mentoring for halal MSMEs, including support for product development, packaging, basic financial management, and, where feasible, pathways toward formal halal certification or recognition, so that initial behavioural changes can evolve into more competitive and resilient enterprises.

These reflections also point to directions for future work in both practice and research. From a practical standpoint, there is a strong case for designing longitudinal follow-up programmes in Timampu to monitor whether and how institutional arrangements, participation patterns, and halal MSME practices evolve over time, and to support the village in moving from quick wins to more strategic investments in halal ecotourism. Similar ABCD-based facilitation models could be piloted in other villages around Lake Towuti or in comparable rural, lake-based contexts, allowing for comparative learning and the development of a more generalisable approach to halal ecotourism and MSME development. From a research perspective, future studies could combine qualitative process documentation with quantitative indicators of economic and social impact, and further explore the dynamics of village–university–industry

¹⁴ Hermawan et al., “Learning From Goa Pindul: Community Empowerment through Sustainable Tourism Villages in Indonesia.”

collaboration in the field of halal tourism. Such work would deepen understanding of how asset-based, partnership-oriented community service can contribute to more inclusive and sustainable forms of rural development.

D. Conclusion

The community service program in Timampu set out to apply an Asset-Based Community Development approach to strengthen halal ecotourism governance and community-based MSMEs, and to observe the early social changes emerging from this process. The findings show that participatory asset mapping and village dreaming successfully reframed local understandings of development from a deficit-oriented focus on needs to an asset-based orientation grounded in the village's natural, social, economic, and institutional strengths. This reframing, in turn, created the basis for co-creating a shared vision of Timampu as a halal ecotourism village and for mobilising villagers—particularly youth, women, and MSME actors—as active subjects in shaping that vision.

At the institutional level, the program contributed to the formation of an embryonic governance structure for halal ecotourism around the Lamapu site, including a draft tourism-oriented group, simple SOPs for cleanliness and visitor services, and the introduction of more regular coordination mechanisms among village government, BUMDes, community organisations, and MSME representatives. These changes illustrate how ABCD-inspired participatory planning can generate concrete governance arrangements when communities are supported to translate shared dreams into roles, rules, and routines. At the micro level, observable shifts in youth and women's participation—from passive attendance to more active initiating and facilitating roles—and incremental improvements in halal MSME practices demonstrate how carefully facilitated spaces and mentoring can nurture local leadership and embed halal-conscious behaviour in everyday economic activity.

Theoretically, the Timampu case adds nuance to the literature on ABCD, community-based tourism, and halal tourism by situating asset-based facilitation within a village–university–industry partnership in a lake-based rural context. It suggests that ABCD is not only a technique for mapping assets but also a vehicle for reshaping the imaginative horizon of village development toward halal-oriented, community-owned ecotourism, while simultaneously prompting institutional and behavioural change. The emerging collaboration between the village, UIN Palopo, and PT Vale points to a hybrid governance model in which local leadership, academic facilitation, and industry support can be combined to co-produce more inclusive and context-sensitive pathways for rural tourism and MSME development.

On the basis of these findings, several recommendations can be made for future community service initiatives. First, program aiming to foster halal ecotourism and MSMEs should allocate adequate time and resources for trust-building and participatory visioning, as these stages lay the groundwork for subsequent institutional strengthening and behaviour change. Second, early governance innovations—such as draft structures and SOPs—should be followed by efforts to embed them in formal village regulations and planning documents, and, where relevant, to align them with corporate community development or CSR/PPM frameworks, in order to enhance their durability. Third, targeted, longer-term mentoring for halal MSMEs is needed to move from small, “low-cost, high-visibility” changes in cleanliness and packaging toward more robust halal value chains and, where feasible, formal certification.

Future research could build on this work by conducting longitudinal studies to track how institutional arrangements, participation patterns, and halal MSME practices evolve over time in Timampu and comparable villages, and by integrating quantitative indicators of economic and social impact with qualitative process analysis. Comparative studies across multiple lake-based or post-extractive rural communities would also help to refine and test the transferability of the ABCD-based, partnership-oriented model presented here. Such extensions would deepen understanding of how community service programmes can catalyse and sustain social change in the direction of more inclusive, halal-conscious rural development.

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