

Wae Rebo Tourism Village Development Based on Local Wisdom and Community Products through a Technological Innovation Approach in Creating Economic Resilience[†]

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Abstract: Wae Rebo Village is one of the tourism objects located in Manggarai Regency, NTT; the local tourist attraction is the community's effort to maintain traditional houses commonly called Mbaru Niang. The purpose of the study was to develop a model for the development of the Wae Rebo tourist village with a technological approach. The concepts used are tourism development, local wisdom, Sustainability Tourism and People's Economy. The research method uses a qualitative approach by observing the research object, namely, the potential for tourist attractions and the condition of social and cultural communities as well as conducting interviews with traditional leaders. The results of the research on the attractiveness of Wae Rebo are traditional houses, namely, Mbaru Niang and nature tourism. The development of Wae Rebo maintains local wisdom by maintaining cultural heritage and the sustainability of social capital is the hallmark of the Wae Rebo tourist village in maintaining the community's economy. However, a technological infrastructure approach is needed for marketing local products in the form of coffee and woven fabrics, as well as the role of the government as a companion, especially in improving human resource capabilities because tourism villages are included in the category of developing tourist villages, so that their sustainability can be maintained towards an independent tourist village.

Keywords: tourism village development; local wisdom; community economy; technology



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1. Introduction

Regional development will be more valuable if it can adapt to the environment and is sustainable. In addition, each region certainly has its own uniqueness and added value as its own attraction that determines the positioning of the region. Therefore, it is necessary to implement periodic and sustainable development, which means that the attraction requires planned management and development. Tourism development contributes to accelerating economic growth with an approach to economic growth and equity for people's welfare and development, oriented toward regional development that is community-based and sustainable through community empowerment, which includes various aspects, such as human resources, destination management, infrastructure, accommodation, science, marketing and technology.

Regional cultural diversity is a social potential that can shape the cultural character and image in each region, and it is an important part of the formation of the image and cultural identity of a region. Some of the values and forms of local wisdom, including customary law, cultural values and beliefs that exist, are partly very relevant to be applied to the planning and development process of a region or area, such as those found in several areas such as Bali, Toraja and others that have various rules of regional planning and development [1].

The origin of the development of the Wae Rebo Village in 1997 was with the research on anthropology by Catherine Allertone, which contained photographs of the life of the Wae Rebo people and the shape of the building called Mbaru Niang (Round House), whereby the image then spread throughout the world through a picture on a postcard. Furthermore, in 2001, Mbaru Niang Wae Rebo received an award from the Indonesian Architects Association (IAI) in the conservation building category. Then, on 27 August 2012, he was awarded the UNESCO Award of Excellence at the Asia Pacific Heritage Award for Cultural Conservation 2012 in Bangkok, by setting aside 42 cultural heritages from 11 countries in Asia. The award is given based on the criteria as a site that reflects local wisdom, by providing benefits, namely, contributing to the surrounding environment and the sustainability of local culture and history [2]. Conservation of traditional houses or Mbaru Niang has succeeded in overcoming the problems of environmental conservation in a wide scope through local traditions. This shows that the conservation of traditional houses not only maintains the existence of traditional houses as inanimate objects but also has cultural values in maintaining the integrity and local traditions.

Traditional architectural buildings can be a tourism attraction and are representatives that describe the socio-cultural life of the community and as heritage works which have norms of customs or cultural inheritance that have been passed down from generation to generation. The existence of a traditional village is an answer to the demands of the function and value of the house as a form of social interaction from the community in the village as a place to live together. The people of Manggarai, especially Wae Rebo, have proven that their architecture is a manifestation of the unity of the values of their sacred life and their habits of life. Traditional village patterns, building forms, spatial planning and forms of accessories as well as the rules of the procession of life are united in the physical building of space, as if there are no boundaries between physical and religious, so that in the end they build an economy based on local wisdom with the strength of community togetherness.

2. Research Methodology

The research approach uses qualitative research with descriptive method as the research design. Sugiyono explained that qualitative research is a research method approach based on the philosophy of postpositivism, which is in accordance with the natural conditions of the research object. Furthermore, qualitative research places the researcher as a key instrument and the results of qualitative research focus more on meaning as opposed to generalization [3]. On the other hand, the descriptive method was chosen because it has the characteristics of research that can reveal or dissect natural and social phenomena in detail [4]. Data collection was conducted through (1) interviews with Indigenous leaders, Communities, Local Guides; (2) observation, which is a field work to observe directly and describe the activities, behaviors, interactions and processes of society, and (3) literature studies.

3. Wae Rebo Tourism Product Components

The components of Wae Rebo tourism products include:

1 Natural attractions

Beautiful natural landscapes are presented in the mountains along the Wae Rebo, where there are 42 species of trees living in the protected forest. The tree species found were Natu (*Planchonella firma*), Ketang (*Planchonella bovate*), Maras (*Dysoxylum* sp.), Worok (*Dysoxylum nutans*), Moak (*Dacrycarpus imbricatus*), Pinis (*Podocarpus amarus*), Rukus (*Adinandra javanica*), Kenti (*Leptospermum flavescens*) Rentigi (*Vaccinium timorensis*) and M debris (*Decaspermum fruticosum*). Based on the survey, Indecon managed to record 38 species of birds found in the mountain forest. Two of them are endemic to Flores, namely, the Flores Crow (*Corvus florensis*) and the Flores Celepuk (*Otus alfredi*). Apart from birds, there are several other animals that inhabit the mountainous forest, namely, wild boars (*Sucelebensis*),

long-tailed monkeys or Kode (*Macaca fascicularis*), squirrels (*Callosciurus notatus*), ferret (*Paradoxurus Hermaphroditus*) and porcupine (*Hystrix javanica*) [5].

2 Cultural Tourism Attractions

Wae Rebo is one of the traditional villages which, to this day, preserves the authenticity of the village, the authenticity of the architecture of the buildings, community life and customs. Upon visiting Wae Rebo, tourists will visit some of the cultural attractions directly, but there are also some cultural attractions that cannot be directly observed, because the time when they travel is not favorable. The travel time is not correct, as some of the cultural attractions of Wae Rebo will be performed at major events scheduled at another time, particularly in November.

3 Wae Rebo Building Architecture

Mbaru Niang is the uniqueness of the village of Wae Rebo. Figure 1 presents a photo of Mbaru Niang, which is a traditional house and has a distinctive architecture left by the ancestors of the Wae Rebo community. Mbaru means house while Niang means tall and round. Mbaru Niang is a house built with an architecture that is different from other house buildings because it is conical in shape and towers upward.



Figure 1. Wae Rebo village house (source: Rahmi, 2022).

According to traditional leaders, it is important to reveal that Mbaru Niang's form is significant because it is a symbol of the protection and unity of the Rebo community. In particular, the floor in Niang is circular, which symbolizes harmony and justice for all residents living in it. Mbaru Niang has been guarded and preserved by the Rebo community for generations despite being abandoned by their ancestors.

The importance of the house has lasted for 19 generations. Mbaru Niang Rebo consists of seven buildings that have stood since their foundation in 1920 until today. The building consists of only seven niang, because it is said that the ancestor built the seven niang to honor the seven directions of the mountain peaks surrounding the village of Vee Rebo, which is also considered the protector of prosperity and peace in the village. Among the seven buildings, there is a circular altar in the middle of the Mbaru Niang group. Compang is the center of the seven Niang, which is considered by the inhabitants of Vee Rebo as a place that has the most sacred value because it serves as a place to perform worship rituals and offerings to God and ancestors [6].

The seven Niang buildings have different traditional names, including: Niang Gendang, Niang Gena Mandok, Niang Gena Jekong, Niang Gena Ndorom, Niang Gena Pirung, Niang Gena Jintam and Niang Gena Maro. Of the seven Niang buildings, Niang Gendang is bigger than the six Niang Gena, while the other six Niang Gena are the same size. Mbaru Niang has five levels, each with a common name and seven important parts that have different meanings and names. The following are the names and functions of the five levels of Mbaru Niang. Hekang Code (5th level): serves as a storage room for ancestors in the form of woven bamboo or langkar; Lempa Rae (4th level): serves as a food reserve;

Lentar (3th level): serves as a storage place for seeds of arable and garden crops; Lobo (2nd level): serves as a storage room for other foods; tent (1st level): serves as a room for human activities/inhabitants. Inside, there is a meeting room, a living room and a dining room, as well as a bedroom for 6–8 families.

To explain the names and meanings of the seven important parts of Mbaru Niang, among others, include: Ngando: works as a roofer throughout, flags were also put up during the 17 August celebration; Hunchback: acts as the center of a building of high sacred value, as well as a seat for traditional leaders when performing waelu'u; Bamboo Book: serves as a roof frame which also functions as a roof support; Wehang: serves to cover and protect occupants from rain and sunlight; Door: serves as a way out or enter the house; Foundation Pile: serves as a support for the Mbaru Niang building. The activities carried out by the community while inside the Mbaru Niang building are located on the very first level (tents). The size of the tents inside Niang Gendang is larger than the six Niang Gena, being 14 m in size while that of the six Niang Gena are 11 m in size. The difference in size is due to the fact that the number of residents in Niang Gendang is more than in the six Niang Gena, namely, eight families, while those living in the six Niang Gena are six families. The inside of the tent is divided into two parts, namely, Motang and Lutur, which have different functions. Motang is a private zone that has a stove for cooking and family meals, as well as a bedroom. The order of the bedrooms is arranged based on the birth order of each head of the family. The concept of a circle is used to organize the seven Mbaru Niang where Compang is the most sacred part as well as the concept in the room, namely, the hunchback as the center point, which is also sacred. Therefore, the traditional leader always sits in front of the hunchback pole because he is also considered sacred by the Wae Rebo community.

4 Penti Ceremony

One of cultural tourism attractions of Wae Rebo village is the Penti ceremony, carried out every month of November (Beko), which is believed by the Wae Rebo community as the new moon in the moon counting system. Based on the results of interviews with the head of customs, we found that: the Penti ceremony is held as a form of expression of gratitude to the creator. In addition, the Penti celebration is also held as a New Year celebration as a form of gratitude for the success given by the creator for a whole year, by giving offerings in the form of chicken meat or agricultural products on the altar table available in the village of Wae Rebo. The Penti ceremony is celebrated with the hope that the people of Wae Rebo will have the same success in the coming year. The Penti ceremony is considered as a traditional ceremony to prepare new plant seeds or in local language "Wuat Wini" to be planted in the garden. Penti ceremony the community hopes that the seeds that have been planted are blessed by The Creator so that the results obtained during the harvest are good results. Penti traditional rituals are carried out for one day with several stages of ceremonies, namely, the blessing of SPRINGS, the salvation of the village, and evil spirits. The community is called to gather at The Drum House and then head to the ritual place accompanied by Sanda singing. The Sanda chant is only sung when the Penti ceremony is in progress. Then the dance Caci is performed.

Caci is a traditional dance from Manggarai which is performed in traditional ceremonies and major events such as Penti ceremonies, celebrations of the Independence Day of The Republic of Indonesia, wedding day and welcoming state guests. The Caci dance is performed by two men who describe their respective strengths, telling the story wherein one of the two men whips the opponent, rewarded with parry, and lashes against the opponent in turn, lasting for several minutes until the end of the dance.

The Caci dance is identical to male strength in Manggarai because it is associated with courage, masculinity and attractiveness for women. The main actors of the Caci dance are men, but not all men can do it because the Caci dance is only performed by brave men, strong and clever in performing dance movements, and singing folk songs, as the dance is accompanied by drum music, gongs, and also regional songs such as "Lando" and "Mbaku".

Caci is a dance based on its philosophy: Caci is a way of communication between God and people. Ca means one and Ci means test; therefore, the dance consists of only two people, which means that God tests the players one by one, with the aim of finding out whether the two dancers are guilty or not. One of these tests is the whip, which symbolizes lightning. Lightning symbolizes God's judgment, but lightning also symbolizes the relationship between heaven and Earth. Caci is a symbol of God, the unity of Mother Earth and Father Heaven. The shield in the right hand is a symbol of the womb and Mother Earth, and the willow wand in the left hand is a symbol of heaven. The strike of the whip connects the motherland and the top of the sky. Caci dance scars become a source of pride for dancers, because they are considered a symbol of masculinity.

Some of the attributes used to perform the Caci dance are: (1) white trousers and songke fabric (trousers are worn and then wrapped with songke fabric, symbolizing the innocence, generosity, honesty, kindness and obedience of the Manggarai people); (2) Ndeki (an attribute in the form of a ponytail in the middle of a dancer made of rattan and white goat hair, symbolizing masculinity and strength); (3) bells (installed at the back of the waist, which will sound after the dance movements performed by the dancers); (4) Panggal mask (worn on the head and symbolizes the strength and charisma of the Manggarai people); (5) Larik (whip used as a weapon, made of dried buffalo skin and equipped with a woven rattan at the end); (6) Nggiling (a round shield made of dried buffalo skin, whose function is to block the opponent's attack when performing the Caci dance); and (7) Tereng or Agang, made from rattan which serves as a tool to repel an attack.

4. Development of Wae Rebo as a Tourism Destination

Of particular interest in the village of Wae Rebo is agritourism, which can also be offered to others as nature and culture. Wae Rebo Agro Tourism offers tourists to experience different things, namely, tourists are invited to visit the coffee plantation while learning about different types of coffee on the plantation. Some types of original coffee from Wae Rebo are Arabica coffee, Robusta and Columbia, which are superior coffee made without the use of pesticide. Instead, the coffee tree is allowed to grow according to the actual growth cycle, resulting in a distinctive coffee bean with an original aroma. The municipality offers tourists to participate directly in the harvesting of coffee beans. The coffee plantations are located a few meters from the village. In addition to agritourism, hiking tours can be made, lasting 4 h, since the existence of Kampung Wae Rebo at an altitude of 1117 above sea level is a potential interest for tourists who enjoy hiking. The trail is a bit steep, but the scenery during the hiking activities express beauty of nature. Figure 2 presents the atmosphere of accommodations provided to tourists who follow the hiking tour.



Figure 2. The atmosphere of the house used by tourists for accommodation (Source: Rahmi, 2022).

5. Social Capital as Economic Resilience

Tourism development in Wae Rebo consists of improving the quality of attractions based on tourist product components, improving cooperation relations with actors of the tourism industry, improving the quality of human resources, and continuously increasing

advertising through Internet and television media. The current development of Wae Rebo tourism, based on observations in the subject of research and the analysis of the results, is Wae Rebo tourism in connection with the target life cycle (life cycle of the target area), according to Butler in Pitana and Diarta, at the point of involvement. The success of the municipality in the development of tourism is proof that the strength of Wae Rebo tourism lies in the participation of the entire municipality [7]. The forms of participation of the Wae Rebo community are explained in detail, as follows. First, the community will be jointly involved in the discussion and decision making for future Wae Rebo tourism plans and developments, namely, in meetings moderated by the Institute for Cultural Preservation (LPBW). Second, the community will participate in the accountability for the tourism management plan in Wae Rebo. Participation is carried out by maintaining safety, maintaining cleanliness, preserving the objects of the ancestral heritage, preserving local wisdom, and mothers especially will participate in the processing and preparation of food for tourists. Third, the community will participate in obtaining benefits, namely, through the sale of weaving products and some typical souvenirs from Wae Rebo. Fourth, the community will participate in the evaluation meetings organized by the LPBW, which are held every month to discuss the results achieved, and at the end of the year to discuss finances and all activities for a year. Fifth, full participation of the community is required in all meetings organized by LPBW [8]. This shows that the strength of social capital is the glue of the Wae Rebo community for increasing economic growth by providing the community with the opportunity to further improve competitiveness through each community-made product presented to tourists.

The advantage of the direct participation of municipality of Wae Rebo in the development of tourism is that the municipality does not have to go far in search of work, but works directly in its own country. The community directly cultivates and preserves the cultural wealth and local policy that they have. Others receive income from sharing the cost of housing and souvenirs.

6. Wae Rebo Tourism Village Model Based on Local Wisdom with a Technological Approach in Creating Economic Resilience

Matutano describes five aspects that have a significant impact on the application of community-led tourism [9]. Social contracts include improving the quality of life of people, including improving education in schools outside Wae Rebo, increasing community pride, and promoting equality in all matters, such as with the housewives in the village. Wae Rebo is directly involved in tourism activities, including institutional management membership, direct participation in planning meetings, management, decision making and other tourism activities. The economic aspect can be related to the availability of funds from tourism activities for tourism development in Wae Rebo, which increases employment in the local community, including the guide. The cultural aspect encourages the people of Wae Rebo to respect cultural differences, which is why the community has done so, namely, by opening up and accepting all the cultures of the world. The community has helped tourists in the field of culture, namely, by sharing information about the culture of Wae Rebo, so that tourists are also interested in learning about it, for example about the traditional clothes that are worn on a daily basis. The political aspect of community participation has increased since the existence of tourism activities until now, since the activities carried out in Wae Rebo should be of direct concern to the community as a whole on the basis of the activities under consideration. Community development in Wae Rebo is more extensive thanks to the cooperation gained from these activities. These activities develop tourism in Wae Rebo, which increases employment in the local community, and one of them works as a guide in cooperation with various tourism NGOs [10]. The rights to ensure the management of natural resources are based on the order of the Regent of Manggarai, according to which Wae Rebo is designated as a cultural reserve of the Regent of Manggarai and is overseen by the Ministry of Forestry.

A technological approach is used for marketing activities, namely, the promotion of Wae Rebo village through social media, by means of local guides documenting photos of Wae Rebo village life through social media. However, there is also a personal approach, namely, through word of mouth, through friends, because tourists are present in groups as friends or together with family. Moreover, the technological approach is used to make it easier to access information about the village of Wae Rebo, particularly about the social and cultural life of the community, tourist attractions, facilities, and locations as well as the uniqueness of Wae Rebo, including the supply chain about the sustainability of the village. Villages that maintain local wisdom as social capital maintain the community's economy with technology as a tool or media to provide excellent service to tourists.

7. Social Capital as Economic Resilience

Tourist destinations development is done by improving the attractions quality based on tourist product components, improving cooperation relations with actors of the tourism sector, improving the quality of personnel and continuous expansion of advertising through mass media, namely, the Internet, radio, television and social media. Regarding the development of Wae Rebo tourism at this stage, based on observations in the field of research and analysis of results, Wae Rebo tourism is in the center of participation in relation to the life cycle of the target area according to Butler in Pitana and Diarta [7]. The success of the municipality in the development of tourism is proof that the strength of Wae Rebo tourism lies in the participation of the entire municipality.

The form of participation of the Wae Rebo community is explained in detail, including: First, the community will be jointly involved in the discussion and decision making for the plan and Wae Rebo tourism development in the future, namely in meetings supported by cultural institutions (LPBW). Second, participation of community in the Responsible Wae Rebo Tourism management plan. This form of participation consists in maintaining protection, maintaining tidiness, preserving cultural values and relics of ancestors, preserving local wisdom, and especially the mothers also participated in the processing and preparation of food for tourists. Third is community participation in obtaining benefits through the sale of woven products and some typical souvenirs of Wae Rebo. Fourth, participation of the community in the evaluation meeting of the LPBW, which is held every month to discuss the results achieved, and at the end of the year, whereby finances and all activities for a year are discussed. Fifth, full community participation in all meetings organized by LPBW [8]. This shows that the power of social capital is the glue of the Wae Rebo community for increasing economic growth by providing the community with the opportunity to further improve competitiveness through any community-produced product presented to tourists.

The advantage of the Wae Rebo community in participating directly in the development of tourism is that people do not have to go far to find a job, but work directly in their own country. The community directly cultivates and preserves the wealth of local culture and wisdom. Furthermore, the second income comes from the division of the cost of accommodation and souvenirs.

8. Wae Rebo Tourism Village Development Model Based on Local Wisdom with Technological Innovation Approach in Creating Economic Resilience

There are five aspects that are considered important pillars in the implementation of the community tourism concept described in Matutano [9]. Social-related agreements include, among other things: improving the quality of life in the community; improving education in schools outside of Wae Rebo; increasing community pride, such as Kampung Wae Rebo, when the impact of tourism is better known than previous tourism activities; and equality in everything, for example, housewives of Wae Rebo are directly involved in tourism activities, become members of a group of institutional directors, and participate directly in decision making and other tourism activities. The agreement from an economic point of view is the availability of funds from tourism activities to use the tourism development of

Wae Rebo to create jobs for the local community, including a guide. The cultural-related agreement aims to encourage the Wae Rebo community to treat cultural differences more respectfully. That is why the community has done so by opening up and accepting all the cultures of the world. The municipality helped tourists culturally by passing on knowledge about Wae Rebo culture to keep tourists interested in it. Tourist development is always associated with the local culture of Wae Rebo, for example, how to talk politely with tourists and always wearing traditional clothes, which are clothes that are used daily. The political aspects of community participation has continued to increase since the existence of previous tourism activities, as activities in Wae Rebo should directly involve all municipalities based on the activities considered. The improvement of the Wae Rebo community is wider, as cooperation with tourism activities aimed at using the development of tourism in Wae Rebo is also wider, which creates jobs to the local community [11].

The technological approach is used for marketing activities, namely, the promotion of Wae Rebo village through social media, by means of local guides documenting photos of village life/Kampung Wae Rebo through social media. However, there is also a personal approach, namely, through word of mouth, through friends, because those who attend tourists in groups are friends or together with family. Moreover, the technological approach is used to facilitate access and information about the village/Kampung Wae Rebo about socio-cultural community life, tourist attractions, facilities, and location as well as the uniqueness of Wae Rebo, including the supply chain about the sustainability of the village/Kampung Wae Rebo transforming into villages that maintain local wisdom as social capital and maintain the community's economy with technology as a tool or media to provide excellent service to tourists.

9. Conclusions

Based on the results and discussions described, the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. From the tourism products component, the development of Wae Rebo as a tourist destination is supported by various tourism opportunities, such as: (1) tourist attractions, namely, having beautiful nature, biological wealth, culture and strong local wisdom, unique building architecture, agrotourism and hiking; (2) accessibility to the target area, although it is slightly winding and passes through mountainous areas; (3) available facilities including adequate accommodation and a souvenir shop typical of Wae Rebo as well as a Tourist Information Center, and other support services including clean water, health centers, reading houses, restrooms and toilets for tourists, electricity supply and places of worship.
2. Social capital is a force in increasing economic growth and competitiveness in producing products by the community as souvenirs for tourists by providing opportunities for the surrounding community to sell their products in turn.
3. The Wae Rebo village community is expected to always play an active role and maintain *Sapta Pesona* in receiving tourists. There are attractions and activities that involve tourists' direct participation, for example in the traditional weaving process. The work of the surrounding community involves preserving nature, environmental cleanliness and the safety and comfort of tourists while in Wae Rebo, as well as maintaining local wisdom and preserving sacred objects and the sacredness of the village.
4. Tourism operators contribute by increasing advertising in online and support media such as television, brochures and newspapers, and by improving services to make tourists feel comfortable and safe. This includes improving the cleanliness of accommodation facilities and supporting infrastructure such as restroom and bathrooms, and access to clean water and food supplies.
5. For the Manggarai Regency Government, it is necessary to improve the human resources of the community by holding training on tourism and providing socialization and information about tourism policy and the development of Wae Rebo. They must also work with travel agencies outside the region to promote and sell Wae Rebo tourism. They can increase advertising through social media and support of media

such as television, international newspapers and direct promotion of tourists in the home country to increase the number of visits of foreign tourists. Furthermore, they can focus on the development of facilities and infrastructure supporting tourism activities such as providing lodging, souvenir houses together with the community, and increasing accessibility, namely, repairing slippery roads that can cause accidents to tourists, while taking into account environmental impacts. There is also opportunity for study on the Wae Rebo village development so that it can become an independent and sustainable tourism village.

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