

Development of a Tourism Catalog as an Effort to Balance Tourist Visits in East Nusa Tenggara

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Abstrak

Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) merupakan destinasi pariwisata potensial di Indonesia dengan kekayaan alam, budaya, dan sejarah, namun penyebaran kunjungan wisatawan masih belum merata karena dominasi kawasan Labuan Bajo sementara wilayah lain seperti Kupang, Ende, dan Timor Tengah Selatan kurang terpromosikan. Kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan mendukung pemerataan kunjungan wisatawan melalui penyusunan buku katalog pariwisata yang menampilkan objek-objek unggulan di wilayah terpinggirkan. Menggunakan metode participatory action research (PAR), kegiatan ini mencakup survei lapangan, wawancara pemangku kepentingan, pengumpulan data visual dan naratif, penyusunan konten, desain, produksi, serta koordinasi dengan instansi pemerintah dan pelaku wisata. Luaran utama kegiatan berupa buku *The Guide Book of Tourism Nusa Wanderlust* yang memuat 15 objek wisata unggulan dan telah diserahkan kepada Dinas Pariwisata Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur sebagai media promosi destinasi wisata NTT. Meskipun dampak kuantitatif belum dapat dianalisis karena data kunjungan wisata dari BPS baru akan tersedia pada tahun berikutnya, distribusi buku ini diharapkan memperkuat promosi wilayah yang kurang dikenal dan menjadi langkah awal dalam mendorong pemerataan kunjungan wisatawan secara berkelanjutan di NTT.

Kata kunci: pariwisata NTT, pengabdian masyarakat, katalog pariwisata, objek unggulan, pemerataan kunjungan wisata, pariwisata berkelanjutan.

Abstract

East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) is a promising tourism destination in Indonesia, known for its abundant natural beauty, cultural heritage, and historical assets. However, the distribution of tourist visits remains uneven due to the dominance of Labuan Bajo, while other regions such as Kupang, Ende, and South Central Timor receive less promotion. This community service initiative aims to support a more balanced distribution of tourist arrivals by developing a tourism catalog featuring leading attractions in underrepresented areas. Using the participatory action research

(PAR) method, the activities include field surveys, stakeholder interviews, the collection of visual and narrative data, content development, design and production processes, as well as coordination with government agencies and tourism practitioners. The primary output of the program is a book titled *The Guide Book of Tourism Nusa Wanderlust*, which features 15 priority tourism attractions and has been handed over to the Tourism Office of East Nusa Tenggara Province as a promotional medium for NTT destinations. Although quantitative impacts cannot yet be analyzed because the relevant visitation data from BPS will only be available in the following year, the distribution of the book is expected to strengthen the promotion of lesser-known areas and serve as an initial step toward encouraging a more equitable and sustainable distribution of tourist visits in NTT.

Keyword: NTT tourism, community service, tourism catalog, leading attractions, equitable tourism distribution, sustainable tourism.

Introduction

Tourism Potential of NTT

East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) is a province in Eastern Indonesia that is rich in tourism potential. This region has more than 500 islands with beautiful beaches, active volcanoes, volcanic lakes, and unique cultural sites. One of its main icons is Komodo National Park, which has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1991 (UNESCO, 2023). In addition, NTT offers cultural tourism experiences such as traditional festivals, unique cuisine, and Portuguese colonial history. This potential is supported by data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf), which lists NTT as one of ten national priority destinations with a 12% annual growth in foreign tourist arrivals (Kreatif, 2022). However, despite this significant potential, its realization has not been optimal due to the uneven distribution of visits.

Analysis of Uneven Tourist Visits

The uneven distribution of tourist visits is a major issue in NTT. Based on data from the NTT Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and domestic tourist visitation data from 2021 to 2024, total visits to NTT reached 20,005,739 tourists (BPS - Indonesian Central Statistics Agency, 2023). The following is a table and pie chart of total tourist visits from 2021 to 2024.

Table 1. Number of Tourist Visits from 2021 to 2024 by District and City

Region	Year				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Sumba Barat	47.933	59.701	84.326	175.937	367.897
Sumba Timur	129.542	163.058	230.918	259.626	783.144
Kupang	151.365	167.826	251.386	685.232	1.255.809
Timor Tengah Selatan	308.053	387.735	447.106	532.160	1.675.054
Timor Tengah Utara	199.996	223.559	272.520	404.999	1.101.074
Belu	196.744	200.393	213.662	391.396	1.002.195
Alor	68.630	59.580	88.947	239.463	456.620
Lembata	49.586	67.775	89.946	199.086	406.393
Flores Timur	100.068	108.377	157.092	366.375	731.912
Sikka	127.414	170.581	222.925	376.455	897.375

Region	Year				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Ende	148.503	191.497	262.745	436.748	1.039.493
Ngada	94.106	125.230	181.858	317.621	718.815
Manggarai	114.132	135.277	203.269	501.455	954.133
Rote Ndao	75.940	121.294	143.055	171.439	511.728
Manggarai Barat	308.413	454.236	596.683	570.390	1.929.722
Sumba Tengah	51.700	47.762	84.066	101.793	285.321
Sumba Barat Daya	108.772	132.898	203.451	224.721	669.842
Nagekeo	55.318	70.215	122.809	313.839	562.181
Manggarai Timur	117.283	133.515	190.895	343.103	784.796
Sabu Raijua	33.405	46.428	56.519	41.975	178.327
Malaka	149.204	157.565	190.041	296.594	793.404
Kota Kupang	472.708	624.851	770.105	1.032.840	2.900.504
Nusa Tenggara Timur	3.108.815	3.849.353	5.064.324	7.983.247	20.005.739

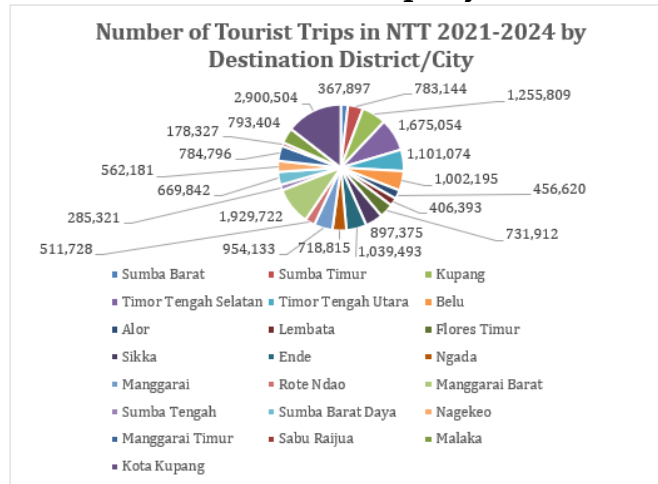
Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS) data, 2021-2024, processed

From Table 1 above, it can be seen that the number of tourists each year from 2021 to 2024 has increased, but the distribution is uneven: regions such as West Manggarai (1,929,722 visits), Kupang City (2,900,504 visits), and South Central Timor (1,675,054 visits) dominate, with West Manggarai alone accounting for approximately 9.6% of total visits. In contrast, regions such as Sabu Raijua (178,327 visits), Central Sumba (285,321 visits), and Southwest Sumba (669,842 visits) receive far fewer visits, despite having attractions such as hidden beaches and cultural sites. For example, Ende (1,039,493 visits) and Ngada (718,815 visits) have the potential of Lake Kelimutu and traditional villages, but their visits only account for about 5-7% of the total. Factors contributing to this inequality include a lack of promotion, limited transportation infrastructure, and the dominance of international tour operators focused on popular destinations such as Labuan Bajo. This has a negative impact on the local economy, with marginalized areas experiencing stagnant income from the tourism sector, while major areas face over-tourism (Lundberg et al., 2020). This community service program is presented as a solution to overcome this problem through an inclusive promotional approach. The following is a pie chart from Table 1 provided.

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Figure 1. Number of Domestic Tourist Trips by District or City Destination



Source: Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), 2021-2024, has been processed

In addition, other districts and cities in East Nusa Tenggara also have a variety of tourist attractions that are officially registered by the local Tourism Office. There are a total of 170 registered tourist attractions in this region, including natural destinations such as beaches and lakes, cultural sites such as traditional villages, and historical attractions that have the potential to be further developed to support sustainable tourism and balance tourist visits in the province. The following table lists the 170 tourist destinations registered by the NTT tourism office.

Table 2. Number of Tourist Attractions in NTT by District or City of Destination

Regency or City	Tourism Theme	Number
Kota Kupang	Alam	2
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Kupang	Alam	12
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Manggarai	Alam	10
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
	Alam	9

Regency or City	Tourism Theme	Number
Kabupaten Timor Tengah Selatan	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Timor Tengah Utara	Alam	10
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Belu	Alam	10
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Malaka	Alam	9
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Sikka	Alam	12
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Ende	Alam	11
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Total		95

Regency or City	Tourism Theme	Number
Kabupaten Manggarai Barat	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Sumba Barat	Alam	8
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Sumba Tengah	Alam	7
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Sumba Timur	Alam	6
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Sabu Raijua	Alam	5
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Kabupaten Rote Ndao	Alam	4
	Sejarah dan Budaya	1
	Religi	1
Total		75

Source : <https://satudatasektoral.nttprov.go.id/pariwisata/>

Therefore, community service related to promotional media for the development of the tourism sector in NTT is very much needed. This service aims to provide broader access to information for potential tourists about various tourist destinations in NTT, so that they have a clearer picture in determining their travel choices. With a more effective promotional strategy, it is hoped that tourist visits can be spread more evenly to various destinations in NTT, not just concentrated in a few popular locations such as Labuan Bajo. In addition, this research can also help tourism industry players in developing tourism products that are more in line with market preferences, so that the competitiveness of the NTT tourism sector can continue to increase amid global competition.

Problem Statement

Based on the above analysis, the specific problem identified is the lack of comprehensive promotional materials for leading attractions in remote areas of NTT. Attractions such as Lasiana Beach in Kupang, which offers beautiful white sand beaches and snorkeling activities, or Lake Kelimutu in Ende, famous for its three-colored lakes, are often overlooked in national tourism campaigns. As a result, domestic and foreign tourists tend to choose well-known destinations, exacerbating economic inequality. This community service program was formulated to develop a catalog book as a promotional tool that can reach a wider audience and encourage visits to other regions (Kotler et al., 2019).

Objectives of the Project

The general objective of this project is to improve and balance tourism in NTT through the development of a tourism catalog book. Specifically, the project aims to:

1. Identify and highlight leading attractions in marginalized areas;
2. Compile a catalog that includes detailed descriptions, interactive maps, high-quality photos, practical information such as transportation and accommodation, and sustainability tips; and
3. Distribute the catalog to increase awareness and tourist visits. These objectives are in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 8 on decent work and economic growth, and number 12 on responsible consumption and production (Organization & Organization, 2016).

Benefits of Community Service

This community service provides multidimensional benefits. For the community, especially in marginalized areas, this catalog can encourage increased income from the tourism sector through diversification of visits, thereby reducing dependence on the main region. For lecturers and the community service team, this activity enhances competence in the field of sustainable tourism and community development. Meanwhile, for the university, this community service strengthens the implementation of the Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi (Three Pillars of Higher Education), especially in community service. More broadly, this community service contributes to national development by promoting inclusive tourism in Eastern Indonesia.

Theoretical Framework

Sustainable Tourism and Destination Development Strategies

Sustainable tourism emphasizes meeting economic, social, and environmental needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, so destination development must consider resource conservation, community involvement, and sustainable governance (Organization & Organization, 2016). In destination development strategies, competitiveness aspects such as attractions, accessibility, facilities, and policies are important factors that must be formulated in an integrated manner (Kovačević, 2018). Studies in the Komodo tourist area also show the importance of carrying capacity management and SWOT analysis in determining the direction of sustainable destination development (Firmansyah, 2023).

Tourism Marketing and Promotional Catalogs

In tourism marketing, integrated marketing communications are necessary to build the image of a destination, attract tourists, and optimize print and digital promotional media (Kotler et al., 2019). An effective tourism catalog must present high-quality visuals,

strong narratives, and practical information that makes it easy for tourists to make decisions (Chatzigeorgiou, 2025). Other supporting research confirms that the integration of print media, digital platforms, and local stakeholder support can increase awareness and intention to visit a destination (Kreatif, 2022).

Case Study: Successful Destination Development

Community-based destination development has proven effective in increasing tourist visits, as in the case of Nglanggeran Tourism Village, which was able to grow through product diversification, community management, and integrated promotion (Iqbal, 2021). A similar case occurred in Pentingsari Tourism Village, where a community-based ecotourism strategy successfully strengthened the village's appeal and tourist visits (Aji, 2024). On a broader scale, the development of Labuan Bajo as a priority destination shows that integrated management based on national policies has a significant impact on increasing visits, although it requires good governance to maintain sustainability (Samo, 2023).

Research Methodology

This community service project uses a participatory action research (PAR) approach, which involves active collaboration between lecturers, students, local communities, and relevant stakeholders. PAR was chosen because it allows for direct community participation in the development process, resulting in more relevant and sustainable outcomes (Bradbury, 2015). The community service team consists of one lecturer as chair, five students as field assistants, and partners from the NTT Tourism Office and tourism community groups in marginalized areas.

Implementation Stages

Survey and Data Collection (May-July 2025): This stage began with a preliminary survey to identify leading attractions. The team conducted in-depth interviews with 50 respondents, including local communities, homestay owners, and tourism operators in Kupang, Ende, and South Central Timor. Questions focused on the potential of the sites, access challenges, and promotional needs. Field observations were conducted to document the condition of the sites, such as measuring water quality in Lake Kelimutu or the cleanliness of Lasiana Beach. Secondary data was obtained from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy and the NTT Statistics Agency for regional context. Tools used included digital questionnaires (Google Forms) and cameras for visual documentation.

Content Development (July-August 2025): Based on survey data, catalog content was developed with a focus on featured attractions. The team compiled narrative descriptions for each attraction, including history, tourism activities, and cultural value. Emphasis was placed on sustainability aspects, such as tips for reducing plastic waste or supporting the local economy. The content also includes interactive maps created using software such as ArcGIS, as well as photos taken during the survey. This process involved validation from local partners to ensure accuracy.

Design and Production (August-September 2025): The catalog design was carried out by a professional graphic designer collaborator, with input from students for visually appealing elements. The catalog is designed in A4 format, with 136 pages, using Indonesian and English to reach international tourists. Production includes printing 100 physical copies and a digital version (PDF) that can be downloaded for free. The

community service budget, which comes from university funds, is used for printing and distribution costs.

Socialization and Distribution (October-November 2025): The catalog book is submitted to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy as a medium for promotion and distribution. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy will use this catalog for NTT tourism promotion campaigns, including distribution to tourism stakeholders, communities, and potential tourists through their official channels.

The main locations for the outreach are districts outside West Manggarai, such as Kupang, Ende, Ngada, and South Central Timor, with the implementation period from January to August 2023. The ethics of the outreach are ensured through informed consent from all participants and respect for local customs.

Result and Discussion

The main outcome of this community service project is a tourism catalog titled “The Guide Book of Tourism Nusa Wanderlust,” which was compiled through a collaborative process between the community service team, local governments, local tourism stakeholders, and the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf RI) as the main partner in content validation and distribution strategy.

This catalog features at least 5 leading tourist attractions in each district and city in NTT, especially those that are marginalized, such as Kupang, Ende, Ngada, and South Central Timor. Each attraction is presented with:

1. A descriptive narrative (history, culture, and attractions),
2. High-resolution photos taken during field surveys,
3. Maps and accessibility information,
4. Recommended activities,
5. As well as sustainability tips based on local wisdom.

The catalog book is organized according to the four main chapters of the original manuscript, but reinforced with insights on sustainable tourism tailored to the destination promotion standards of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy.

In terms of production, 100 physical copies of the catalog were printed, while the digital version was uploaded and distributed through the official channels of the university, local partners, and the tourism office network. Distribution to tourism stakeholders was carried out after a joint socialization process with the tourism office regarding the use of the catalog as part of a more equitable promotion of NTT destinations.

Impact of Community Service

The impact of this community service was evaluated through two categories: short-term direct impact and medium- to long-term objective impact.

1. Direct Impact (Short-Term Impact)

The short-term impact that can be measured during the service period includes:

- a. Increased destination literacy among 200 tourism operators who received the catalog, as evidenced by a perception survey.
- b. Strengthening of the promotional network between the university, local communities, and tourism agencies as strategic partners.
- c. Improved quality of destination information in marginalized areas through the provision of photos, maps, and narratives that can be reused by regional tourism agencies.

- d. A brief survey conducted among tourism practitioners showed that the majority of respondents considered the catalog useful in helping them convey destination information to tourists.
2. Medium- to Long-Term Objective Impact
The objective impact of this community service cannot be quantitatively concluded in the year of implementation because increases or changes in tourist visits will only be reflected in:
 1. Official statistics from the NTT Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in the following year,
 2. Annual reports from provincial/district tourism agencies, and
 3. visitor trends based on big data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (e.g., movements through official government applications and digital platforms).
 4. Objective impact indicators to be analyzed in the coming years include:
 5. Changes in the distribution of tourist visits in the districts and cities that are the focus of the catalog,
 6. Increased local economic flow, especially in tourism MSMEs (homestays, culinary, local transportation),
 7. Diversification of destinations promoted by industry players, including travel agents and tour providers.

Thus, this catalog serves as an initial instrument that opens access to information, while the real impact on tourist movements will be seen when the official annual data is published.

Challenges and Solutions

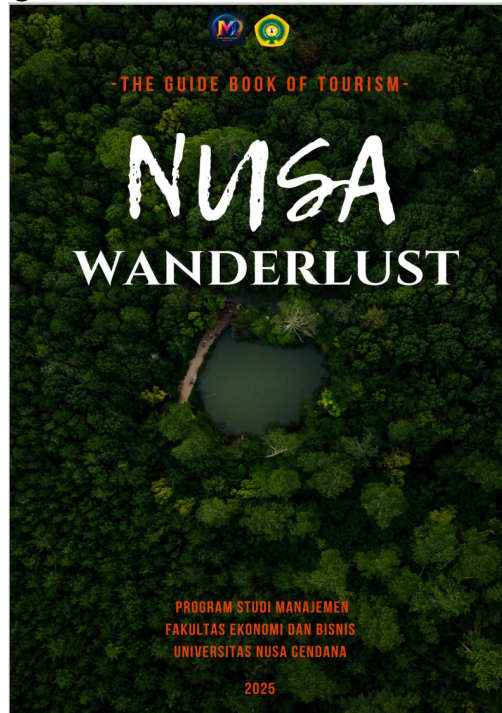
The main challenge during the service was limited road access in remote areas, such as in South Central Timor, which made field surveys difficult. The solution was to collaborate with local transportation and reschedule activities. Another challenge was the lack of accurate data on objects, which was overcome through cross-verification with secondary sources. Despite production delays due to several revisions, the team managed to complete the project on time with the support of the university.

Photos of Activities and Book Covers

Figure 2 Discussion and Cooperation with the East Nusa Tenggara Provincial Tourism Office



Figure 3 Nusa Wanderlust Book Cover



Book Link :

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1heXCgJGm7FH8hARBDqUeoEnLmMVPZXPB/view?usp=sharing>

Conclusion

This community service project successfully developed a tourism catalog highlighting leading attractions in remote areas of NTT, supporting a balance between tourist visits and inclusive economic development. Key achievements include the production of a comprehensive catalog, effective distribution, and a positive impact on public awareness. Reflections from this community service project highlight the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration in addressing tourism inequality. Recommendations for further development include integrating the catalog with a mobile application for real-time promotion, evaluating long-term impact through longitudinal studies, and expanding to other regions in Eastern Indonesia. Overall, this community service project strengthens the role of higher education institutions in sustainable development.

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