

case 4

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Locals' participation and halal tourism: Lombok

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Summary: This chapter discusses the development of tourism in Lombok. It discusses four different development phases and indicates the key factors for creating a socially sustainable tourism destination.

Key words:

- Authenticity
- Halal tourism
- Community participation
- Masterplan

Key message:

- The value system and religious beliefs of residents have a vital impact on tourism development.
- Local communities will participate voluntarily and support tourism when they know that it will benefit them economically and promote their identity

1.1 Introduction

The indigenous "Sasak" people of Lombok are mainly Muslim and, their beliefs characterise Lombok as "a thousand-mosque island". Lombok is well known as a backpacker destination and the Indonesian Government identified the island for tourism development around 1979. Lombok was seen as suitable for tourism investment as it is geographically and culturally close to Bali. The first phase of development began in 1986 with the development of a number of star-rated hotels. The tourism industry experienced a first phase of significant tourism growth between 1986 and 1999.

However, few of the island's indigenous people participated in this tourism development for two main reasons^{1 2}. Firstly, local communities perceived tourism as disadvantageous to the local society and economy³. Residents stereotyped tourists as people with unfavourable attitudes and behaviours towards local beliefs and culture. Tourists' hedonic and permissive attitudes and behaviours were viewed negatively².

Secondly, local people lacked the knowledge and skills to work in the sector or start a tourism business. For example, the first star-rated resort hotel built in Senggigi employed only a few locals in low level jobs, such as security guards, gardeners, and drivers. People other islands such as Bali and Java with better knowledge and skills were employed in higher-level jobs⁴. Few of the new small tourism enterprises such as restaurants and souvenir shops were locally owned. The end of the Suharto⁵ regime in 1997 created chaotic socio-political conditions and uncomfortable environment of tourism industry.

The influx of these non-local tourism players and other factors triggered social tensions between the local and non-local people. This tension reached boiling point in 2000 and sparked a riot. Tourism infrastructure was vandalised and all tourists were evacuated⁶, leading to a second phase of tourism development (2000–2005) characterised by declining tourist visitation to Lombok and a deteriorating tourism business environment.

During this second phase, many non-local investors left, tourism projects were delayed and employees lost their jobs¹. Many local enterprises, including building material shops and property developers only indirectly linked with tourism, lost money or closed.

This downturn led to a change in local people's attitudes towards tourism as they personally experienced the reduction in the multiplier effect of tourist activities. Residents began to recognise the importance of tourism to Lombok's economy³.

¹Fallon, F. (2003). After the Lombok riots, is sustainable tourism achieved? In C. M. Hall, D. J. Timothy and D. Duval (Eds.), *Safety and security in tourism: relationships, management, and marketing*. Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Hospitality Press, pp. 139-158.

²Saufi, A., O'Brien, D., and Wilkins, H. (2014). Inhibitors to host community participations in tourism development in developing countries. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, volume 22, issue 5, pp. 801-820.

³Saufi, A. (2013). *Understanding host community's experiences in establishing and developing small tourism enterprises in Lombok, Indonesia*. Ph. D thesis, Griffith University, Australia.

⁴Widiani, H. B. T., Rosidi, M., Surenggana, M. M. D., and Putus, L. A. (1997). *Dampak Pengembangan Pariwisata terhadap Kehidupan Sosial di Daerah Nusa Tenggara Barat*. Mataram: Favorit

⁵Suharto was Indonesia's second President.

⁶Fallon, F. (2001). Conflict, power and tourism on Lombok. *Current Issues in Tourism*, volume 4, issue 6, pp. 481 - 502.

4.2 Revival phase

A revival of tourism in Lombok began in 2006, stimulated by increased stability in Indonesian socio-economic and political conditions, and the decision that the island would become an international destination, with international airlines landing therefrom 2011.

Nevertheless, challenges remained. Firstly, government tourism organizations performed poorly, and lacked support from the private sector and the local community¹²⁷. Secondly, the religious community, particularly the *Imams* or Islamic scholars did not support tourism. The Lombok culture is paternalistic, and the people are obedient to the *Imam's fatwa* (call or order to do something for the sake of God). A *fatwa* is considered more powerful than the state regulation. Therefore, the religious leaders play important roles in the success of tourism development in Lombok. Third, Lombok required a vision for development. Tourism stakeholders began to realise the importance of a sustainable tourism development masterplan as a basis for collaboration and synergy amongst stakeholders. This masterplan needed to consider not only economic matters but also the sustainability of socio-cultural and environmental systems.

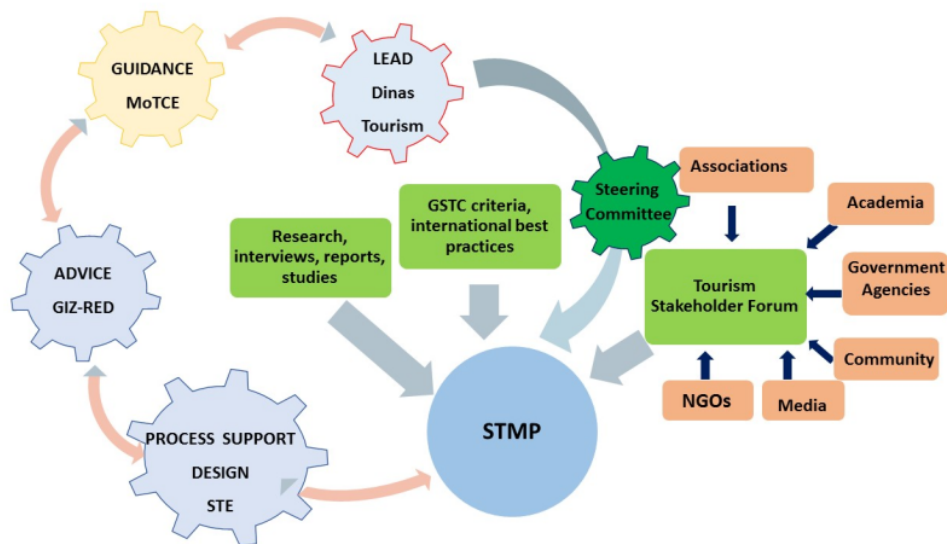
4.3 Planning (knowledge)-based phase

In 2014, Lombok developed its first Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (STMP) for 2015-2019, assisted by GIZ (a German organization that provides assistance for tourism development). The majority of tourism stakeholders, including local community representatives, tourism NGOs, researchers, private sector businesses, and governmental departments related to tourism, were involved of the STMP. The STMP follows the principles of sustainable tourism as formulated by Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)⁸ (Saufi et al., 2015). The process used for preparing the STMP is illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 4.1: Lombok Sustainable Tourism Master Plan Process

⁷Schellhom, M. (2010). Development for whom? Social justice and the business of ecotourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, volume 18, issue 1, pp. 115-135.

⁸Saufi, A., Teguh, F., Ristanto, H., Prayitno, B., Oehms, O., Vltriani, D., Creutz, S., and Nuzullay, B. H. (2015). *Sustainable Tourism Master Plan of Lombok 2015-2019*, GIZ-SREGIP: Jakarta.



The first step in the STMP process was to form a steering committee consisting of representatives of all tourism stakeholders. The committee's tasks were to provide secondary data, suggestions, and evaluation of the final STMP. The committee also provided recommendation to the Provincial Governor concerning authorisation and implementation of the STMP. Data was collected through focus group discussions (FGD) in five regions and one municipality, from April to September 2014⁸.

The vision for sustainable tourism development was determined as: "*Lombok is to be a sustainable, competitive, and nature and culture-based tourist destination*". Development focused on four pillars. (1) A destination that is fully supported by local communities, unique, clean, locally based, environmentally based, safe and comfortable. (2) Promotion strategies to increase the quality of tourist visitation, the positive image, and sense of dignity of Lombok tourism. (3) Tourism personnel and organizations that are professional, competitive, supportive, and collaborative. (4) A business environment that stimulates the creation of innovative and unique tourism products and services, the implementation of sustainable tourism principles, and the emergence of local tourism entrepreneurs⁸.

One of strategies of the STMP is to increase local participation by adopting local wisdom⁸ which means developing *halal tourism* products. Lombok residents practice *halal* activities when processing and making foods and drinks. Development of *halal tourism* is seen as a new form of local participation in sustainable tourism development.

4.4 Halal tourism as induced participation

Lombok was recognised as the world's best *halal* tourist destination by the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in 2015 and 2016, despite the lack of *halal* tourism infrastructure, such as *halal-certified hotels and restaurants*. This award increased locals' confidence in tourism. Local government issued a decree in 2015 established Lombok as the first *halal* tourist destination in Indonesia.

Local communities campaigned for *halal tourism* involving *imams* through focus group discussions, workshops, and religious forums. A religious forum is an informal schooling system where local people study Islamic teachings from an *imam* or cleric, and is an effective means to communicate to grassroots community members. *Halal tourism* is, then, seen by local communities as an opportunity to benefit from tourism and promote Lombok to tourists based on Islamic teaching. The development of *halal* certification signifies the acceptability of products and services and has increased locals' confidence in tourism.

Halal tourism may be considered an implementation of Lombok's tradition of *ngayo*: visiting family members, neighbours, friends, and other community members to strengthen and maintain relationships³. *Ngayo* is the way Lombok people practice Islamic values by building solidarity, developing honesty and understanding other people. *Ngayo*, in a *halal* tourism context, is serving tourists with hospitality and honesty. In other words, *halal tourism* is a product demonstrating the inner characteristics of the Lombok people, and not a product created to satisfy market demand.

Lombok experienced an increase in visitors of nearly 40% in 2016⁹. Halal tourism attracted new market segments. In 2016, 1019 Middle East tourists arrived in Lombok.

4.5 Conclusion

Lombok provides a successful case study of community participation in tourism development. This success occurred only after the community understood the tourism's multiplier effect, locals were able to participate in businesses, government empowered and involved local communities, creating collaboration with private sector stakeholders and developed professional personnel. The development of the tourism master plan provided a reference point and guidelines for action towards sustainable tourism development. The development of halal tourism attracted the full support from local communities. The essence of halal tourism for Lombok is "*local identity*". In other words, local communities will participate voluntarily and support tourism when they know that it will benefit them economically and promote their identity.

⁹Disbudpar NTB. (2016). *Statistik Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat 2016*: Disbudpar NTB.

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