



# Development of Coastal Ecotourism MSMEs through Puger Beach Destination Management Training

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**Abstract:** This community service program aims to strengthen coastal micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and ecotourism development at Puger Beach, Jember Regency, Indonesia. Puger is a traditional fishing hub with growing ecotourism potential, yet it faces constraints in destination management, product innovation, digital marketing, and stakeholder coordination. Using a participatory approach, the program involved 40 purposively selected MSMEs (fish cuisine, tourist boats, beach stalls, and handicrafts) through stages of needs assessment, training, mentoring, and evaluation. Training modules covered coastal destination management, service quality, branding, and digital promotion, followed by intensive on-site mentoring and collaborative development of promotional media. Pre- and post-intervention data were collected using questionnaires, observation, and interviews. The results show improved MSME capacities in arranging business spaces, applying basic hospitality standards, and utilising social media for promotion. Tourism boat providers and food vendors reported higher visitor numbers and short-term income growth, while handicraft producers began to reposition their products for tourism markets. The program also stimulated cleaner environmental practices and stronger collaboration between MSMEs, local leaders, and village government. These findings indicate that community-based destination management training can be an effective strategy for enhancing local economic resilience while supporting sustainable coastal ecotourism.

**Keywords:** Coastal Ecotourism, Community Service, Destination Management Training, MSMEs, Puger Beach.

## Introduction

Puger Beach in Jember Regency is one of the coastal areas that has considerable economic, social, and ecological potential (BPS, 2024; Suharto & Kholifah, 2020). For a long time, this area has been known as a center of traditional fishing, a harbor for fishing boats, and a hub of interaction among coastal communities (Adiningsih et al., 2023). The abundant marine resources, combined with the activities at the Puger Fish Auction Place or TPI, daily fish auctions, and the distinctive traditions of the fishing community, make this area not only economically important but also endowed with cultural and tourism appeal, with high potential for further development (Artanti et al., 2022).

In recent years, ecotourism has begun to emerge in the Puger area. The increasing number of tourist visits, both from residents and visitors from other regions, has been followed by the growth of various micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) around the coastal area (Malik et al., 2024). These MSMEs operate in various sectors, including seafood-based culinary businesses, tourist boat rental services, beach food stalls, fresh fish sales, processed fish products, handicrafts based on coastal resources, and recreational equipment rentals (Mardiah et al., 2024; Nisa & Misidawati, 2024; Rohmawati et al., 2019). The presence of these MSMEs drives the local economy, improving income among coastal communities (Puspita et al., 2022).

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However, this great potential has not yet been fully optimized. In the field, various problems still hinder the development of ecotourism and the strengthening of coastal MSMEs (Puji et al., 2018). In terms of destination management, most business actors and tourism managers still apply simple management patterns without comprehensive destination planning (Suhrowardi et al., 2024). Aspects such as service quality, spatial arrangement, cleanliness, and environmental management are not yet handled professionally, thereby reducing the attractiveness of the tourism destination (Soekiman et al., 2018). On the other hand, marketing and branding strategies also remain weak. The use of digital media, online promotion, and the packaging of tourism narratives has not been optimally utilized, so Puger ecotourism is not widely known and remains less competitive than other coastal destinations (Ningrum, 2017).

Another equally important issue is the lack of innovation in products and services. Many MSMEs still offer conventional products without differentiation, making it difficult for them to compete amid tourists' growing preference for creative products and unique tourism experiences. In addition, synergy among MSME actors, village government, and tourism-awareness groups (pokdarwis) has not yet been firmly established (Wahyudiono et al., 2018). Weak coordination has led to the absence of an integrated collaboration network that can position Puger Beach as a flagship ecotourism destination with added economic, social, and ecological value (Suswandi, 2017).

This condition indicates that strengthening the capacity of coastal communities, particularly MSME actors and tourism-awareness groups, is an urgent need (Izzati & Watemin, 2025). Systematic efforts through a Community Service Program are required to improve destination management capabilities, tourism service quality, marketing strategies, and product innovation based on local potential (Saputra et al., 2024). Through this Community Service activity, it is expected that coastal MSMEs in Puger will be able to manage their tourism businesses more professionally, broaden their understanding of sustainable ecotourism concepts, and increase coastal economic income (Ariyunita et al., 2021).

Furthermore, this capacity strengthening is expected to support the development of Puger Beach's tourism branding as an environmentally friendly, economically valuable, and competitive ecotourism destination. The scope of activities includes education, training, business development assistance, and evaluation, all of which focus on MSME actors and tourism-awareness groups. Thus, this Community Service program is not only focused on improving technical skills but also on building collective awareness among coastal communities to preserve the

environment while sustainably utilizing existing potential.

## Method

### *Approach of the Program*

This Community Service Program uses a participatory approach, positioning the community as the main subject at every stage of the activity. This approach was chosen because the development of ecotourism-based MSMEs in coastal areas requires full involvement from local business actors, community leaders, fishermen groups, and tourism managers at Puger Beach. The community is not merely positioned as an object or recipient of the program, but as a partner involved in the processes of problem identification, solution formulation, implementation, and evaluation. In this way, the changes produced are expected to be more sustainable, context-specific, and aligned with actual field needs (Amanah & Fatchiya, 2018; Elpisah, 2023).

### *Location and Subjects of the Program*

The community service activities are carried out in the coastal area of Puger Beach, Jember Regency, which is a center of traditional fishing activities and ecotourism development. The program's subjects include coastal MSME actors (fish processors, culinary vendors, tourism service providers, and artisans), Puger Beach tourism managers, fishermen's groups, as well as community leaders and representatives of tourism-awareness groups. The selection of these subjects is based on their strategic role as key drivers of economic and tourism activities in the Puger area, as well as on their being among the most affected by ecotourism development.

### *Stages of Program Implementation*

#### 1. Problem and Needs Identification (Needs Assessment)

The initial stage of the program begins with problem and needs identification through field observations, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with MSME actors and tourism managers. Observations are conducted in the main areas of tourism and MSME activities around Puger Beach to map the destination's existing conditions, business space layouts, patterns of tourism services, and environmental and waste management. In-depth interviews are conducted with selected MSME representatives, fishermen, and tourism managers to explore the challenges they face, including limited knowledge of destination management, a lack of digital marketing skills, an absence of a strong destination brand identity, and issues related to cleanliness and environmental management. The

results of this needs assessment are then used to design training materials and mentoring strategies relevant to the local context.

## 2. Preparation of Training Materials

Based on the needs assessment results, the community service team prepares training materials in simple modules that are easy for the community to understand. The materials include concepts of coastal destination management based on ecotourism, development of value-added MSME products, basic techniques of digital marketing (use of social media, product photography, and destination storytelling), tourism service management (standard operating procedures, cleanliness, safety, and visitor comfort), as well as principles of sustainable and eco-friendly business for MSME actors. The preparation of materials takes into account participants' backgrounds, so that the language, case examples, and illustrations are adjusted to their daily realities.

## 3. Implementation of Training and Workshops

The training and workshops are conducted face-to-face at locations that are easily accessible to MSME actors and coastal communities. The methods used include interactive lectures to deliver basic concepts, case studies drawn from actual experiences at Puger Beach, group discussions to formulate solutions, and hands-on practice jointly. In the coastal destination management workshop, participants are invited to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their own destination. In the digital content training sessions, participants practice taking product photos, writing promotional captions, and managing simple social media business accounts. Service simulation sessions are conducted by rearranging MSME business spaces and practicing receiving, serving, and closing interactions with visitors in a friendly and professional manner. This experiential learning approach is expected to help participants more easily understand and internalize the material.

## 4. Mentoring and Implementation

After the training, activities continue with a mentoring phase to ensure that the materials obtained can be implemented in daily business practices. Mentoring is conducted through periodic field visits and weekly mentoring sessions. The community service team assists MSME actors in improving product packaging to make it more attractive and in designing simple digital marketing strategies, such as creating business accounts, developing posting schedules, and producing short photo or video content. For tourism managers, guidance is provided on drafting SOPs for tourism services that address cleanliness, safety, and visitor comfort. At this stage, the formation of an initial or mini tourism-awareness group (pokdarwis) is also

facilitated as an early driver of coordination and collaboration among tourism actors at Puger Beach.

## 5. Development of Destination Promotional Media

As one of the program outputs, the community service team, together with the community, develops destination promotional media to increase the visibility of Puger Beach as a coastal ecotourism site. This process includes designing digital and printed brochures, taking photos and videos for destination profiles, preparing social media content that showcases MSME activities and the uniqueness of Puger tourism, and designing a destination logo as an initial visual identity. The production of promotional media is carried out collaboratively: the community is involved, from exploring local narratives and determining key promotional messages to managing social media accounts. In this way, it is expected that after the program ends, the community will have the capacity to continue and further develop promotional activities independently.

## 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is conducted throughout the mentoring process to observe changes in behavior, skills, and business practices among MSMEs. The community service team records progress in implementing training materials, including changes in product packaging appearance, activity levels in digital promotions, business space arrangements, and improvements in tourism services. The final evaluation is conducted through participant interviews, self-assessment forms, and comparisons of digital marketing capabilities before and after the activities. In addition, an analysis is conducted of the program's potential sustainability, local institutional support, and opportunities for further program development. The results of monitoring and evaluation serve as the primary basis for preparing the community service report and formulating recommendations to strengthen ecotourism and coastal MSMEs at Puger Beach in the following stages.

# Result and Discussion

The implementation of the Community Service Program in the coastal area of Puger Beach took place over several months using an intensive mentoring approach based on community participation. This activity involved various target groups that are key components of the ecotourism MSME ecosystem, namely fish-based culinary entrepreneurs, tourist boat service providers, beach stall vendors, seafood sellers, artisans, and fishermen's groups that act as local



partners in providing tourism attractions based on traditional fishing culture.



**Figure 1.** Overview of Puger Kulon Village

At the initial stage, the community service team conducted social mapping to understand the community's current conditions and challenges. This process included direct field observations and brief interviews with local stakeholders, including neighborhood heads, fishing leaders, tourism managers, and several MSME owners. The initial mapping revealed that most business actors at Puger Beach had been running their businesses for generations but still relied on conventional methods that did not yet fully follow modern tourism service standards. In addition, although some MSMEs have strong potential, these advantages have not yet been fully leveraged to create strong tourism attractions.



**Figure 2.** Overview of Puger Community Activities

Subsequently, the community service team determined the sample group for pre- and post-intervention analysis. The sample was selected purposively based on the following criteria:

- 1) Active business actors for at least one year,
- 2) Located around the Puger Beach tourism area, and
- 3) Willing to participate in training and mentoring.

Through this process, 40 MSMEs were selected as core participants, consisting of 15 fish culinary businesses, 10 tourist boat service providers, 8 beach stall vendors, and 7 artisans. This number is considered

sufficiently representative to describe the characteristics of coastal MSMEs at Puger Beach.

To describe the initial situation (pre-intervention), the team collected data using a simple questionnaire that covered digital skills, product quality, daily tourist visits, monthly income, and visitor satisfaction with MSME services. Field observations regarding cleanliness conditions, business space layout, and food hygiene standards complemented the questionnaire. The quantitative data were then enriched with in-depth interviews to explore community motivation, operational constraints, and their expectations of the program.

Throughout implementation, the program focused not only on face-to-face training but also on continuous mentoring. The community service team divided the activities into several sessions, including coastal destination management workshops, product photography and digital content creation training, tourism service simulations, and branding identity development for Puger Beach. Each training session was followed by hands-on field practice, including improving the layout of beach stalls, demonstrating packaging techniques for culinary products, and creating visual content for digital promotion.

After the training series was completed, the community service team conducted a structured mentoring process over three weeks. At this stage, MSME actors were monitored for their progress in applying the training materials. For example, culinary entrepreneurs were asked to improve the cleanliness of their cooking areas, while tourist boat providers were encouraged to prepare safety SOPs for visitors. Monitoring was conducted through field visits, small group discussions, and direct communication via the Puger MSME WhatsApp group.



**Figure 3.** Overview of Puger Community Activities

For post-intervention evaluation, the team again collected data using the same instruments as in the pre-intervention phase. Data collection was carried out to assess:

- 1) The increase in MSME income,
- 2) The number of tourist visits,

- 3) Visitor satisfaction levels with services,
- 4) The ability of MSME actors to utilize digital media, and
- 5) The sustainability level of destination management practices that had been introduced.



Figure 4. Overview of Puger Community Activities

These data were then analyzed comparatively to identify changes that occurred after the implementation of the community service program. The results of this analysis became the basis for formulating the program's achievement indicators in the subsequent section.

Overall, the community service activities ran smoothly, received community support, and produced sufficiently rich data from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. Thus, this general overview of implementation provides a strong foundation for understanding the program's comprehensive impact, as described in the following sub-chapters.

Table 1. MSME Data in Puger

Year	Number of MSMEs
2021	45
2022	52
2023	60
2024	73

Table 1 shows that the number of coastal MSMEs in Puger Beach has experienced a consistent upward trend throughout the 2021–2024 period. In 2021, there were around 45 MSMEs, then increased to 52 units in 2022, 60 units in 2023, and reached approximately 73 units in 2024. The sharpest increase occurred in the 2023–2024 period, indicating the strengthening of local economic dynamics, in line with the development of ecotourism activities and various interventions, including assistance, training, and capacity-building for business actors, carried out through community service programs and other initiatives. This increase not only reflects the growing number of new business actors but also shows that the business climate in the Puger coastal area is becoming more conducive, attracting people to develop businesses based on local resources,

particularly in the culinary, tourism services, and handicraft sectors.

Table 2. Average Income Data for Coastal MSMEs

No	Category	Income (IDR/ Month)
1	Fish Cuisine	18
2	Tourist Boats	25
3	Handicrafts	12
4	Beach Stalls	20

Table 2 shows variations in income among coastal MSME categories in Puger Beach. Tourism boat providers rank highest, with an average monthly income of around Rp25 million, indicating that marine tourism services have the most significant economic appeal as tourist visits increase. Below that, beach stalls recorded income of around IDR 20 million per month, followed by fish cuisine at around IDR 18 million per month, indicating that the direct consumption sector remains an important pillar of the local economy. Meanwhile, craft MSMEs have the lowest relative income, around IDR 12 million per month, which indicates the need for stronger design innovation, improved product quality, and more aggressive marketing strategies so that coastal resource-based crafts can contribute more to the community's economy. Overall, this pattern confirms that the development of integrated ecotourism packages combining tourist boat services, culinary offerings, beach stalls, and crafts has the potential to strengthen economic added value for all coastal SME actors.

Conclusion

The Community Service Program themed "Development of Coastal Ecotourism MSMEs through Destination Management Training at Puger Beach," has enhanced the capacity of MSME actors, strengthened destination governance, encouraged the use of digital technology, and generated initial impacts in the form of increased tourist visits and business income, while also fostering collaboration between MSMEs, the community, village government, and academics. Going forward, the development of Puger Beach as an MSME-based ecotourism destination needs to be supported by continuous follow-up training (financial management, integrated tour packages, and creative digital content), improvement of tourism facilities and infrastructure, stronger and more distinctive branding and visual identity, implementation of community-based environmental governance, strategic partnerships with government and industry, and regular monitoring of MSME economic growth and capacity so that the benefits of the program can be maintained and continue to expand for the local community.



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