

Community-Based Housekeeping Training for Women: Supporting Homestay Development in Desa Wisata Pintukota Kecil

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Received: 21 Mei 2025; Revised: 11 Oktober 2025; Accepted: 12 November 2025

Abstract

This community service program was designed to address the knowledge gap in hospitality and accommodation management among women in Desa Wisata Pintukota Kecil, a small island-based community based tourism destination in Lembeh Island, Bitung Municipality, North Sulawesi. As part of the community's recovery following a flood and landslide disaster in April 2024, the training aimed to equip local women with basic housekeeping knowledge to support homestay development and community-based tourism in a desa wisata. The activity was conducted on October 19, 2024, with 25 women participants. The method involved lectures and demonstrations focused on cleaning procedures, linen management, guest handling, and hygiene standards. Pretest and posttest evaluations using 15 multiple-choice questions revealed significant improvement in participants' knowledge. Scores increased from 30–60% in the pretest to 88–100% in the posttest. The results show that the delivery method was effective and the training content was appropriate to the participants' context and needs. Women were identified as key actors in the potential growth of homestay-based tourism in the village. This initiative illustrates how targeted training can contribute to sustainable community empowerment and readiness for tourism engagement.

Keywords: community-based tourism; desa wisata; housekeeping; homestay

Abstrak

Program pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini dirancang untuk menjawab kesenjangan pengetahuan dalam manajemen hospitality dan akomodasi di kalangan perempuan di Desa Wisata Pintukota Kecil, sebuah destinasi wisata berbasis komunitas yang terletak di Pulau Lembeh, Kota Bitung, Provinsi Sulawesi Utara. Sebagai bagian dari proses pemulihan masyarakat pascabencana banjir dan tanah longsor pada April 2024, pelatihan ini bertujuan untuk membekali perempuan lokal dengan pengetahuan dasar tata graha guna mendukung pengembangan homestay dan pariwisata berbasis masyarakat di desa wisata. Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan pada tanggal 19 Oktober 2024 dengan jumlah peserta sebanyak 25 orang perempuan. Metode pelatihan mencakup ceramah dan demonstrasi yang berfokus pada prosedur pembersihan, pengelolaan linen, penanganan tamu, dan standar kebersihan. Evaluasi pretest dan posttest yang menggunakan 15 pertanyaan pilihan ganda menunjukkan peningkatan pengetahuan peserta yang signifikan. Skor meningkat dari 30–60% pada pretest menjadi 88–100% pada posttest. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa metode penyampaian pelatihan efektif dan materi yang disampaikan sesuai dengan konteks serta kebutuhan peserta. Perempuan diidentifikasi sebagai aktor kunci dalam potensi pertumbuhan pariwisata berbasis homestay di desa tersebut. Inisiatif ini menunjukkan bahwa pelatihan yang tepat sasaran dapat berkontribusi

pada pemberdayaan masyarakat secara berkelanjutan dan kesiapan dalam keterlibatan pariwisata.

Kata Kunci: desa wisata; pondok wisata; tata graha; wisata berbasis masyarakat

A. INTRODUCTION

Desa Wisata Pintukota Kecil in Figure 1, located on Lembeh Island in Bitung municipality, North Sulawesi, represents one of Indonesia's many community-based tourism initiatives aimed at promoting local economic development through the sustainable use of cultural and natural resources (Lumataw & Pesik, 2023). Its geographical setting offers remarkable tourism appeal: coral reef ecosystems ideal for snorkeling and diving, forest trails, traditional fishing practices, and a peaceful rural lifestyle that aligns well with the expectations of experiential and ecotourism markets (Pongtuluran & Rompas, 2023; Sigo et al., 2023). As part of Bitung's broader tourism strategy, this *desa wisata* has been identified as a prominent location for fostering inclusive growth through community based tourism, particularly in the post-pandemic and post-disaster recovery period (Lumataw & Pesik, 2023).



Figure 1. *Desa Wisata* Pintukota Kecil

However, despite the appeal of its surroundings, tourism products and the cultural authenticity it offers, the tourism infrastructure and human resources in Pintukota Kecil remain limited. Accessibility is one of the most fundamental constraints. The village is situated on a small island separated from the Sulawesi's mainland, and transport depends largely on small passenger boats crossing from the port of Bitung (Sigo et al., 2023). This logistical isolation makes it difficult to transport goods, manage supplies, and attract consistent visitor flows. Furthermore, many homestay operators are

informal, home-based hosts who have never received training or exposure to hospitality standards. As a result, services provided in local accommodations are often inconsistent and lack the professionalism expected in rural tourism settings.

A deeper look into homestay operations in Pintukota Kecil reveals more specific challenges. There is little understanding of the basic principles of hospitality, particularly housekeeping, which is one of the most visible indicators of service quality for guests (Hidajat & Mansur, 2024; Prastowo, 2022). The absence of structured cleaning routines, unclear roles in guest preparation, and poor management of sanitation can contribute to guest discomfort and potentially negative perceptions of the village's readiness. Moreover, many hosts are unaware of basic housekeeping practices especially the ones related to hygiene and sanitation. These reflect an underlying lack of knowledge about the role of cleanliness and order in delivering a satisfying hospitality experience.

Another pressing issue is the misconception surrounding the homestay model itself. Some community members believe that to operate a homestay, one must build a physically separate structure exclusively for guests. This misunderstanding creates psychological and financial barriers for local residents who otherwise could engage in tourism using the homes they already occupy. In reality, the defining aspect of a homestay—especially in the context of a *desa wisata*—is not architectural separation, but the cultural immersion that occurs when visitors share space with host families (Sofiani et al., 2024; Sudarmayasa et al., 2020; Wiguna et al., 2018; Yulius, 2023). Addressing this misperception is essential not only to increase local participation in the tourism economy, but also to preserve the community-based essence of the *desa wisata* concept.

Compounding these human resource constraints is the lack of clear operating procedures or guidelines for homestay operations. Hosts typically rely on personal intuition or past experiences rather than established standards for preparing rooms, welcoming guests, or managing post-stay cleaning. In the absence of operational frameworks, service delivery becomes fragmented and highly variable (Inyo & Githii, 2022; Roganović et al., 2019; Zhong et al., 2025). This inconsistency affects not only guest satisfaction, but also the ability of the community to promote itself collectively as a reliable destination. Without a foundation of shared knowledge and practices, even the most promising *desa wisata* risks stagnation.

To respond to these challenges, the Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism at Universitas Pelita Harapan designed a basic housekeeping training program specifically for the context of Desa Wisata Pintukota Kecil. Unlike formal vocational certification, this community service initiative focused on introducing foundational skills and concepts in an accessible, practice-oriented format. The training included lecture and basic housekeeping skill demonstration. The curriculum also included discussions on the values of hospitality, the importance of guest comfort, and the cultural significance of cleanliness and order as forms of respect and care for visitors.

This training served as both a skills intervention and a community awareness effort. By clarifying the purpose and flexibility of the homestay model, it encouraged broader participation among residents, particularly women who often assume responsibility for home-based services. The emphasis on housekeeping was not only technical, but also strategic—it addressed the most immediate and visible indicator of quality in homestay operations (Cahyaningsih et al., 2023). In doing so, the initiative laid the groundwork for a more organized, confident, and hospitality-aware community capable of strengthening its position in Bitung and North Sulawesi's growing tourism landscape.

B. IMPLEMENTATION & METHODS

This training program is designed to provide participants with basic understanding and practical skills by combining lectures and demonstrations. This combination optimizes learning effectiveness, allowing participants to grasp theoretical concepts and directly apply them in practice.

Lectures will deliver fundamental concepts and principles of housekeeping management (Dietrich & Evans, 2022). A housekeeping lecturer from Pelita Harapan University will lead this session, emphasizing the importance of housekeeping in accommodation operations and key management techniques.

Demonstrations will provide visual examples of applying housekeeping concepts in daily practice (Maričić et al., 2019). The instructor will show effective cleaning techniques, room maintenance, and linen management, enabling participants to observe correct procedures firsthand.

The training implementation is structured into three systematic phases:

Pre-event Phase

1. Participant Identification: Participants were selected from among guesthouse owners and managers in *Pintukota Kecil Village*, who are directly involved in the day-to-day operations of their accommodations.

2. Training Material Preparation: The training materials were developed to cover essential housekeeping principles, accommodation management techniques, and best practices in the hospitality industry, adapted to the local context and participant needs.

3. Facility Preparation: Classrooms were arranged, and all necessary equipment—including presentation tools and housekeeping demonstration kits—were prepared to ensure smooth training delivery.

4. Event Promotion: The training program was promoted intensively through local networks, posters, social media, and word-of-mouth among hospitality stakeholders in

the village to ensure maximum participation.

Event Phase

1. **Training Execution:** The training was carried out over a defined schedule using a blended approach of lectures, visual demonstrations, and hands-on practice to reinforce both knowledge and practical skills.
2. **Use of Training Modules:** Participants received comprehensive training modules containing illustrations, case studies, and step-by-step guides designed to support independent learning beyond the sessions.
3. **Lecture and Practice Integration:** The program was structured to alternate between theory and application, allowing participants to immediately implement what they learned in a supervised setting.

Post-event Phase

1. **Evaluation and Feedback:** An evaluation was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the training and to gather constructive feedback from participants regarding content relevance, delivery, and areas for improvement.
2. **Follow-up Support:** Continuous support and mentoring were offered to participants to ensure the long-term application of skills in their respective businesses. This includes follow-up visits and availability of instructors for consultation.

C. RESULT & DISCUSSION

The community service program titled “Housekeeping Skills Training for Homestay Accommodation in Pintukota Kecil Village” was conducted on October 19, 2024, at Grace House Homestay, located in Pintukota Kecil Village, part of Kelurahan Pintu Kota, North Lembeh District, Bitung City, North Sulawesi Province (Figure 2 and Figure 3). This activity was designed as a direct response to local community needs identified through prior communication with the District Head. The island itself was still recovering from the flood and landslide disaster in April 2024, which had significantly disrupted infrastructure and community-level tourism activities. Unlike

professionally managed resorts, homestays and other grassroots tourism efforts continued to experience post-disaster setbacks, particularly in service quality and readiness.

A total of 25 women, all of whom had expressed strong interest in turning their homes into homestays, participated in the training. These participants had no prior experience managing homestay accommodations but demonstrated high enthusiasm and attentiveness throughout the program. The training was designed to be practical and accessible. It began with a lecture delivered by a faculty member teaching Housekeeping in the hospitality program, followed by a live demonstration on basic towel art, and concluded with a lively Q&A session and group lunch. Materials presented during the training were simplified and aligned with the participants’ learning capacity, ensuring clarity and relevance.

The content of the training was developed based on 15 key housekeeping topics that also served as the basis for a pretest and posttest evaluation. These included fundamental housekeeping definitions, room preparation procedures, linen and towel management, cleaning standards, personal hygiene, handling guest property, and final room inspection. Table 1 presents the percentage of correct answers on each item from the pretest and posttest.

The average pretest scores ranged between 30% and 60%, while posttest scores improved dramatically to between 88% and 100%. This outcome clearly indicates that the training significantly increased participants’ knowledge and understanding of basic housekeeping skills relevant to homestay operations (Pan & Sana, 2021). In particular, participants demonstrated a strong grasp of topics such as handling lost items, proper towel replacement, final inspections, and guest feedback handling—all of which are critical to maintaining hospitality standards in rural homestays.

This positive result reflects the appropriateness of both the materials and the delivery method. The interactive nature of the

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training—coupled with contextual examples and live demonstrations—enabled participants to relate new knowledge to their everyday environment (Du et al., 2020; Dzaiy & Abdullah, 2024). Moreover, the training helped clarify common misconceptions among residents regarding homestay operations, especially the belief that homestays require a separate building rather than shared living spaces with guests.

Table 1. Pretest & Posttest Comparison

No.	Question Topic	Pretest (%)	Posttest (%)	Improvement (%)
1	Definition of housekeeping	44%	96%	52%
2	Importance of room cleanliness	52%	100%	48%
3	Action after guest checks out	48%	96%	48%
4	Cleaning surfaces	38%	88%	50%
5	Changing linens	42%	92%	50%
6	Room check before guest check-in	56%	100%	44%
7	Function of disinfectant/floor cleaner	34%	93%	59%
8	Avoiding bad odor in bathroom	40%	89%	49%
9	Handling lost and found items	36%	96%	60%
10	Final inspection after cleaning	30%	88%	58%
11	Replacing towels properly	60%	100%	40%
12	Housekeeping's effect on guest satisfaction	50%	96%	46%
13	Reporting minor damages	46%	92%	46%
14	Ensuring cleanliness before check-in	44%	96%	52%
15	Responding to guest feedback	40%	100%	60%

The success of this activity also offers a broader implication: developing community-based tourism in small islands like Lembeh must begin with basic capacity-building tailored to the local context (Wildman et al., 2019). While the training addressed housekeeping, participants expressed interest

in additional hospitality training in areas such as culinary skills, pastry making, front office operations, and sanitation and hygiene standards. In line with this, there is also a strong need for financial support to help families adapt their homes to meet basic accommodation standards.

The community of *Desa Wisata Pintukota Kecil* also strongly hopes for continued support from local government, particularly the Bitung City Tourism Office (*Dinas Pariwisata*), in the form of capacity-building programs, promotional initiatives, and funding schemes. This initiative proves that when knowledge is made accessible and contextually relevant, even small interventions can spark meaningful change and readiness in communities seeking to participate in a sustainable rural tourism (Kirana & Artisa, 2020; Saputra et al., 2022).



Figure 2. Documentation of PkM



Figure 3. Instructors and PkM Participants

D. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

Conclusion

This community service program aimed to enhance the knowledge and skills of local women in Pintukota Kecil Village regarding the basic principles of housekeeping as part of homestay preparation for community-based tourism. The results demonstrated that the training was effective and well-received by all 25 participants, as shown by the substantial increase in posttest scores compared to pretest results. This improvement indicates that the information was successfully delivered and



understood, offering meaningful new knowledge that participants can begin to apply in future tourism initiatives.

The fact that all participants were women suggests that women hold a central and strategic role in the development of community-based tourism in Pintukota Kecil, particularly in managing homestay accommodations. Their enthusiasm and active participation were key supporting factors that contributed to the success of the program. Another supporting factor was the relevance and clarity of the training materials, which were specifically adapted to meet the participants' real-life needs and aspirations to operate homestays in their own homes.

However, some challenges remain. One of the main limiting factors is that none of the participants are currently managing an active homestay. This means that while their interest is strong, they still require continued mentoring and follow-up training in various areas of hospitality management. In addition, many of the participants noted that they lack the financial means to make the necessary improvements to their homes in order to meet acceptable accommodation standards. These constraints suggest that the development of homestay-based tourism in the village must be accompanied by sustained support—both technical and financial—to truly empower the local community as active stakeholders in tourism development.

Suggestion

Based on the strengths and limitations identified during the implementation of this community service activity, several recommendations can be proposed to ensure the sustainability and broader impact of community-based tourism in Pintukota Kecil Village and the wider Lembeh Island area.

Future training programs should be designed to build on the foundational housekeeping knowledge delivered in this program. Recommended topics include front office operations, basic culinary and pastry skills, guest communication, digital marketing for homestays, and hygiene and sanitation management. These areas are essential to

strengthen the capacity of residents—particularly women—to manage homestay businesses more professionally and independently. In addition, introducing sessions on financial literacy and small business management would help participants prepare their homes, manage their income, and maintain quality standards in the long term.

For academics and higher education institutions, this program demonstrates the importance of community-responsive approaches in designing training interventions. Future engagement should emphasize multi-phase or continuous capacity-building models, combining theory with hands-on mentoring and field-based assistance. Researchers and educators are encouraged to integrate local socio-cultural contexts into curriculum design, ensuring that community empowerment goes beyond knowledge transfer and becomes a catalyst for transformation.

To the local government and the Bitung City Tourism Office, this program highlights the urgency of supporting community-based tourism beyond infrastructure development. There is a pressing need to allocate training resources, micro-financing schemes, and technical assistance for families aspiring to operate homestays. Institutional support should also include recognition and certification mechanisms to formalize and promote homestay businesses in small-island tourism areas. By aligning efforts between communities, academic institutions, and local authorities, Lembeh Island has the potential to become a model of sustainable, inclusive, and resilient community-based tourism in Indonesia.

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