

## **Community Involvement in Agritourism: A Participatory Approach to Rural Sustainable Development**

**Ulfa Utami Mappe<sup>1</sup>, Riri Amandaria<sup>1\*</sup>, Mario<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Sociology/Sociology Anthropology Faculty of Social and Law Sciences, Universitas Negeri Makassar

\*Corresponding author:  
[ririamandaria2@gmail.com](mailto:ririamandaria2@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Agritourism is a form of tourism that integrates the agricultural sector with tourism activities, aims to provide educational and recreational experiences for visitors and improve the welfare of rural communities through economic diversification. In Indonesia, the potential for agritourism is enormous thanks to the abundant natural and agricultural wealth. The active participation of local communities in the management of agritourism is the main key to the sustainability and success of this programme. Community participation can be realised through involvement in programme planning, implementation and evaluation, providing positive economic and social impacts. Support from various parties such as the government, private sector, and non-governmental organisations is essential to ensure the sustainability of agritourism. This research highlights the management of Tabarano Agro Hill in Tabarano Village, East Luwu Regency, showing how local community participation in agritourism management contributes significantly to sustainable rural development. The research method used was a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The results showed that community participation in various aspects of management, including decision-making, programme implementation, environmental maintenance, and marketing, improved the quality and attractiveness of agritourism, and provided sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits for the local community.

**Keywords:** *Agritourism; Community Participation; Rural Sustainable Development*



This is an open access article  
under the CC BY license  
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

### **INTRODUCTION**

Agritourism is a form of tourism that integrates the agricultural sector with tourism activities. This initiative not only aims to provide an educative and recreational tourism experience for visitors, but also to improve the welfare of rural communities through economic diversification. In Indonesia, with its abundant natural wealth and agricultural potential, agritourism has a great opportunity to flourish and contribute to sustainable rural development. Agritourism, which combines aspects of agriculture and tourism, provides a unique experience for tourists to experience farm life while enjoying the natural beauty of the countryside. The tourism sector itself is an economic and service sector with the fastest growth and development rate in the world (Salak 2020). Along with the development of agritourism in Indonesia, the participation of local communities in management is an important factor that determines the sustainability and success of the agritourism programme. The support and active involvement of local communities not only enriches the traveller experience but also ensures that the economic and social benefits of agritourism can be widely felt by local communities.

Community participation in agritourism management can be realised through various means, such as involvement in programme planning, implementation and evaluation. Local communities, with their in-depth knowledge and experience of the local environment, can provide valuable input in determining the types of agritourism activities that are appropriate and attractive to visitors (Nahar, et al., 2024). For example, the community can play an active role in the development of tourist attractions such as educational farms, pick-your-own orchards, and demonstrations of making processed agricultural products. In addition, the community can also be involved in the management of tourist facilities, such as providing accommodation in the form of homestays that allow tourists to experience rural life firsthand.

Community involvement not only improves the quality and attractiveness of agritourism, but also has a positive economic and social impact. By participating in agritourism management, communities can earn additional income through the sale of agricultural products, provision of tourism services, and culinary and handicraft businesses. This increase in income can in turn improve the welfare of families

and local communities. In addition, active community participation in agritourism activities can strengthen the sense of community and social cohesion, as well as strengthen local identity and culture.

Sustainable rural development is a development concept that focuses not only on economic improvement, but also on social balance and environmental sustainability. This concept promotes a holistic approach that ensures that every step of development considers the long-term impact on ecosystems and local communities. In this context, community participation is a key element. Without the active involvement of local communities, sustainable development efforts will be difficult to achieve the expected goals. Therefore, community participation in agritourism management is not only important for the sustainability of agritourism itself but also for achieving sustainable rural development goals (Widayuni, 2019).

Tabarano Agro Hill is an open space agro-tourism located in Tabarano Village and managed by the local community. This agro-tourism has been developed since 19 May 2017 with an initial concept that combines agricultural patterns and education about agriculture. In the process of developing Bukit Agro Tabarano, community support and involvement are important references because this tourist spot is managed directly by the local community. In addition, attention from the government is also needed as a form of participation in regional development. The participation of the local community has enabled this tourism to grow rapidly, attracting visitors from both within and outside the region. The direct contribution of the community in the management of Bukit Agro Tabarano can be seen in various aspects, such as assisting in the management and growth of ornamental plants, construction of facilities from empty land to photo areas, as well as the construction of gazebos and other places.

Bukit Agro Tabarano is not only an attractive tourist destination for visitors, but also provides employment opportunities for the surrounding community. The community can open business places such as food and beverage stalls, as well as cafes that can be a meeting place for young people. Local farmers also have the opportunity to share their knowledge with tourists who want to learn farming, as Bukit Agro Tabarano provides training for visitors. The training includes how to grow attractive flowers, vegetables in polybags, fruits, and how to make compost fertiliser. Thus, Bukit Agro Tabarano not only provides economic benefits through tourism, but also acts as an agricultural education centre that enriches visitors' knowledge and empowers the local community.

However, to achieve optimal community participation, there needs to be adequate support from various parties, including the government, private sector and non-governmental organisations. This support can be in the form of providing training and mentoring for the community to increase their capacity to manage agritourism, as well as providing access to the necessary capital and technology. In addition, policies that support the development of agritourism, such as tax incentives and ease of licensing, are also very important to encourage community participation (Permana, 2022).

With integrated and sustainable support, agritourism can develop into a sector capable of contributing significantly to sustainable rural development. Active community participation in agritourism management will ensure that the economic, social and environmental benefits of agritourism can be felt directly by local communities. Thus, agritourism is not only an educational recreational facility for tourists, but also a driving force for economic and social development in rural areas, especially in Tabarano Village, East Luwu Regency. This paper will elaborate on the form of community participation in the management of agritourism in Tabarano Village and its impact on rural economic development. This study is expected to contribute to the development of more effective policies and programs in optimising the potential of agritourism in Indonesia.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach, with a descriptive qualitative research type. Descriptive research seeks to describe an event, symptom, or occurrence that occurs today. This research was conducted in the area of Tabarano Village, Wasaponda District, East Luwu Regency. The location was chosen with the consideration that the natural potential of Tabarano Village has great potential for the development of agro-tourism and community involvement in tourism development. Active community involvement in agro-tourism development will be a key factor in successful management. The location of this research is in Barenteng Village, Bontonompo District, Gowa Regency. For the selection of informants, purposive technique was used, namely sample selection by considering several criteria. The criteria for informants include Informants in this study are landowners who are used as tourist attractions, two people who are managers of tourist attractions, as well as two people involved in the management of tourist attractions, the head of Tabarano village, and three tourists as informants.

The data collection method is carried out through in-depth interviews with informants. Observation is also carried out, where researchers will directly visit the location to observe the problem or object to be studied, as well as select informants according to predetermined criteria, so that the data obtained is in accordance with field conditions. In addition, documentation was also used to obtain data directly from the research site. This documentation includes photos of activities in the field and recordings of interviews with informants.

The data analysis procedure was carried out in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and data conclusion, as described by Moleong (2021). The data reduction stage involves simplifying, selecting, and eliminating irrelevant or insignificant data. The data presentation stage includes the presentation of data that has been simplified and made easier to understand. Meanwhile, the data inference stage is the final stage where researchers draw conclusions based on the data that has been processed and presented.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Community Participation in Agrotourism Development supporting Rural Sustainable Development***

Community participation in agritourism management is the main key in supporting sustainable village development. This form of participation can be done in various ways that allow the community to make a significant contribution to agritourism management (Nurhidayati, 2015). Community participation is not only an important step to build community welfare, but also shows how environmentally conscious communities tend to be more creative and innovative in carrying out their activities. In tourism development, the level of togetherness and community awareness of the importance of maintaining and preserving the environment is a crucial factor. Activities carried out by the community through the utilisation of local potential and cultural preservation is one effective way to increase community knowledge and position them as the main actors in the development of Bukit Agro Tabarano tourism.

The importance of community participation has direct implications for the sustainability of agritourism businesses. This participation can be realised through various forms, including participation in the form of ideas or thoughts, participation in the form of labour, and participation in the form of property. Participation in the form of ideas or thoughts involves the community in planning and decision-making, so they can contribute innovative ideas that suit local needs. Participation in the form of labour includes direct involvement of the community in operational activities, such as managing agricultural land, maintaining cleanliness, or guiding tourists. Meanwhile, participation in the form of property can be in the form of material donations or facilities needed to support agritourism activities (Yatmaja, 2019).

### ***Community Participation in Decision Making***

The importance of community participation has direct implications for the sustainability of agritourism businesses. This participation can be realised through various forms, including participation in the form of ideas or thoughts, participation in the form of labour, and participation in the form of property. Participation in the form of ideas or thoughts involves the community in planning and decision-making, so they can contribute innovative ideas that suit local needs. Participation in the form of labour includes direct involvement of the community in operational activities, such as managing agricultural land, maintaining cleanliness, or guiding tourists. Meanwhile, participation in the form of property can be in the form of material donations or facilities needed to support agritourism activities (Yatmaja, 2019).

Community participation in the form of ideas is essential in generating innovative new ideas based on their experiences. Discussions or meetings regarding agritourism planning provide an opportunity for the community to provide ideas about unique experiences, products or services provided, as well as effective strategies to attract visitors. These ideas can then be implemented to ensure tourism activities run well and attract more visitors. In addition, these meetings can also help in evaluating and refining existing plans, ensuring that every step taken is in line with local conditions and potential. Thus, community participation not only contributes to the development of ideas and strategies, but also increases the sense of ownership and responsibility for the agritourism project (Pramusita and Sarinastiti, 2018). The success of Bukit Agro Tabarano tourism management is highly dependent on the extent to which the community can be involved and contribute in every stage of development, from planning to implementation. Participation in this form of thought fruit can also improve the skills and knowledge of the community in tourism management, so that they are better prepared to face challenges and take advantage of opportunities that exist. By providing space for the community to actively participate, agritourism management can run more effectively and efficiently, and provide sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits for the local community.

### ***Community Participation in Programme Implementation***

Communities can also play an active role in the implementation of agritourism programmes, which follows on from their involvement in strategic decision-making. This involvement includes various daily activities that support agritourism operations, such as plant care, provision of services for tourists, and promotion of agritourism destinations. By being directly involved in plant care, communities not only preserve the environment but also ensure the quality and aesthetics of agritourism are maintained. Good care of the plants will attract more visitors, which in turn will increase local income. In addition, the provision of services for tourists such as tour guides, facility management, and accommodation services, provides a pleasant and satisfying experience for visitors. These roles allow communities to interact directly with tourists, introduce local culture, as well as promote unique local products. These interactions not only enrich the tourist experience but also open up new economic opportunities for local communities, such as the sale of handicrafts, agricultural products, and regional culinary specialities.

Promotion of agritourism destinations is also an important aspect in the implementation of agritourism programmes. The community can be involved in promotional activities through social media, tourism exhibitions, and cooperation with travel agents. Active participation in promotion will help increase the visibility of Tabarano Agro Hill, attract more visitors, and expand the marketing network. Through effective promotion, communities can introduce the uniqueness and beauty of their agritourism destinations to a wider market. Through active participation in various aspects of agritourism programme implementation, the community can ensure that each activity runs smoothly and effectively. This participation not only improves the quality of service and attractiveness of the destination, but also strengthens the sense of community and collective responsibility in maintaining the sustainability of agritourism. Thus, community involvement in the implementation of agritourism programmes is the main key in achieving the goal of sustainable and prosperous rural development (Marwanti, Nurhaeni, and Sugiarti, 2013).

### ***Community Participation in Environmental Maintenance***

Community involvement in environmental maintenance is also very important in sustainable agritourism management. Communities can be involved in reforestation activities, waste management, and conservation of natural resources. Thus, they help maintain the preservation of nature and ecosystems that are the basis of agro-tourism tourism. The next participation is participation in the form of labour, which means working as field workers (Dayan and Sari22). The Tabarano village community stated that the management of tourist attractions involved various tasks such as planting and maintaining plants, maintaining existing facilities, and helping to maintain the sustainability of agro-tourism operations due to the pandemic that occurred in a certain year which resulted in the abandonment of the Bukit Agro Tabarano tourist spot. By actively participating in field work, the community not only helps in maintaining the cleanliness and beauty of the tourist attractions, but also ensures that its operations continue to run well, despite facing challenges such as the pandemic.

Environmental stewardship by the community is an important foundation in sustainable agritourism management. This involvement can be realised through various activities such as reforestation programmes, where the community plants trees and greenery around the agritourism area. Waste management is also a major concern, where the community works together to process garbage and agricultural waste into compost that is beneficial to plants. In addition, conservation of natural resources, such as preserving water and soil, is an integral part of these efforts. By taking care of the environment, the community ensures that the ecosystem remains balanced and supports the sustainability of agritourism.

In labour participation, communities demonstrate their commitment through direct contributions in the field. They are involved in a variety of practical tasks, from planting and caring for plants to maintaining tourist facilities such as walking trails, parking areas and rest areas. The pandemic caused some aspects of Bukit Agro Tabarano's operations to be neglected, but with the spirit of gotong royong, the community managed to revive this tourist spot. They work together to ensure that every corner of the tourist area remains clean, well-maintained and attractive to visitors. In a crisis situation such as a pandemic, the active participation of the community becomes very important to maintain the continuity of agro-tourism and restore local economic conditions.

Overall, community participation in the form of labour and environmental maintenance not only improves the quality of the agritourism destination but also strengthens the sense of ownership and responsibility for the sustainability of the business. By being directly involved in various aspects of operations and maintenance, the community ensures that Bukit Agro Tabarano Agrotourism can continue to grow and provide economic and social benefits for the entire community.

### **Participation in Marketing and Promotion**

Local communities can also play a role in the marketing and promotion efforts of their agritourism destinations. They can become tourism ambassadors who promote the beauty and uniqueness of their villages to potential tourists. Their participation in marketing and promotion can increase the attractiveness of agritourism destinations and increase the number of tourist visits. With these various forms of participation, communities can become valuable partners in the sustainable management of agritourism. Their participation not only strengthens local involvement in village development, but also generates significant economic, social and environmental benefits for the local community.

Community involvement in the form of labour can also contribute to the promotion and commercialisation of agritourism in Tabarano Village. The community can manage social media or websites that inform travellers about the attractions, activities and services available at the tourist attractions. In addition, the community can participate in tourism events or festivals at the local level, thus promoting Tabarano village as an agritourism destination. Community involvement in these promotional and marketing activities helps increase the visibility of the village as a tourist destination, attracts visitors, and supports the economic development of the local community.

In terms of marketing, local communities can use various social media platforms to share interesting content related to Tabarano Agro Hill. For example, they can post beautiful photos of the natural scenery, videos of agritourism activities, or success stories about local products. Participation in tourism exhibitions or cultural festivals is also an effective means to introduce the village to a wider audience. By engaging in promotional activities, the community not only helps raise the profile of the village but also fosters a sense of pride and ownership over the success of agritourism.

Active involvement in marketing and promotion not only increases the number of tourist visits but also positively impacts the local economy. As the number of tourists increases, revenue from the tourism sector increases, which in turn creates more employment and business opportunities for the local community. This creates a positive cycle where local economic growth supports further development of agritourism facilities and services, attracting more visitors and providing long-term benefits to the community. Overall, community participation in agritourism marketing and promotion is critical to the sustainability and long-term success of tourist destinations. By taking an active role in managing and promoting agritourism, local communities can ensure that the economic, social and environmental benefits are felt equitably and sustainably, thus creating more prosperous and competitive villages.

### **CONCLUSION**

Agritourism combines the agricultural sector with tourism activities to provide educational and recreational experiences for visitors and improve the welfare of rural communities through economic diversification. In Indonesia, agritourism has great potential due to its rich natural and agricultural resources, with the active participation of local communities as a key factor in the success and sustainability of this programme. The case study of Tabarano Agro Hill in Tabarano Village shows that the support and involvement of the local community plays an important role in the development of agritourism destinations. The community is involved in planning, implementation, maintenance and marketing, which not only enhances the tourist attraction but also has a positive impact on their economic and social welfare, creating additional income opportunities through the sale of agricultural products, tourism services, and culinary and handicraft businesses. To achieve optimal community participation, support from various parties, including government and non-governmental organisations, is needed in the form of training, mentoring, access to capital and technology, and supportive policies. With integrated and sustainable support, agritourism can become a significant sector in sustainable rural development, empower local communities, and preserve local culture and environment.

### **REFERENCES**

- Dayan, M. A., & Sari, M. I. (2022). Potensi Agrowisata Berbasis Masyarakat. *National Multidisciplinary Sciences*, 1(1), 53-59.
- Lao, H., Kabu, E., & Nazarudin, H. (2024). PERAN MASYARAKAT LOKAL DALAM KEBIJAKAN PENGEMBANGAN PARIWISATA DESA FATUMNASI, TIMOR TENGAH SELATAN. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen, Ekonomi, & Akuntansi (MEA)*, 8(1), 1967-1976
- Marwanti, S., Nurhaeni, I. D. A., & Sugiarti, R. (2013). Penguatan Partisipasi Masyarakat Petani Menuju Ekonomi Kreatif Melalui Pengembangan Pariwisata Berbasis Sumber Daya Pertanian. *Cakra Wisata*, 17(1).
- Nahar, A. N., Awwaliyah, A. N., Damayanti, L., & Nur, D. M. M. (2024). Pengembangan Desa Wisata Berbasis Partisipasi Masyarakat Lokal di Desa Wisata Colo Kudus. *ARIMA: Jurnal Sosial Dan*

*Humaniora*, 1(4), 308-316.

- Nurhidayati, S. E. (2015). Studi evaluasi penerapan Community Based Tourism (CBT) sebagai pendukung agrowisata berkelanjutan. *Masyarakat, Kebudayaan Dan Politik*, 28(1), 1-10.
- Pramusita, A., & Sarinastiti, E. N. (2018). Aspek sosial ekonomi masyarakat lokal dalam pengelolaan Desa Wisata Pantai Trisik, Kulonprogo. *Jurnal Pariwisata Terapan*, 2(1), 14-25
- Permana, M. (2022). STRATEGI PEMBANGUNAN KAWASAN EKONOMI PERDESAAN BERBASIS MASYARAKAT: Studi Kasus: Kawasan Agrowisata Bumiaji, Kota Batu & Agropolitan Srimartani, Kabupaten Bantul. *Jurnal Plano Buana*, 3(1), 10-22.
- Salak, A. (2020). *ISSN 2442-3262 pengembangan partisipatif untuk kegiatan wisata , hal ini sangat diharapkan oleh masyarakat sebagai pendorong kelestarian budidaya salak dan promosi potensi pariwisata . Tujuan penelitian adalah salak dan menganalisis tingkat partisipasima.* 7(3), 302–312.
- Widayuni, R. (2019). *Partisipasi Masyarakat Dalam Pengembangan Desa Wisata Di Desa Sidokaton Kecamatan Gisting Kabupaten Tanggamus* (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Raden Intan Lampung).
- Yatmaja, P. T. (2019). Efektivitas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Oleh Kelompok Sadar Wisata (Pokdarwis) Dalam Mengembangkan Pariwisata Berkelanjutan (Studi pada Pokdarwis Minang Rua Bahari di Desa Kelawi, Kecamatan Bakauheni, Kabupaten Lampung Selatan).