



Building Inclusive Tourism: An Evaluative Study of Accessibility and Empowerment of Local Communities

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Abstract

This study explores the implementation of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach, Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi, focusing on accessibility and local community empowerment as key components of sustainable coastal tourism. Although Bira Beach possesses exceptional natural potential, several challenges remain particularly limited accessibility for people with disabilities and insufficient community involvement in destination management. Using a qualitative evaluative approach, this research applies the Universal Design Principles framework combined with community empowerment theory to assess the effectiveness of inclusive tourism development programs. Data were obtained through interviews, participatory observation, and documentation involving local residents, tourism stakeholders, and government representatives. The findings indicate that accessibility facilities, such as ramps, special toilets, and digital information systems, are still inadequate, resulting in unequal opportunities for all visitors. In addition, local communities are mostly involved in small-scale tourism activities and have limited participation in strategic decision-making processes. This condition constrains the realization of sustainable and inclusive tourism benefits. The study recommends improving physical and digital accessibility, enhancing training and capacity-building programs for local residents, and strengthening collaboration between government, private sectors, and non-governmental organizations. The integration of inclusive design and community empowerment can support Bira Beach's transformation into an accessible and sustainable marine tourism destination that benefits all stakeholders.

Introduction

Indonesia is an archipelagic nation with over 17,000 islands and rich natural and cultural resources. This diversity makes the tourism sector, particularly marine tourism, a leading sector supporting the national economy. Activities such as diving, snorkeling, surfing, and ecotourism are increasingly popular with tourists (Schuhbauer et al., Nayak & Sit, 2025; Soonsan et al., 2025). However, this sector still faces significant challenges in its management, particularly related to the lack of destination planning oriented towards comfort, inclusivity, and environmental sustainability (Quattrone, 2025; Rubio-Escuderos et al., 2025; Ramaano, 2025).

One province with extraordinary marine resources is South Sulawesi, with Bira Beach in Bulukumba Regency as one of its prime destinations. Bira Beach is renowned for its fine white

sand, clear seawater, and stunning sunsets. This beach is also the gateway to the Selayar Islands, known for their beautiful coral reefs. Despite its significant potential, Bira Beach faces challenges in achieving inclusive tourism standards that can ensure the sustainability of its tourist attractions (Bakty et al., 2025; Gaffar et al., 2025; Abdi et al., 2025).

Inclusive tourism destination planning is crucial to supporting the development of a sustainable tourism sector (Karsokiene et al., 2025; Dirgantara & Baswarani, 2025; Zitri et al., 2025). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the tourism sector will contribute approximately 4.2% to Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2023, with South Sulawesi recording significant tourism growth. However, many tourist destinations, including Bira Beach, still do not fully provide adequate access for all groups, such as tourists with disabilities, vulnerable groups, and marginalized local communities. Therefore, this research will focus on accessibility and local community empowerment in supporting inclusive and sustainable tourism development at Bira Beach.

Inclusive tourism, as defined by Pryimachenko et al. (2021), is a concept that emphasizes the provision of facilities and services that are accessible to everyone, regardless of physical, social, or economic barriers. Previous research indicates that accessibility remains a major challenge in many tourist destinations in Indonesia. For example, Indrawati & Kuncoro (2021) in *Tourism Management* states that "good accessibility not only enhances the tourist experience but also strengthens the competitive position of a tourist destination." Iqbal & Nurhidayah (2024) in the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* also emphasized that many tourist areas have not yet adopted inclusive accessibility principles that meet the needs of all community groups (Chwaja et al., 2025; Domínguez Vila et al., 2025; Paiva et al., 2025).

This is reinforced by (Gole et al., 2025), where inclusive tourism is defined as a concept that aims to provide equal opportunities for everyone, including people with disabilities, to enjoy tourism activities. It is also noteworthy that the Republic of Indonesia has committed to realizing the right to travel for people with disabilities, as stipulated in Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities. One of the targets of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 11 also emphasizes the goal of creating safe, inclusive, and sustainable cities and settlements, with inclusive tourism being a crucial component of achieving this goal.

Furthermore, Hassan et al. (2022) in the *International Journal of Tourism Research* demonstrated that local economic empowerment through tourism can provide long-term benefits for improving the quality of life. Ardhiatma (2025) in *Sustainability* also emphasize that local community empowerment is an important indicator in realizing sustainable and inclusive tourism.

Bira Beach, despite its immense potential, has not fully met the principles of inclusivity, particularly in terms of accessibility and local community empowerment. According to data from the Bulukumba Regency Tourism Office, accessibility to Bira Beach remains limited, particularly for certain groups such as tourists with disabilities. The road to the beach, although improved, is still inadequate, particularly for three-wheeled vehicles and those requiring special facilities. Furthermore, local community empowerment in the tourism sector remains limited to boat rentals and souvenir vendors, with no community involvement in tourism management based on the principles of sustainability and inclusion (Azzahra, 2025; Anwar et al., 2025; Sihotang et al., 2025).

Moscardo & Murphy (2014) argues that the concept of sustainability must be applied to tourism planning to ensure that the sector's development does not damage the environment or neglect local communities. Although numerous studies have addressed accessibility in tourism, most

have focused on physical infrastructure and government policies, failing to emphasize the importance of local community empowerment as an integral part of the success of inclusive tourism. Risfandini (2024) in *Tourism Geography* shows that local community empowerment is often overlooked in the implementation of inclusive tourism policies.

Inclusive infrastructure design can increase community participation in tourism activities and support local economic sustainability. Research by Robustin et al. (2018) showed that good accessibility positively contributes to tourists' decision to visit. Therefore, the management of Bira Beach needs to involve the local community in tourism planning and management to ensure social and economic sustainability.

Sustainable tourism focuses not only on economic aspects but also encompasses interacting social and environmental dimensions (Khater et al., 2025; Burton et al., 2025; Jokom et al., 2025). This perspective aligns with the theory of sustainable development, which aims to meet basic human needs, integrate environmental protection, and achieve social equality. Therefore, inclusive and sustainable tourism area planning must integrate the principles of accessibility, environmental sustainability, and local community participation at every stage of tourism destination development.

Method

The study, "Developing Inclusive Tourism: An Evaluative Study of Accessibility and Local Community Empowerment at Bira Beach in Bulukumba Regency," is an evaluative study using a qualitative approach with participant observation and interviews. Evaluative research is a research approach that aims to assess the effectiveness of a program or intervention in achieving its stated objectives. The evaluative research method was also adopted in Tahir's work (Tahir, 2023), which examined the management of Bira Beach as a tourist attraction. The primary objective of evaluative research is to provide evidence-based recommendations that can help improve programs or policies. This is crucial to ensure the program's sustainability and success. By using data collected through systematic and objective methods, evaluative research offers in-depth insights into what is working well and what needs improvement. In the tourism context, evaluative research can help understand how accessibility, community empowerment, and destination attractiveness contribute to tourist experiences and satisfaction. The primary focus of this study is to evaluate the success and effectiveness of inclusive tourism development, particularly with regard to accessibility and local community empowerment at Bira Beach. This evaluation was conducted using an assessment based on the Universal Design Principles theory proposed by Mace in 1997, which encompasses seven basic principles for creating environments accessible to everyone, regardless of physical condition, age, or other limitations.

Using a qualitative approach, this study sought, among other things, to understand how tourists and local communities respond to various inclusive tourism initiatives and to assess the extent to which existing accessibility influences community participation in tourism development. The case study method allowed researchers to delve into the specific situation at Bira Beach, where they could obtain detailed and contextual data regarding the interaction between physical, social, and economic accessibility in tourism. This approach is highly relevant given that inclusive tourism is not only about increasing tourist visits but also about creating opportunities for local communities to actively participate in decision-making processes and derive economic benefits from existing tourism activities. By applying the Universal Design Principles concept, researchers are expected to offer recommendations that can optimize accessibility and empower local communities in Bira Beach to maximize the benefits of tourism growth. This research is expected to contribute to the development of more sustainable

and inclusive tourism policies and practices, improve the welfare of local communities, and strengthen Bira Beach's position as a friendly and accessible tourist destination for all groups.

Data Sources and Informants

This study uses primary and secondary data to examine inclusive tourism development at Bira Beach, Bulukumba Regency. Primary data was obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation with purposively selected informants, including local residents involved in tourism (homestay owners, tour guides, vendors), community leaders, and regional tourism managers such as the Tourism Office. Secondary data was obtained from government reports, tourism planning documents, previous research results, and tourist visit statistics. All informants and data sources were used to obtain a comprehensive picture of accessibility, community empowerment, and the success of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach.

Data Collection Methods

This research employed qualitative methods, using in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies as data collection techniques. Interviews were conducted with local residents, tourism managers, and tourists to explore perceptions of accessibility and community empowerment. Direct observations were conducted at Bira Beach to assess physical conditions, social interactions, and accessibility levels. Documentation studies included government policies, tourism planning documents, and tourist visitation statistics. Data analysis was based on Universal Design Principles to assess accessibility and Local Community Empowerment theory to evaluate community involvement and benefits from inclusive tourism development.

Data Analysis Techniques

This study employed a qualitative approach to data analysis through thematic analysis, comparative analysis, and data triangulation. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes from interviews, observations, and documentation related to accessibility, community empowerment, and the application of universal design principles. Comparative analysis was conducted by comparing data from various informants and policy documents to identify similarities and differences in perspectives. Data triangulation was used to enhance the validity of the findings by comparing results from various techniques and data sources to obtain a more accurate and comprehensive picture of inclusive tourism on Bira Beach.

Result and Discussion

Accessibility of Inclusive Tourism at Bira Beach

Accessibility of tourism at Bira Beach for various community groups, particularly tourists with disabilities and vulnerable groups such as the elderly and pregnant women, is an issue that requires in-depth attention. Interviews with stakeholders at Bira Beach indicate that, despite improvements, accessibility issues remain significant.

From the perspective of homestay owners, it was found that, although some improvements have been made, such as providing wheelchair ramps, other disability-friendly facilities, such as dedicated bathrooms for people with disabilities, remain very limited (Reindrawati et al., 2025). This aligns with research showing that accessibility in tourism encompasses physical aspects that must be addressed to make destinations more inclusive. Furthermore, homestay owners highlighted the need for government support in improving accessibility facilities and providing training to manage accessible homestays for all (Suardana et al., 2024).

Tour guides also highlighted the challenges of serving tourists with disabilities, noting that terrain that is not always friendly to them, such as uneven footpaths, hinders their travel experience. This reflects the need for tourism service providers to be equipped with additional understanding and training regarding accessibility needs (Michopoulou & Buhalis, 2013). On the other hand, souvenir vendors expressed a desire to improve accessibility facilities in their area but felt a lack of attention from authorities.

From a tourism management perspective, the Bulukumba Regency Tourism Office also acknowledged that despite improvements, disability-friendly infrastructure remains very limited. They emphasized the importance of involving local communities and other stakeholders in accessibility planning. This aligns with findings that collaboration between various parties is key to creating a more inclusive environment in tourism destinations (Bichler & Löscher, 2019).

Tourists, both domestic and international, expressed their appreciation for the beauty of Bira Beach, but also expressed negative experiences related to difficult accessibility for tourists with disabilities. Tourists with disabilities complain that many facilities are not accessible, such as the path to the beach, which is very difficult to access. Tourism managers are urgently needed to ensure that all visitors can enjoy this tourist destination without barriers (Pearce & Schänzel, 2013).

Non-governmental organizations focused on the rights of persons with disabilities added that, despite some efforts, accessibility at Bira Beach remains far from adequate. They emphasized the importance of involving people with disabilities in the planning and evaluation process to ensure their needs are addressed (Reid et al., 1999).

Based on these interviews, it can be concluded that, while there is an intention to improve accessibility at Bira Beach, implementation remains limited. Prioritizing improvements to physical accessibility is an urgent priority, including the provision of disability-friendly public facilities and training for local communities in inclusive tourism management. This research recommendation emphasizes the need for collaboration between the government, tourism managers, and local communities to make Bira Beach an accessible tourism destination for all groups.

Based on the observations and the suitability of the research indicators conducted by the researcher, referring to the application of universal design concepts in inclusive tourism development at Bira Beach, the following is an in-depth analysis of various aspects that need to be considered to improve the area's accessibility and inclusivity.

In analyzing the level of tourism accessibility at Bira Beach for all community groups, especially tourists with disabilities and vulnerable groups such as the elderly and pregnant women, it is important to consider the universal design principles applied in the accessibility assessment. Based on the observations obtained, it can be seen that Bira Beach faces several challenges and opportunities in meeting these accessibility criteria.

Equity of Use: Physical Accessibility

Disability-Friendly Pedestrian Paths

Bira Beach must ensure barrier-free paths that allow people with disabilities to easily access the beach. This includes flat and safe paths, and the absence of physical obstacles such as piles of sand or rocks that could impede access. Interviews revealed that physical access to the tourist area at Bira Beach is still very limited, especially for tourists with disabilities, the elderly, and pregnant women.

"I have a lot of trouble getting down to the beach. Luckily, I have grandchildren who can carry me down and do activities here," Elizabeth (89 years old)

There are many shortcomings in services experienced by the elderly, for example, the path to the beach and other public facilities is not disability-friendly, such as uneven footpaths and the lack of wheelchair ramps in several areas. This shows that despite some improvements, such as improving the path to the beach, physical accessibility remains a major challenge.

Ramps and Elevators for Accessibility

The presence of ramps or elevators in elevated areas is essential to ensure good accessibility for visitors with wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Regarding facilities, many homestay owners, tour guides, and souvenir vendors acknowledged that facilities such as accessible toilets, designated parking areas for the disabled, and ample space for wheelchairs are still very limited. This was also expressed by tourists with disabilities, who felt they still faced difficulties in accessing some facilities. For example, the lack of wheelchair ramps or accessible seating for the elderly and pregnant women was also a major issue.

Special Parking for the Disabled

Providing ample parking spaces close to the entrance of the facility would facilitate access for tourists with disabilities or other vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and pregnant women. Observations showed that despite efforts to improve roads and access to the beach, many areas still require improvement regarding these facilities. The implementation of wheelchair ramps and designated parking areas for the disabled is very minimal. This indicates that despite progress, accessibility planning at Bira Beach still requires serious attention to ensure more equitable accessibility for all groups. Physical accessibility, including pedestrian paths, ramps, and dedicated parking spaces, requires Bira Beach to ensure that all these facilities are adequately equipped to support people with disabilities. In this context, less than 30% of people with disabilities in Indonesia can independently engage in activities in public spaces, indicating the need for improvements to these physical facilities. The availability of disability facilities that do not fully meet user needs, demonstrating the importance of improvements at Bira Beach.

Flexibility in Use

Diverse Facilities for Visitors: Providing various mobility aids such as wheelchairs, accessible boats, or alternative transportation will provide flexibility for visitors with special needs. Alternative Tours with Different Media: Visitors with hearing or visual impairments can utilize alternative tours, such as audio, visual, or text guides. Bira Beach needs to provide a variety of facilities tailored to the needs of each visitor, whether requiring physical assistance such as wheelchairs or those requiring alternative tours. The use of mobility aids and tours with various media is crucial in creating a more inclusive tourism experience. Therefore, expanding these facilities can increase Bira Beach's appeal to a wide range of tourists. Flexibility in use: It is recommended that Bira Beach provide a variety of alternative facilities, such as wheelchairs and other mobility aids. According to research conducted in public areas, these adjustments are particularly important for visitors with special needs, including the elderly and pregnant women (Novikova et al., 2015). This study underscores the need for facilities that can be adapted to the diverse needs of visitors, thereby creating a more inclusive and enjoyable tourism experience.

Simplicity and Intuitiveness: Directions and Information

Clear and Easy-to-Follow Directions: Simple directions, with easy-to-understand symbols and signs, will greatly assist visitors in navigating the beach area without confusion. Use of Easy-to-Understand Symbols: To clarify directions, the use of universal images and symbols can be a good option, ensuring they are understandable to visitors from various backgrounds.

Observations indicate that clear directions and easy-to-understand symbols are crucial to ensure visitors do not feel confused or have difficulty. This is not only for visitors with disabilities, but also for all groups of visitors, including the elderly and pregnant women, who may require more time to navigate the area.

The simplicity and intuitiveness of providing clear directions are also crucial. Previous research has shown that the use of easy-to-understand symbols facilitates orientation for all visitors, which is especially important in tourist locations where many visitors may be unfamiliar with the area. Jerubun & Nugraha (2024) noted that difficult-to-understand directions can lead to confusion for visitors, which in turn can reduce their satisfaction. The impact of difficult-to-understand directions can lead to confusion for visitors, which in turn can reduce their satisfaction.

Digital Information Accessibility

Website or App Accessibility: Developing disability-friendly digital platforms, such as websites or apps that provide alternative text and audio transcripts, is crucial. Information in Multiple Formats: Providing information in multiple formats (text, audio, video) will facilitate access for visitors with special needs. Accessibility to digital information is crucial, as many tourists now rely on technology to plan their trips. A website or app that is accessible in multiple formats will be particularly helpful for tourists with hearing or visual impairments. Bira Beach can enhance the visitor experience by providing more inclusive and responsive digital services. Challenges in digital information accessibility must also be addressed. Developing a disability-friendly website or app by providing alternative text and customizable visual settings is a crucial step for Bira Beach management. Providing information in multiple formats can help improve understanding and visit planning for all visitors, including those with disabilities.

Error Tolerance: Visitor Safety and Comfort

Safe Evacuation Routes: Visitor safety, especially in emergencies, must be ensured by evacuation routes that are easily accessible to all visitors, including those using wheelchairs or with other physical limitations. Accessible Facilities in Emergency Situations: Management must ensure that essential facilities, such as emergency exits and evacuation routes, are accessible to all visitors without physical barriers. Safety is crucial, especially in tourist attractions. Ensuring safe and accessible evacuation routes will enhance visitors' sense of comfort. It also reflects the management's commitment to creating a safe environment for everyone, without exception. The importance of safe evacuation routes and accessible facilities in emergency situations cannot be overstated. In this context, facility design that reduces the risk of errors and provides rapid emergency access is crucial, especially for vulnerable groups such as the elderly and people with disabilities. Applying good design principles in emergency situations will ensure the safety of all visitors to Bira Beach.

Therefore, to improve tourism accessibility at Bira Beach, it is crucial for management to continuously improve and adapt existing facilities, ensure equitable use, provide clear information, and ensure safety during emergencies for all community groups. Bira Beach needs to continue its efforts to implement universal design principles, which prioritize accessibility

for all community groups. While progress has been made in some areas, there is still much room for improvement, particularly in terms of physical accessibility, digital information, and staff training. By enhancing inclusive design and involving more stakeholders in the development process, Bira Beach can become a truly welcoming tourist destination for all.

Empowering the Local Community at Bira Beach

The management and development of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach involves various factors that influence local community empowerment. Interviews with stakeholders in the tourism sector at Bira Beach revealed both potential and challenges in increasing local community participation. These interviews revealed that local community empowerment in tourism management needs to be optimized by considering inclusive tourism principles that emphasize accessibility, training, and broader active participation. Interviews with several individuals directly involved in the tourism sector provided valuable insights into the factors influencing local community empowerment in the management and development of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach.

Community Involvement in Tourism Management

This research identified that most respondents felt that local communities have opportunities to participate in the tourism sector, but their participation is still limited to certain aspects, such as boat rentals and souvenir sales.

"No, I haven't participated in inclusive tourism training. If there were training on marketing and business management, that would be very helpful." (Arif, 54)

Policies are needed to encourage greater local community involvement in the planning and management of the tourism sector. The government and other stakeholders must create space for communities to participate more actively in decisions related to tourism policy and infrastructure. This is in line with Wallerstein (1993), who argued that empowerment is achieved when individuals or groups have the power to change and influence decisions related to their lives. In this context, local community involvement in tourism management needs to be expanded, for example by involving them in more strategic decision-making, such as tourism destination management and inclusive infrastructure planning.

Local Community Economic Empowerment

Tourism at Bira Beach has had a positive impact on local incomes, but there is still a dependency on the peak tourist season. Off-season income is very low.

"My family's income has increased since the tourism sector developed. My food stall is busier, but sometimes I feel unprepared for the increased demand." (Tina, 34)

To reduce dependence on the peak tourist season, it is important to create programs that diversify community incomes, such as training in new skills and developing local products that can be marketed sustainably. Ahmad & Abu, (2015) states that economic empowerment includes increasing access to resources that can improve the community's quality of life. Economic empowerment in this context means that local communities receive sustainable economic benefits from tourism, rather than solely relying on the peak tourist season.

Community Training and Capacity Building

Most local communities at Bira Beach have not received specific training related to inclusive tourism management. Most local communities at Bira Beach have not received adequate training related to inclusive tourism management, especially regarding physical accessibility and the provision of disability-friendly services. While there has been training on general safety

and hospitality, specific training on how to accommodate visitors with disabilities, the elderly, or pregnant women remains very limited.

In an interview with a homestay owner on Bira Beach, she stated:

"We've received training on basic safety and hospitality, but training on accessibility and inclusive tourism is still very lacking. For example, we're taught how to welcome tourists, but there's no training on how to facilitate accessibility for people with disabilities or elderly visitors." (B, 48)

This homestay owner revealed that despite improvements, they feel ill-prepared to provide more disability-friendly facilities, such as wheelchair ramps and more accessible access to the homestay for tourists with physical limitations.

Similarly, a local tour guide said:

"The training we received focused more on tourist hospitality and basic safety. But training on how to accommodate tourists with special needs, such as those with hearing or visual impairments, is still very lacking. We find it difficult to provide fully inclusive services." (R, 51)

The tour guides revealed that although they were trained to provide general hospitality, they were not provided with sufficient knowledge on how to design tours that accommodate visitors with sensory impairments, such as the use of audio aids for tourists with hearing impairments.

The local government also acknowledged shortcomings in the training provided. A local government official said:

"We recognize that inclusive tourism is an important part of developing the tourist destination on Bira Beach. However, the training we have provided so far has focused more on general safety and hospitality. We plan to conduct a more comprehensive training program, which includes training on physical accessibility and how to better manage inclusive tourism." (R, 28)

However, they also revealed that the biggest challenges they face are the lack of resources to conduct comprehensive and ongoing training, as well as the need for competent trainers in the fields of accessibility and inclusive tourism.

Local communities involved in tourism shared similar views. One local resident who runs a souvenir business on Bira Beach explained:

"We need more specific training on physical accessibility and how to communicate with tourists who are visually or hearing impaired. This training is crucial so we can provide better services to visitors from various backgrounds."

These local residents expressed their desire for more in-depth training that would help them understand how to manage more disability-friendly facilities and provide more inclusive services to all tourists. While training on safety and hospitality exists, training on accessibility and inclusive tourism management remains lacking. Rappaport (1987) states that effective empowerment can only be achieved through capacity building through training and education. Training for local communities is crucial to improving their skills in serving tourists from various backgrounds and ensuring that the tourism sector can develop inclusively. Therefore, it is crucial for the government and relevant organizations to provide more comprehensive training programs for local communities.

An Appropriate Empowerment Model for Inclusive Tourism Management and Development in the Bira Coastal Area

The management and development of inclusive tourism in the Bira Coast area can be designed based on community empowerment theory, which emphasizes capacity building, participation, and sustainability for local communities. This model must accommodate accessibility, active participation, and economic opportunities for all community groups, including vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, the elderly, and pregnant women. The following is an appropriate empowerment model based on community empowerment theory in the Bira Coast area:

Economic Empowerment Model

The Economic Empowerment Model aims to improve the welfare of local communities by expanding access to economic resources and creating inclusive business opportunities in the tourism sector. This model is implemented through providing skills training for communities to enable them to become tour guides, accommodation providers, and disability-friendly souvenir businesses, thereby enhancing their competency and providing alternative livelihoods. Furthermore, opening access to capital and technology is a key factor in supporting the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to become more competitive. This empowerment is supported by the existence of a business incubator that serves as a means of mentoring, advanced training, and expanding business networks for local communities in developing inclusive tourism businesses such as homestays and disability-friendly souvenirs. Furthermore, collaboration between the community, government, and the private sector is encouraged to strengthen market access, increase the competitiveness of local products, and ensure that community needs and interests are reflected in sustainable tourism development policies and programs.

Participatory Empowerment Model

The Participatory Empowerment Model aims to increase the active involvement of local communities in the entire management and development of inclusive tourism at Bira Beach through collaborative planning, implementation, and evaluation. This model emphasizes the importance of strengthening communication channels and partnerships between the government, community, and private sector to create effective and sustainable collaboration. An asset-based approach is implemented to explore and maximize local potential, enabling the community to play a key role in developing authentic tourism products. Furthermore, participatory research methods such as observation, interviews, and needs analysis are used to deeply understand community aspirations and problems, resulting in more targeted policies. Empowerment is also directly integrated into tourism product development, such as the management of disability-friendly homestays, thus not only improving service quality but also strengthening the community's sense of ownership of the tourism sector. Through this active involvement, tourism development at Bira Beach has significant potential to boost local community well-being while realizing inclusive and sustainable tourism.

Infrastructure and Accessibility Empowerment Model

The Infrastructure and Accessibility Empowerment Model aims to improve physical and digital accessibility for local communities and tourists, including people with disabilities, through the development and management of inclusive facilities. This model includes the provision of disability-friendly infrastructure such as level pedestrian paths, ramps, and designated parking spaces. This involves involving local communities in the construction and maintenance process to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility for the tourism environment. Furthermore,

mobility aids such as wheelchairs, accessible boats, and alternative tours tailored to the needs of visitors with hearing or visual impairments are provided to enhance the comfort and equity of the tourism experience. To ensure sustainability, local communities are also provided with training in the management and maintenance of accessibility facilities to develop additional skills, actively participate in strengthening tourism attractions, and support the creation of inclusive, sustainable, and vulnerable-focused tourism.

Technology and Information Empowerment Model

The Technology and Information Empowerment Model aims to enhance the empowerment of local communities in accessing information and utilizing technology to support inclusive tourism development, particularly at Bira Beach. This model is realized through the development of a disability-friendly digital platform in the form of a website and application that provides information in various formats such as text, audio, and video so that it can be accessed by all visitors without exception, while also functioning as a means of evaluation and communication between managers and tourists. To ensure sustainable management, local communities are provided with training in managing and updating tourism information content to ensure it remains relevant and accurate, while simultaneously creating job opportunities and encouraging the development of a digital-based local economy. In addition, socialization of the use of digital platforms is carried out so that the community is able to optimally utilize technology in promoting tourist destinations, creating attractive and easily accessible content, expanding market reach, and increasing interaction between tourists and the community, so that inclusive tourism can develop in a more participatory, effective, and sustainable manner.

Conclusion

Overall, despite the intention and initial efforts to improve physical accessibility at Bira Beach, disability-friendly facilities remain very limited, resulting in tourists with disabilities, the elderly, and pregnant women still facing difficulties in optimally accessing the tourist area, impacting the quality of their experience. Therefore, developing inclusive tourism at Bira Beach requires the implementation of an integrated empowerment model through three main approaches: economic empowerment, active community participation, and the use of technology and information. The community's dependence on the tourist season for income highlights the importance of more comprehensive skills training to expand business opportunities, while strengthening digital technology is necessary to improve promotion and provide easily accessible information to all visitors. Multistakeholder collaboration, ongoing training, and providing access to resources are key to strengthening community capacity in realizing inclusive, competitive, and sustainable tourism management.

Suggestion

To realize inclusive tourism that is accessible to all community groups, including people with disabilities, the elderly, and pregnant women, significant improvements in accessibility facilities are needed. One step that can be taken is to improve and provide disability-friendly facilities, such as smoother pedestrian paths, wheelchair ramps in all key areas, and other public facilities that are easily accessible to all groups. Furthermore, the government and the private sector need to collaborate to allocate an adequate budget for developing disability-friendly infrastructure. Involving local communities in the planning and maintenance of these facilities will also foster a sense of ownership and responsibility for managing accessibility in the Bira Beach area. To empower local communities in managing inclusive tourism, the government and relevant institutions need to provide more comprehensive training programs that cover skills in physical accessibility, inclusive tourism services, and tourism business management.

This training should be aimed at increasing the capacity of local communities to serve tourists from various backgrounds, especially those with special needs. Furthermore, providing training related to the use of disability-friendly digital technology is also crucial for promoting Bira Beach more widely and ensuring that information about inclusive tourism is accessible to all. Thus, empowerment through training will strengthen community participation in improving economic sustainability and the diversity of tourism products on Bira Beach.

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