

Effective Business Plan for Community-Based Ecotourism Village Development: A Case Study of Training in Cibodas Village, Bandung Regency

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Abstract

Cibodas Village, Bandung Regency, has a significant natural and geographical potential to be developed into a tourism village, particularly in the agritourism and ecotourism segments, supported by rice field landscapes, forests, and the superior commodity of chayote. However, the development of this tourism village is hampered by several issues, including the absence of investors for infrastructure, the scarcity of chayote derivative products, and limited local knowledge in tourism management. To overcome the main challenge of attracting investment, a formal instrument in the form of a comprehensive and convincing business plan is needed. This study aims to analyse how to create an effective business plan for a tourism village, prioritising financial feasibility and community-based sustainability. The method applied involves participatory training and mentoring for village stakeholders in developing the components of a business plan. The study results indicate that an effective business plan must integrate business dimensions (market, product, and measurable financial projections) with the principles of community-based ecotourism, particularly regarding cultural authenticity, environmental preservation, and fair benefit-sharing mechanisms, to ensure long-term community support and involvement. The resulting business plan becomes a strategic asset for Cibodas Village to attract investment, enhance local management capacity, and sustainably realise the village's economic potential.

Keywords: business plan, community-based ecotourism, tourism village, training

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I. Introduction

1.1. Background

The global tourism sector has undergone a fundamental transformation, with traveler interest increasingly shifting from standardized mass tourism offerings toward authentic, immersive, and community-led experiences (Ghina & Hatammimi, 2025; Coherent Market Insight, 2025). This trvel trend is driven by the search for authentic experiences and the desire to reconnect with nature, away from the hustle and bustle of urban life or rural escapes (The business research company, 2026). This shift has driven significant growth in the global rural tourism market, which is projected to reach USD 118.03 billion by 2025 (Takaendengan et al., 2022). Indonesia, with its wealth of villages with unique natural and cultural potential, has a significant opportunity to capitalize on this Community -Based Tourism (CBT) trend (Amalina & Listyorini, 2025).

Cibodas Village in Pasir Jambu District, Bandung Regency, is one of the areas designated as a Pioneer Tourism Village since December 2022 (Octavia et al., 2024). Situated at an altitude of 1,000–1,200 meters above sea level, the village boasts strong agrotourism and ecotourism potential, characterized by rice

paddies, protected forests, and abundant chayote production (Desa Cibodas, 2024). Specifically, the village's potential includes natural scenery for trekking, camping, and paragliding, as well as the presence of local arts such as Jaipong and Sisingaan dances that can be developed as attractions. Furthermore, Cibodas Village boasts a human resource advantage, with 20.33% of the population (approximately 1,706 people) identified as unemployed, creating a potential workforce ready to be involved in tourism management. The tourism village program aims to absorb labor and explore potential to improve the welfare of village communities, thus preventing urbanization (Adinugroho et al., 2023). A tourism village must possess three potential components. The first is the tourism potential available in a village or region. The second is the community's interest and readiness to jointly develop the tourism village. And finally, it must possess unique characteristics (Aminuddin et al., 2022). Three factors drive the development of a tourism village. First, a village must have traditions and culture that are still practiced and authentic. Second, the village environment must be pristine and unpolluted. And finally, the village must face slowing economic growth (Suwintari et al., 2023).

However, despite its legal capital and abundant potential, Cibodas Village faces serious challenges that hinder its transition from a start-up to a mature tourism village. Key issues identified through discussions with Cibodas Village stakeholders include the lack of investors to facilitate the development of the necessary infrastructure, a lack of knowledge to process chayote into derivative products, and limited understanding among local communities regarding tourism management and administration.

Given that infrastructure constraints require significant external investment, the proposed priority solution is the development of a professional business plan. This business plan serves as a strategic instrument that not only clarifies the village's vision but also demonstrates the financial and operational feasibility of the proposed tourism model to potential investors and stakeholders (Frontin, 2021). Therefore, this community service program focuses on training and mentoring in the development of a business plan for Cibodas Village's tourism packages, directly addressing the limited local management knowledge and providing the tools necessary to attract investment funds.

Thus, the research question that will be answered in this article is: How to compile an effective business plan for a tourist village that is able to attract investment and ensure community-based sustainability?

1.2. Literature Review

1.2.1. Concept and Principles of Community-Based Tourism (CBT)

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is a sustainable tourism model in which local communities play a central role in the planning, management, and ownership of tourism enterprises, so that net socio-economic benefits can be enjoyed directly by their members (Twining-Ward, 2007). CBT has evolved from a niche concept to a mainstream development strategy that seeks to balance economic growth with environmental conservation and social equity (Wang et al., 2025).

The main goals of CBT include:

1. **Economic Empowerment:** Creating employment opportunities (especially for women and youth), supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and ensuring that tourism revenues remain within the community (economic multiplier effect) (Compete Caribbean, 2019; World Bank, 2025).
2. **Cultural and Environmental Conservation:** Integrating local practices and traditions into tourism offerings, which provides incentives for communities to maintain their cultural and natural heritage (Study Smarter, 2024).

3. Capacity Building: Providing continuing training and education in hospitality, tour guiding, and business management skills to increase community self-reliance (Jackson, 2025).

The effectiveness of CBT depends heavily on its ability to integrate the three main pillars of sustainability—economic, social/cultural, and environmental—into every activity and business plan formulated (Compete Caribbean, 2019; Study Smarter, 2024)

1.2.2. Framework and Components of an Effective Business Plan for Tourism Villages

A business plan is a living document that summarizes a company's strategy and projected expected financial performance, serving as a roadmap and a crucial tool for raising capital (Jänis, 2023; Hatammimi et al., 2022). For CBT-based tourism villages, an effective business plan must encompass strategic elements that ensure sustainability and community ownership, going beyond traditional financial projections.

Based on the general business framework (Business Model Canvas/BMC) and CBT guidelines, the key components of a business plan for a tourism village include (Compete Caribbean, 2019):

Market Overview and Analysis

This section defines the village's unique selling proposition (USP) that differentiates it from competitors (Frontin, 2021). This USP should be rooted in natural assets, culture, or specific agricultural practices (such as the chayote commodity in Cibodas). Market analysis includes identifying the target tourist segment (Ideal Guest Profile), market trends (e.g., agritourism, eco-tourism), and understanding distribution channels .

Products and Marketing Strategy

CBT products should be developed as authentic, experience-driven experiences and professionally packaged. Strategies should include:

- Product Development: Transforming village assets (such as trekking or jaipong dance) into market-ready tourism packages .
- Pricing : Calculating the net rate that covers operational costs plus a profit margin, as well as the retail rate that takes into account commissions for travel agents or OTAs.
- Digital Marketing: Utilizing social media and SEO for digital storytelling and user-generated content (UGC) to reach modern target markets, which is an effective and low-cost promotional tool for MSMEs (Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009).

Community and Environmental Sustainability

This section is the key differentiator of a CBT Business Plan. Business plan's effectiveness is measured by its commitment to ensuring community benefits and environmental sustainability (Frontin, 2021; Compete Caribbean, 2019). Benefit-sharing mechanisms must be detailed transparently to prevent elite capture — where local elites monopolize tourism profits (Wang et al., 2025).

Financial Feasibility

This aspect is crucial for attracting investors. Financial feasibility is analyzed through (financial models lab, 2025):

- Start-up Costs and CAPEX: Calculate the initial investment for infrastructure and equipment.
- Working Capital : Funds needed to cover operating costs before income stabilizes.
- Financial Projections: Calculate the Net Present Value (NPV), Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR), and Internal Rate of Return (IRR) to measure long-term profitability. These projections should be realistic, reflecting the village's ability to handle high fixed costs in the early years.

1.2.3. Feasibility Analysis and Economic Impact

Tourism development, particularly communal homestays , has been shown to have a positive economic impact (multiplier effect), increase regional income (GRDP), and absorb local labor (financial models lab, 2025). Studies show that the communal homestay model has a positive NPV, $BCR > 1$, and a high IRR, indicating strong financial viability as a labor-intensive and resource-efficient business. This analysis provides an empirical basis for proving that investment in community-based tourism models is prospective.

II. Methods

2.1. Community Service Research Approach

This community service program adopts a qualitative-practical approach with a focus on improving the skills of the target community, in line with the Roadmap of the Digital Business and Entrepreneurship Research Group, School of Economics and Business, Telkom University.

The methods applied include four main pillars:

1. Participatory Approach: Encourage the active involvement of village stakeholders (Tourism Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis), Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES), and Youth Organizations) in every stage, from identifying potential to preparing business plans.
2. Practical and Contextual Approach: Training materials are tailored to the specific conditions of Cibodas Village (for example, the use of chayote and paragliding potential), ensuring that the resulting business plan is applicable and realistic.
3. Inclusive Mentoring: Provides direct and ongoing technical guidance to the working group, ensuring a thorough understanding of business concepts, financial planning, and effective marketing strategies.
4. Consultation and Feedback: Regular sessions to review the progress of the business plan, provide suggestions for improvements, and validate business assumptions.

2.2. Program Implementation Stages

The program is implemented in three main stages:

1. Preparation Stage: Conducting field observations to explore natural and cultural potential and collecting basic socio-economic data (e.g., number of unemployed/potential workforce, condition of road infrastructure).
2. Training Stage: Provides intensive training sessions on basic tourism business concepts, market research, segment identification, and procedures for compiling comprehensive business plan components, including financial projections.
3. Mentoring Phase: After training, facilitators assist tourism awareness group, village-owned enterprises, and youth organization in developing and finalizing detailed business plans for tourism packages. Regular evaluations and feedback are provided to refine the business plans and prepare them for presentation to potential investors.

Key partners in this program are the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES), and the Cibodas Village Youth Organization (Karang Taruna). Pokdarwis and Karang Taruna are responsible for data collection and market research, while BUMDES is targeted as the primary implementer, managing and implementing the post-validation business plan.

III. Results

3.1. Analysis of Potential and Critical Problems of Cibodas Village

Through the initial preparation and analysis stages, Cibodas Village was confirmed to have a strong foundation for a rural tourism model that targets tourists seeking authentic experiences and a connection to nature .

Key findings related to the potential that form the basis for developing tour packages are:

- Chayote Agrotourism: This primary commodity, although abundant, is still identified as a raw product. The potential for developing derivative products (multi-products) such as crafts or culinary delights (such as the Farm-to-Table or Food & Beverage Tour models) is still very limited and needs to be included in the Business Plan product development .
- Ecotourism and Hardcore Activities: The vast expanse of land and highlands support trekking and paragliding activities , which suit the Adventure Seekers and Eco-Tourists segments .
- Social Readiness: The high unemployment rate (20.33%) provides a ready supply of labor to be trained in tourism service skills (Capacity Building).

Findings related to critical issues that must be addressed in the business plan are:

- Infrastructure/Investment Needs: The presence of a solid business plan is mandatory to attract investors, addressing the lack of infrastructure identified as a major obstacle.
- Management Capacity: Lack of local understanding of management, digital marketing, and financial planning is a barrier to the transition to market-ready status .

3.2. Developing an Effective Business Plan for Cibodas

The mentoring process resulted in a consensus that the Cibodas Village business plan should focus on four strategic areas to ensure its effectiveness:

3.2.1. Definition of Core Product and USP

Core products are developed based on the integration of existing potentials:

- Farmer Agrotourism Package: Combines Farm-to-Table experiences and Agricultural Experience Activities (e.g., picking chayote, cooking local dishes). This addresses the issue of chayote product diversification.
- Ecotourism Trekking and Camping Ground: Utilizing the natural landscape for Wilderness and Forest Tourism , targeting Adventure Seekers .
- Cultural Authenticity Products: Packaging the arts of jaipong and sisingaan into structured and scheduled cultural attractions, making them market-ready .

3.2.2. Cost Structure and Financial Projections

Given the significant investment required, the financial analysis presented must be transparent and data-driven, demonstrating the feasibility of the venture. For example, using the projected startup costs of agritourism/rural tourism (which globally range from USD 450,000 to USD 650,000) as a baseline to estimate the CAPEX required for the visitor center and basic infrastructure. This approach allows:

- **BEP Calculation:** Determine a realistic break-even point based on fixed operational costs (tourism awareness group/core staff salaries, marketing, maintenance) and variable income (tour package/homestay rates).
- **Funding Model:** Identify funding sources, ranging from own capital (village-owned enterprises/local contributions), People's business loans (for example, soft loans for MSMEs), to equity from investors.

3.2.3. Digital Marketing Strategy

The marketing strategy is focused on strengthening the image of the tourist village through earned media and owned media :

- **Content Focus:** Digital storytelling about the authentic lives of chayote farmers, cultural traditions, and natural beauty, targeting Millennials and Gen Z who prioritize authenticity and social proof .
- **Accessibility:** Ensuring the online ordering system functions optimally and information is available across digital platforms .

3.2.4. Community Sustainability Commitment

Business Plan explicitly includes a commitment to benefit sharing, in line with the principles of CBT effectiveness:

- **Empowering Local Workforce:** Integrating 20.33% of the working age population into tourism operations (as trekking guides , homestay managers , or craftsmen of chayote derivative products).
- **Transparency Mechanism:** Propose the establishment of an oversight committee (as per best CBT practices) to ensure equitable allocation of tourism revenue and prevent elite capture.

IV. Discussion

The core question of this research, "How to develop an effective business plan for a tourism village?", is answered through a synthesis of best business practices and the CBT framework. The effectiveness of the business plan in the Cibodas context is measured by its ability to address key issues (investment and management) while ensuring social sustainability.

4.1. Business Plan as a Catalyst for Investment and Capacity Building

An effective business plan serves two purposes: as an internal tool for capacity building and an external tool for attracting investment.

4.1.1. Attracting Investment through Measurable Financial Feasibility

Cibodas Village explicitly requires investment for infrastructure development. Investors, both private and funding institutions (such as the People's Business Credit (KUR) or venture capital (VC), demand concrete

evidence that the project will provide adequate returns (Hatammimi et al., 2022) . Therefore, the effectiveness of a business plan lies in the accuracy and completeness of its financial analysis.

Business Plan must systematically calculate and project:

- Initial Capital Requirement (CAPEX): This calculation should include the cost of building a visitor center , camping ground facilities , and renovations for the homestay (referring to general estimates of agritourism where the initial CAPEX reaches around USD 525,000) (financial models lab, 2025).
- Feasibility Criteria: The use of NPV, BCR, and IRR metrics is crucial. A study on communal homestays showed that a larger-scale model (Model 1C) provided the highest NPV and IRR values, reaching an NPV of up to IDR 1.14 billion and an IRR of 61.15%, proving that large-scale accommodation collaborations are highly feasible. An effective business plan should adopt the communal homestay model to mitigate individual capital risk and maximize the multiplier effect (Takaendengan et al., 2022).

4.1.2. Business Plan as a Medium for Increasing Local Capacity

business plan development process itself is a vital capacity-building mechanism, addressing the limited knowledge of tourism management in Cibodas. The active involvement of (tourism awareness group, village-owned enterprises, and youth organization in training on strategic planning, pricing (understanding Net Rate vs. Retail Rate), and cash flow projections empowers them to make independent business decisions in the future. The effectiveness of the business plan here lies in the use of the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) framework to set goals, ensuring that the plan is actionable and controlled by local management (Compete Caribbean, 2019).

4.2. Integrating Business Models with CBT Principles

The effectiveness of a tourism village business plan is measured not only by profitability but also by the extent to which it ensures social and environmental sustainability. This requires the integration of CBT principles into the business architecture (Compete Caribbean, 2019).

4.2.1. Building Product Authenticity and Uniqueness

business plan must define a strong Unique Selling Propositions (USP), for example by promoting chayote agrotourism and authentic local dance. Cultural authenticity is measured by the extent to which the experiences offered truly reflect local life, traditions, and way of life without being engineered for tourists (cultural commodification) (Compete Caribbean, 2019; study smarter, 2024; Amalina & Listyorini, 2025). Transforming chayote products into derivative products or farm-to-table attractions is an effective strategy to increase appeal.

4.2.2. Elite Capture Risk and Benefit Sharing

One of the biggest challenges in community-driven development is elite capture, where local elites can dominate project benefits (Ghina & Hatammimi, 2025; Jackson, 2025) . An effective business plan should include transparent and democratic governance mechanisms, such as:

- Oversight Committee: Formation of an independent oversight committee from various levels of society to monitor contracts, procurement, and financial integrity.

- Public disclosure policies on project budgets and fair profit-sharing mechanisms among community members (tourism group, village-owned enterprises, and non-homestay owners) (Takaendengan et al., 2002). An effective business plan model ensures that the involvement of elites (who may have better access and resources) is benevolent or serves the needs of the community as a whole.

4.3. Digital Marketing Strategy and Partnerships

The effectiveness of a business plan also depends on a realistic go-to-market strategy in the digital age. Digital marketing is an effective tool for micro and small businesses with limited budgets (Hatammimi et al., 2022).

- ICT Integration: Developing an online presence (simple website/blog, social media) for digital storytelling about Cibodas, utilizing authentic photos and videos to attract the Millennials and Gen Z segments (Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009).
- Strategic Partnerships: Building alliances with parties capable of providing market access that Cibodas lacks. This includes partnerships with inbound tour operators specializing in ecotourism or government agencies (such as the Tourism Office) to gain visibility and policy support. Partnerships with universities are also crucial to provide research expertise and sustainable capacity building (Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009).

V. Conclusions and Suggestions

5.1. Conclusions

The development of an effective business plan for Cibodas Village, with research questions focused on investment attractiveness and sustainability, must be based on a comprehensive strategic business framework that integrates financial strength with Community-Based Tourism principles.

The effectiveness of a business plan is determined by:

1. Investment Attractiveness: The business plan must present clear and feasible financial projections (using NPV, BCR, IRR, and BEP) to validate the need for infrastructure and operational investments.
2. Local Capacity Building: The business plan development process serves as management training for tourism group and village-owned enterprises, enabling them to identify Unique Selling Propositions (such as chayote agrotourism), package products, and measure business performance.
3. Community Sustainability: An effective business plan must explicitly include a commitment to community contributions and transparent governance mechanisms for equitable benefit sharing, ensuring broad community support and mitigating the risks of elite capture and cultural commodification.

Through this framework, the business plan can transition from a mere document to a tool that empowers communities to manage their own economic destiny, transforming natural potential into sustainable business assets.

5.2. Suggestions

To ensure the sustainability of the program and to ensure that the business plan that has been prepared produces real impact, several strategic suggestions are proposed:

1. Implementation and investment mobilization phase: village-owned enterprises, as the main implementer, must be accompanied in the post-business plan validation phase, especially in presenting the business plan to potential investors and facilitating the agreed capital structure.
2. Performance monitoring and evaluation system: Cibodas Village needs to adopt a structured and sustainable monitoring framework. Monitored indicators should include not only conventional business performance (occupancy rates, revenue growth), but also social and environmental indicators to measure the impact of Community-Based Tourism. Examples of indicators include: the percentage of tourism revenue distributed fairly, the level of community satisfaction with tourism (including a sense of ownership and pride), and the effectiveness of local cultural preservation programs (e.g., the sustainability of dance studios).
3. Strengthening operational digitalization: Given the high demand for online bookings and efficient communication, villages are advised to adopt simple technology solutions (such as WhatsApp-based chatbots or e-booking systems) to improve service responsiveness and operational efficiency, especially in the homestay and tour package booking segments.

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