

## **Connecting The Cleaning of Palu Beach with MSME Development: Community Service Efforts for Sustainable Economic Growth**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Beach cleaning is one of the important efforts in maintaining environmental sustainability while also supporting the development of ecotourism. In the city of Palu, community service efforts through beach clean-ups aim not only to improve environmental cleanliness and health but also to encourage local economic growth, particularly through the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector. This article examines the relationship between the cleaning of Palu's coastline and the empowerment of local SMEs. In addition, this research also highlights the economic impact generated, both in the form of new job creation in the tourism and MSME sectors, as well as the increased attraction for tourists. Through a community service-based approach, this initiative is expected to strengthen the synergy between environmental conservation and sustainable economic development in Palu. The results show that beach cleanups not only contribute to environmental cleanliness but also provide opportunities for SMEs to grow and play a role in promoting a more sustainable economy.

**How to Cite:** Jalil, A., Noval, N., Pakkawaru, I., Nuriatullah, Nurfitriani, & Handayani, I. (2024). Connecting The Cleaning of Palu Beach with MSME Development: Community Service Efforts for Sustainable Economic Growth. *Journal of Community Service: In Economics, Business, and Islamic Finance*, 2(1), 10–16. <https://doi.org/10.24239/jcsebif.v2i1.3918.10-16>.

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### **ARTICLE INFORMATION**

#### **History of article:**

Received:

15 July 2024

Revised:

18 August 2024

Accepted:

10 September 2024

Published:

31 December 2024

#### **Keywords:**

Community service,  
sustainable, MSME.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Palu, a coastal city located in Central Sulawesi, has extraordinary natural tourism potential, with beautiful beaches and rich marine biodiversity. However, this city also faces significant challenges in maintaining cleanliness and environmental sustainability, especially after various natural disasters, including the earthquake and tsunami in 2018

(Kurumbatu & Sudarji, 2018). The disaster not only caused significant physical damage (Rindrasih, 2019; Schrank et al., 2013), but also affected coastal ecosystems and coastal areas, as well as damaging infrastructure that supports the tourism sector and the local economy (Sofyan et al., 2023). Beach cleaning has become one of the important steps to restore environmental conditions and rebuild the disrupted ecotourism potential.

Efforts to clean up the beach after a natural disaster not only focus on physical recovery but also play an important role in raising public awareness about the importance of environmental preservation (Indrayani et al., 2024). Beach cleanups conducted by the local community, along with support from various parties, can reduce the negative impact of waste and pollution that may arise due to disasters. This activity also serves as a platform to strengthen the sense of togetherness and solidarity among the community (Harinawati et al., 2022), while simultaneously teaching the values of sustainability in natural resource management.

In addition, beach cleaning can have a direct impact on the local economy, particularly the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector. The tourism sector, which had been halted due to the disaster, can recover through efforts to maintain the cleanliness and preservation of the beach. The preserved natural beauty and cleanliness of the beach will attract tourists back, providing opportunities for local SMEs to develop their businesses, such as offering food, crafts, and tourism services that support ecotourism. Thus, post-disaster beach cleaning can become one of the driving forces to revive the local economy and strengthen the MSME sector as the backbone of the economy.

After a natural disaster, communities often face significant challenges in restoring their social and economic conditions (Morrish & Jones, 2020). In Palu, many SMEs were affected, both in terms of physical damage and a decrease in the number of tourists. Therefore, the development of ecotourism-based MSMEs that support environmental conservation activities, such as beach clean-ups, becomes important to encourage a more sustainable economy. Local MSMEs that prioritize environmentally friendly products and services can play an active role in post-disaster recovery by creating new business opportunities that support ecotourism principles.

Through community service in beach clean-up, the people of Palu can be directly involved in efforts to restore the environment and promote more sustainable economic development. Collaboration between the community, government, and private sector in post-disaster beach cleanup activities will strengthen social bonds and create an economic development model based on environmental preservation. This activity also encourages public awareness to be more concerned about environmental sustainability and enhances their capacity to face natural disasters in the future.

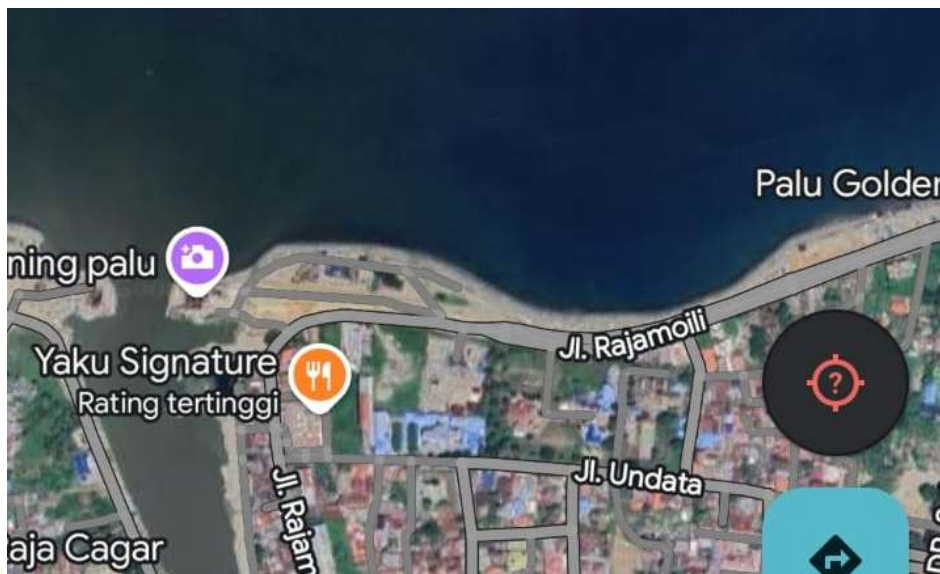
In this article, it will be discussed how the post-disaster beach cleanup in Palu can support the development of MSMEs and promote ecotourism awareness in the community. This research aims to explore the relationship between environmental recovery efforts, MSME empowerment, and sustainable economic development post-disaster. It is

hoped that the findings of this research can provide an overview of strategies for developing ecotourism-based regions that involve MSMEs as one of the main pillars in building a resilient and sustainable post-disaster economy.

## METHODS

This activity began with the formation of an implementation team from the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business at UIN Datokarama Palu, followed by a location survey to identify and determine urgent issues that need to be addressed. Surveys were conducted in several locations, with consultations involving community leaders and government officials regarding areas that require attention for the sustainability of MSME businesses in the coastal areas of Palu City.

Next, the implementation team communicated with several universities in the city of Palu to involve them directly, namely Alkhairaat University and Abdul Azis Lamadjido University, as well as collaboration partners from Universiti Sains Malaysia and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The results of the team's survey were then coordinated with teams from other campuses, and outreach activities were conducted over two days with students on their respective campuses and the local community in the coastal areas of Palu City, including several business owners.



**Figure 1.** Location of the Activity

The beach cleaning activity was carried out over one day, during which organic and non-organic waste were separated. At the end of the activity, an evaluation was held, followed by socialization on the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness, especially in preserving the coastal ecosystem, to the community and students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The beach cleanup activities conducted in the coastal area of Palu City were successfully carried out with the active participation of students and the local community. The implementation team, consisting of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business at UIN Datokarama Palu, Alkhairaat University, and Abdul Azis Lamadjido University, conducted a survey to determine beach locations that require special attention. The survey was conducted by consulting with community leaders and government officials to identify areas with more urgent environmental issues, such as plastic waste and other pollutants.

After determining the relevant locations, the implementation team held a beach cleanup activity that lasted for one day. During the activity, the waste found was separated into organic and inorganic waste, which was then collected for further processing. This activity successfully collected hundreds of kilograms of non-organic waste, such as plastic and styrofoam, which are major issues on the coastal beaches of Palu City. This cleanup not only improves environmental cleanliness but also has a direct impact on the aesthetics of cleaner and tidier beaches, which is important for attracting tourists.

### ***Impact Activities towards MSMEs and the Ecosystem***

This beach cleanup not only has a positive impact on environmental cleanliness (Nisak et al., 2023), but also plays a role in supporting the development of MSMEs, particularly those related to the tourism and ecotourism sectors. One of the objectives of this activity is to raise public awareness about the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness, especially for MSMEs located in coastal areas. SMEs, such as food stalls, souvenir shops, and tour service providers, are highly dependent on the condition of the surrounding environment. A clean and well-preserved beach will enhance tourist attraction, which in turn can increase income for MSME operators.



**Figure 2.** Coastal Cleanup of Palu City  
Source: Author's Documentation 2024

This activity also successfully involved students and the community in the process of developing ecotourism awareness. With the socialization about the importance of maintaining beach cleanliness and the preservation of coastal ecosystems, the community and students have



become more aware of the direct relationship between a clean environment and the economic potential that can be developed through the ecotourism sector. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) that depend on this sector are beginning to realize the importance of adapting to environmentally friendly practices so that their businesses can survive and thrive in the future.

### ***Post-Activity Evaluation and Socialization***

At the end of the cleaning activity, an evaluation was conducted involving all parties involved, including students, the community, and MSME actors. This evaluation aims to assess the effectiveness of the cleaning activities and their impact on the awareness of the community and students regarding the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness. In the evaluation, the community and students were given further socialization about waste management, reducing plastic waste, and the importance of maintaining the balance of coastal ecosystems.

In addition, this socialization also educates MSME actors to integrate ecotourism principles into their businesses, such as reducing the use of single-use plastics and utilizing environmentally friendly local materials for their products. This socialization aims to encourage SMEs to play a more active role in preserving the beach and coastal ecosystems, which in turn will enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of their businesses in the long run.



**Figure 3.** Guidance on the Importance of Preserving Coastal Ecosystems  
Source: Author's Documentation 2024

This beach cleanup activity demonstrates that with good cooperation and a high level of awareness regarding the importance of environmental preservation, we can create a sustainable positive impact both for the environment and the local economy, especially for the MSME sector which is the backbone of the economy in the coastal areas of Palu City.

The success of this activity is inseparable from the solid collaboration between the implementing team, the university, the government, and the local community. The involvement of various parties

in the beach cleanup activities is crucial in creating collective awareness towards environmental preservation and the development of an ecotourism-based economy. The active participation of the community and students involved in this activity also shows that community service efforts can drive sustainable positive change at the local level.

At the end of the beach cleanup activities, it is very important to remind the community and MSME actors about their role in maintaining the cleaned beach ecosystem. The sustainability of this ecosystem depends on a joint commitment not only to maintain cleanliness but also to protect the natural habitats around the beach. Without sustainable awareness, the cleaning efforts undertaken will only be temporary and will not have a long-term impact on environmental preservation. Therefore, every individual must actively participate in minimizing waste, especially plastic waste, and promoting a more environmentally friendly lifestyle to maintain the sustainability of coastal ecosystems.

Moreover, awareness of the importance of preserving coastal ecosystems also directly impacts the local economy, especially for SMEs operating in the tourism and ecotourism sectors. A clean and healthy beach will increasingly attract tourists, which in turn boosts the income of MSMEs. Therefore, maintaining the cleanliness and preservation of the beach is not only an ecological duty but also a long-term investment for the economic growth of the region. In this case, beach cleaning activities should be seen as part of a larger effort to create sustainable tourism and support SMEs to continue developing in conditions that promote environmental sustainability.

## CONCLUSIONS

The coastal cleanup activity in Palu City is one form of community service that not only aims to maintain environmental cleanliness but also to foster collective awareness of the importance of preserving coastal ecosystems. Through the active participation of various parties, including students, the community, and UMKM (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) actors, this activity demonstrates that joint efforts in environmental conservation can have a significant impact on both the ecosystem and the local economy.

With the successful implementation of this beach cleanup, it is hoped that the community will increasingly recognize the importance of maintaining beach cleanliness as part of a shared responsibility for environmental preservation. In addition, this activity serves as a momentum to encourage the development of UMKM based on ecotourism, which can support sustainable economic growth in Palu City.

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