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Toward World Heritage Nomination: Governance Challenges and Community Entrepreneurship in the Wolio Fortress Landscape

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the governance challenges and community-based entrepreneurship opportunities influencing the readiness of the Wolio Fortress Landscape, Baubau, Indonesia, for World Heritage nomination. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research combines document analysis of the Wolio Fortress nomination dossier with stakeholder perspectives, informed by recent scholarship on urban heritage governance, living heritage, and sustainable tourism. The findings show that Wolio represents a multi-layered heritage landscape with strong historical, cultural, religious, and political significance as the former center of the Buton Sultanate. However, its nomination readiness remains constrained by fragmented governance, weak institutional coordination, limited community influence in decision-making, and increasing pressures from urban transformation and tourism development. The study emphasizes that Wolio should be understood not merely as a defensive structure, but as a living heritage landscape shaped by the dynamic interaction between physical attributes, local institutions, and everyday practices. Within this framework, community-based entrepreneurship emerges as a strategic mechanism to bridge heritage conservation and local well-being through heritage interpretation, cultural experiences, and community-led tourism services. This article argues that advancing the Wolio Fortress Landscape toward World Heritage nomination requires integrated governance, meaningful community participation, equitable benefit-sharing, and adaptive monitoring systems. These elements are essential for strengthening nomination readiness and ensuring the long-term sustainability of heritage tourism.

Keywords: *World heritage nomination, Heritage governance, Living heritage landscape, Community-based entrepreneurship, Sustainable heritage tourism*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, urban World Heritage management has evolved beyond physical preservation toward a more complex integration of governance, community engagement, and sustainable development. Recent literature shows that the management of urban World Heritage Sites lies at the intersection of heritage management, community engagement, tourism pressures, and policy issues, so that the success of a nomination is determined not only by the strength of heritage values, but also by the capacity of governance that is able to bridge conservation, community well-being, and sustainable development of the area [1], [2], [16]. Within this perspective, the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach frames heritage as a dynamic system integrating spatial, social, and cultural processes [2], [16].

Contemporary heritage studies emphasize that heritage is not a static object but a social process shaped by memory, identity, and everyday practices. This shift has given rise to a people-centered approach that positions communities not merely as beneficiaries or objects of policy, but as actors who contribute to shaping, interpreting, and preserving heritage in everyday life [3], [22]. However, various studies also demonstrate that the language of participation does not automatically generate

real community agency. In many cases, seemingly inclusive forums remain constrained by authorized heritage discourse, unequal distribution of resources, and a tourism market orientation that pushes heritage into an economic commodity rather than a living heritage constructed collectively [3], [4], [24], [31], [32].

This issue becomes even more crucial in the context of historic fort areas, as forts were never simply defensive structures. Fort heritage in various regions shows that forts are layered landscapes that record power, trade, mobility, coloniality, memory, and identity, while also becoming spaces of contestation between official narratives, tourism, and the experiences of local communities [5], [6]. In the context of Eastern Indonesia, studies of fort heritage in Ternate show that colonial and postcolonial forts can function as spaces of nostalgia, tourist attractions, and also as a means of community engagement in renegotiating the meaning of local history [5]. This perspective is important for Wolio, as it positions forts not as inanimate objects, but as dynamic social spaces shaped by memory, identity, and contemporary needs.

Wolio Fortress can also be understood within a broader maritime landscape shaped by networks of mobility, trade, and cultural exchange. Literature on maritime heritage shows that maritime heritage is too often interpreted from a land-based, material-centric perspective, even though maritime spaces harbor networks of mobility, trade, power, and cultural connectivity that profoundly shape the region's history [7]. This reading is crucial for Wolio because the relationship between Buton, shipping networks, Islamization, and inter-island relations are crucial to the region's historical significance.

Locally, related studies indicate that the Wolio area has been inhabited since the late 13th century by the *Mia Patamiana* group (four immigrants from the Johor Peninsula), then developed through three major cultural phases: the mia patamiana phase, the kingdom phase, and the sultanate phase [1]. Construction of Wolio Fortress itself began during the reign of Sultan Qaimuddin and was completed during the reign of Sultan Abdul Gafur Wadudu. Therefore, this area not only represents a single episode in fortification construction, but also records the long continuity of Wolio's history as the center of government, defense, culture, and Islamic propagation of the Buton Sultanate. Inside the fort there are 12 lawa 'gates', 16 baluara 'bastions', 21 limbo 'resident units', various physical and non-physical remains, as well as spatial functions that indicate a high level of socio-political and cultural organization [1]. In addition, studies on the Grand Mosque of the Buton Sultanate show that the landscape of the Buton Palace Fortress is also connected to the philosophy of Bhinci-bhinciki Kuli 'pinching a little skin', the teachings of Buton Sufism, as well as the relationship between *Sara Ogena* (Large Institution) which refers to the Sultanate Institution in general and *Sara Kidhina* (Small Institution) which refers to the Religious Customary Institution, in the formation of the Buton socio-political order [8]. Thus, Wolio Fortress cannot be understood only as a defensive structure, but as a space of government, religion, customs, and social ethics that are intertwined. These elements collectively reinforce Wolio as a multi-layered heritage landscape rather than a single historical structure.

The significance of Wolio Fortress is further strengthened by the area's national cultural heritage status and its preparation for World Heritage nomination. However, studies of the Wolio Fortress area indicate real threats in the form of uncontrolled residential growth within the area, the transformation of traditional Bhanua Tadha houses into modern architecture, high vehicle traffic, weak regulations specific to the area, and the absence of a single, strong management institution [1]. These pressures become increasingly significant as tourist visits continue to grow and the area becomes more open to economic and tourism development [1]. In the context of urban heritage management, this situation reflects the gap between high heritage value and still-developing management capacity [2], [10], [14].

At the academic level, numerous studies have addressed urban World Heritage management, community engagement, tourism pressures, and people-centered conservation [2], [3], [16]. However, limited studies integrate World Heritage nomination readiness, governance challenges, and community-based entrepreneurship within a single analytical framework, particularly in living heritage landscapes. Some studies emphasize the management of inscribed sites, others focus on the conflict between conservation and tourism, while the community entrepreneurship dimension is often discussed separately from the issues of attributes, values, and readiness for nomination [9], [13], [35]. However, in the context of an area like Wolio, readiness for nomination is highly dependent on the ability to link conservation with equitable socio-economic benefits for the core community.

This article argues that Wolio Fortress should be conceptualized as a multi-layered heritage landscape requiring integrated governance, substantive community participation, and culturally grounded entrepreneurship. Instead, readiness for World Heritage nomination must be built through an integration of detailed identification of heritage attributes and values, truly people-centered multi-stakeholder governance, substantive engagement with the core community, strengthened heritage interpretation, and the development of community-based entrepreneurship rooted in Wolio cultural identity. From this perspective, community-based entrepreneurship is not a cosmetic addition, but rather a crucial mechanism for bridging conservation with local well-being, while simultaneously bridging the gap between heritage as an official category and heritage as a living space [9], [17], [18], [21].

This research integrates World Heritage nomination readiness, governance challenges, and community-based

entrepreneurship within a single analytical framework, specifically within the context of a living heritage landscape. Unlike previous studies that tend to address these aspects separately, this research positions the Wolio Fortress Landscape as a dynamic system shaped by the interaction of spatial, social, and institutional factors. Within this framework, the research also proposes a co-management approach and adaptive monitoring as a basis for strengthening the sustainability of area management.

Based on this framework, this study asks three main questions: (1) what governance challenges influence the readiness of the Wolio Fortress Landscape for World Heritage submission; (2) what is the position and involvement of local communities in the management of the area and the distribution of the resulting benefits; and (3) what community-based entrepreneurship strategies are most relevant to support the development of sustainable heritage tourism. This study aims to answer these questions through an analysis of the dynamics of governance, community participation, and entrepreneurial opportunities in the Wolio Fortress Landscape, in order to formulate a management direction that supports both heritage preservation and local economic sustainability.

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2. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. World Heritage, OUV and Nomination Readiness

World Heritage nomination readiness refers to the capacity to articulate, demonstrate, and sustainably manage heritage values beyond administrative preparation. The proposal document for Wolio Fort indicates that the nomination agenda includes identifying history, attributes, justification of values, conservation conditions, threats, and protection and management mechanisms [1]. Recent literature supports this. Rey-Pérez et al. assert that many World Heritage properties still rely on outdated inscription dossiers that are insufficiently detailed to assess change, even though more detailed identification of heritage attributes and values is crucial for prioritizing protection and controlling interventions [10]. Furthermore, current urban WHS management demands the integration of management plans, community engagement, tourism pressures, and policy concerns [2].

Nomination readiness must also address the alignment between officially defined heritage values and locally experienced meanings. Lin points out that in the case of Quanzhou, residents partially accepted the OUV and authenticity narratives, but also expanded them through daily values, local memory, and everyday life experiences [17]. In other words, readiness is not only about the coherence of argumentation for international evaluators, but also about the ability to bridge global values and local meanings. This is in line with the findings of Molina et al. that citizens' perceptions of World Heritage values are often not identical to the official OUV framework, because citizens place more emphasis on everyday values, local identity, and spatial experiences [21].

2. Governance

Heritage governance fundamentally concerns the distribution of power, authority, and decision-making capacity. Sun et al. show that even when people-centered language is used, community agency can still be diminished due to the dominance of official discourse, unequal resource governance, and a tourism market orientation [3]. Kang et al. clarify that participation can be tokenistic, consultative, or even empowered co-production [4]. Many heritage processes appear participatory but remain limited to tokenistic or consultative forms without real decision-making influence.

This critique is reinforced by Pastor Pérez and Colomer, who point out that authorized participation often makes participation appear inclusive, even though the issues discussed, the boundaries of discussion, and the parameters of decisions are framed from above [24]. Baker et al. even show that heritage consultation can result in symbolic violence when core communities function only as complementary legitimators [11]. At the global level, Starrenburg asserts that participation in global cultural heritage governance remains too state-dominated, while affected heritage communities have not been given adequate space for influence [30]. When read together, this literature underscores that the governance of Benteng Wolio must go beyond symbolic consultation and move towards recognizing the core community as custodians who have knowledge, interests, and rights over the future of the area.

3. Fort as Lanscape

Fort heritage literature conceptualizes forts as layered heritage landscapes rather than isolated defensive structures. Lukito et al. show that fort heritage in Ternate shapes local collective identity and memory, while also serving as a space for negotiation between nostalgia, tourism, and community engagement [5]. Youn and Bae emphasize that adaptive heritage is not solely determined by material integrity, but also by its ability to revitalize collective memory and the continuity of meaning [12]. In the Wolio context, these two perspectives are crucial because the fort area encompasses not only walls, gates, and bastions, but also governmental, religious, residential, and local institutional functions that persist to this day [1], [8].

This perspective is further strengthened by the concept of ordinary or everyday heritage. Jhearmaneechotechai suggests that the urban

heritage of ordinary people, such as shophouses, alleys, small sacred sites, and other everyday elements, is as important as large monuments in shaping the character of a region [23]. Bonnin and Moore-Cherry demonstrate that livelihood buildings can also be understood as everyday heritage worthy of protection [18]. This provides a strong theoretical basis for viewing Wolio not only from the monumental attributes of the fort, but also from the daily living practices, social spaces, and economics that support the sustainability of the area..

The living heritage approach is also enriched by Vanier et al., who show that living sites need to be understood through the relationship between archaeological data, ecological knowledge, archives, and community memory [19]. In the context of Indonesia and Asia, Kim and Kim show that preserving living heritage at the block and district level requires citizen awareness, community consensus, and a broader reading of the area than a single building [29]. In this way, Wolio Fort can be positioned as a living heritage landscape whose primary value lies in the dynamic relationship between its physical attributes, traditions, community, and social landscape.

4. Hul & Layering

The Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) framework provides a basis for understanding heritage as a layered system integrating spatial, social, and temporal dimensions. Rong points out that HUL research is now moving from static preservation to adaptive reuse, cultural tourism, monitoring tools, and technology integration, although it remains weak in terms of social equity and ecological sustainability [16]. Lang, Wei, and Han demonstrate that historic cities can be read through layering based on historical maps, GIS, and spatial syntax, allowing elements with high continuity and reuse priorities to be more accurately identified [24]. Meanwhile, Wu et al. demonstrate that cultural landscapes are natural-social composite systems that operate through relationships between space, infrastructure, community, and resource governance [25].

This perspective is crucial for Wolio because the fort does not stand alone. It is connected to limbo, roads, houses, mosques, tombs, water sources, and spatial functions that have evolved over time [1]. Therefore, Wolio's nomination and management need to be built on a regional scale, not just the scale of a single fort element. The HUL approach allows for a more coherent reading of history, spatial morphology, social dynamics, and contemporary regional development.

5. Tourism and Entrepreneurship

Heritage tourism literature conceptualizes visitor experience as a multidimensional process influencing conservation attitudes and behaviors. Nian et al. showed that tourist experience, service quality, and OUV appeal positively influence perceived value, satisfaction, and conservation intentions [13]. Fernández Gallardo and Hernández Rojas demonstrated that sustainability-oriented tourist services correlate with satisfaction, loyalty, revisit intention, and willingness to recommend World Heritage cities [35]. Mele and Egberts added that tourism narratives can shift between authorized heritage discourse and counter-narratives that are more multisensory, sustainable, and close to local communities [26]. Yang et al. also demonstrated that cultural space significantly influences aesthetic experience through aesthetic association and aesthetic comprehension [27].

In the context of historic areas, Tao et al. demonstrated that tourism economic resilience grows from a combination of resident engagement, cultural and creative industry empowerment, folklore community collaborative governance, and host-guest symbiosis [9]. Wang, Zheng, and Hou added that the involvement of the younger generation in cultural preservation moves through the perception-identity-action pathway, with cultural confidence and institutional support as important links [33]. Thus, community-based entrepreneurship should be framed as an integrated strategy linking heritage conservation, local identity, and visitor experience.

6. Risk & Monitoring

Nomination readiness requires the capacity to assess vulnerabilities and manage change through adaptive monitoring. Bajracharya points out that World Heritage sites in developing Asian countries face high threats from climate change, sudden ecological-geological events, and local conditions that damage the physical fabric, while the adaptive capacity of their management is often insufficient [14]. Wang et al. in the case of Datong show that investment-driven transformation of historical cities can trigger tenant and function homogenization, coordination friction, pressure on authenticity/integrity, and the need for monitoring toolkits based on simple but auditable indicators [28].

On the technical side, Zalbidea-Muñoz et al. showed that remote monitoring and IoT can strengthen preventive conservation through continuous environmental data and more precise diagnoses [15]. Hallgren et al. cautioned that even in collaborative forums, issues can arise at the procedural level, namely when certain issues can be discussed, by whom, and within what framework [32]. Therefore, Wolio monitoring is not limited to physical inspections, but needs to simultaneously

examine attribute conditions, changes in spatial function, tourism pressures, quality of participation, and institutional response capacity.

3. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative case study approach to analyze governance challenges and community-based entrepreneurship opportunities in the Wolio Fortress area's readiness for World Heritage nomination. This design was chosen based on the research problem's nature, which relates not only to the physical condition of the property but also to the relationship between heritage values, management systems, community involvement, pressures on spatial use, and the direction of tourism development [1]–[4]. Therefore, this research does not attempt to statistically test causal relationships, but rather to deeply understand how governance, participation, and local economic development are intertwined within the context of a living heritage.

The research location is the Wolio Fortress area, also known as the Buton Palace Fortress, in Baubau City, Southeast Sulawesi. This area was chosen because of its importance as the center of government, defense, religion, and culture of the Buton Sultanate, and is currently being prepared within the framework of a World Heritage proposal [1]. The research focuses on three main dimensions: (1) governance challenges that influence nomination readiness, (2) forms of community involvement and benefit distribution in area management, and (3) opportunities for community-based entrepreneurship that can support sustainable heritage tourism [1], [9], [10].

This study utilized two data sources: documentary data and field data. The primary documentary data came from the Document for Proposing the Buton Palace Fortress as a World Heritage Site [1]. This document was analyzed to understand the area's development history, property attributes, justification for OUV (Outstanding Value), conservation status, threats, protection, management, and monitoring and evaluation agendas. Field data were obtained from the perspectives of stakeholders directly connected to the area, such as local government officials, cultural heritage conservationists, traditional or religious leaders, representatives of the area's residents, tourism stakeholders, and local businesses [2], [3], [11].

Selection criteria included (1) direct involvement in heritage management or community activities, (2) knowledge of Wolio Fortress governance and history, and (3) representation of different stakeholder groups within the heritage landscape. A total of 18 informants participated in this study, consisting of 4 local government officials, 3 cultural heritage experts, 3 customary and religious leaders, 4 local residents, and 4 tourism stakeholders. Informants were selected based on their roles, knowledge, and direct involvement in the management and everyday use of the Wolio Fortress Landscape.This strategy was used because the study did not aim to obtain statistical representation, but rather to capture rich and relevant perspectives on nomination readiness, management practices, and the dynamics of area use. The use of purposive sampling in qualitative heritage studies aligns with previous research emphasizing the importance of role-diverse sampling to capture the experiences of actors with different positions within a heritage landscape [17], [18], [26].

Data were collected using four techniques: document analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and field observations. The data collection process was conducted over three months. A total of 18 interviews were carried out, each lasting 45–90 minutes, along with 2 FGDs involving 6–8 participants each. Document analysis was used to examine official narratives and policy frameworks, while interviews and FGDs explored governance, community perspectives, and emerging issues. Field observations were conducted across key zones within the Wolio Fortress Landscape to document spatial use, visitor activities, and ongoing changes in the area.

Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis to identify patterns of meaning across multiple data sources. The analysis process included data familiarization, iterative coding, theme development, and interpretive synthesis. Initial codes were generated from interview data, focus group discussions (FGDs), documents, and field notes, which were then grouped into broader thematic categories. The analysis focused on five main themes: governance fragmentation, community participation and benefit distribution, tensions between conservation and tourism development, community-based entrepreneurship opportunities, and the need for monitoring and adaptive management. This approach enabled researchers to identify recurring patterns of meaning while still considering the context and positionality of the actors involved [17], [18], [22].

The validity of the data in this study was ensured through triangulation of data sources, namely by integrating the results of document analysis, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and field observations, as well as through adequate researcher involvement in the field and systematic documentation of the analysis process. Ethical considerations in this study include providing informed consent from participants, maintaining the confidentiality of participant identities, respecting local knowledge, and responsible use of data to support the management of the Wolio Fortress Landscape as a sustainable living heritage.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Governance Challenges in the Wolio Fortress Landscape

The research findings indicate that the primary challenge in managing the Wolio Fortress area in Buton lies in the lack of a coherent relationship between heritage values, institutional structures, and changes to the site. The nomination proposal document asserts that one of the greatest threats to the site's integrity is its urban location, with its dynamic residential growth within the fort, high vehicle traffic, weak enforcement of protection regulations, and the absence of a dedicated agency fully responsible for managing the site. [1]. In the context of an urban World Heritage site, these problems demonstrate that the primary issue is not simply physical preservation, but the weak integration between governance, planning, and day-to-day management [2], [16].

Empirically, these conditions demonstrate that Wolio Fortress exists in a situation that can be described as a governance gap. On the one hand, protection instruments from the central, provincial, and regional governments are already in place; on the other hand, the proposal document itself acknowledges the need for additional regulations for effective protection and management [1]. This means that the problem with Wolio is not the lack of a legal basis, but rather the weak transformation of that legal basis into an operational instrument capable of controlling development, spatial function, architectural changes, and the pressures of daily urban activities [1], [2]. To clarify the main dimensions of governance challenges in the Wolio Fort area, the research findings are presented briefly in Table 1.

Table 1. Governance challenges in the Wolio Fortress area

Governance Dimension	**Main Findings**	**Key Indicators / Issues**	**Implications for Nomination Readiness**
Management institutional arrangement	There is not yet a dedicated body that holds full responsibility for managing the area.	Coordination remains scattered across multiple institutions; authority is not yet centralized.	This complicates policy integration, supervision, and rapid response.
Operational regulation	A legal basis is available, but it has not yet been adequately translated into technical regulations for the area.	Area protection does not yet have firm operational instruments.	This limits the effectiveness of protection and change control.
Urban pressure	The fortress area is located within an urban environment that continues to develop.	Settlement growth, high traffic intensity, and pressure from spatial functions.	This threatens the integrity and legibility of the heritage landscape.
Changes in area attributes	Several traditional elements have undergone changes in form and function.	Transformation of traditional houses into modern forms.	This reduces the authenticity and continuity of the landscape.
Area monitoring	There is not yet a truly operational annual monitoring system.	Limitations in baseline data, periodic evaluation, and open reporting.	This reduces adaptive management capacity.
Power distribution	The language of participation is not yet fully aligned with real influence in decision-making.	Communities may not yet have an equal bargaining position in management.	Governance risks remaining top-down even when it appears participatory.

As shown in Table 1, the governance issues at Wolio Fortress are not merely administrative in nature, but also reflect issues of authority distribution, weak operational instruments, and the lack of integration of living space management within an urban context. In this regard, the Wolio case aligns with various studies of urban heritage governance, which show that threats to heritage sites are often not caused by a lack of value, but rather by the weak integration of governance, planning, and area management in everyday practice [2], [16].

From a people-centered heritage perspective, this situation also highlights the tension between the discourse of participation and the reality of power distribution. Sun et al. show that the capacity of community agents is easily weakened when heritage values are misaligned, resource governance is unequal, and heritage management is dominated by the logic of the tourism market [3]. Meanwhile, Hallgren et al. assert that even collaborative forums can lose their democratic meaning when the procedural framework limits the space for negotiation regarding mandates, issues, and the direction of decision-making. [31]. Thus, governance

challenges in Wolio are not only related to a lack of coordination, but also to who sets the agenda, who is recognized as the owner of knowledge, and who has real influence in the decision-making process. In the context of nomination readiness, this is crucial because high-value properties will not be sufficiently supported by the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) narrative without adequate institutional capacity to consistently safeguard the area.

4.2. Community Position, Participation and Benefit Distribution

Research findings indicate that the local community in the Wolio Fort area is not a peripheral element, but rather an integral part of the area's sustainability. The nomination document notes that descendants of Butonese nobles from the *Kaomu* and *Walaka* families still reside within the fort. Furthermore, traditional management systems persist through the roles of customary institutions, cultural figures, and religious institutions, which continue to contribute to rituals, area maintenance, and daily cultural life. [1]. In other words, Wolio Fortress is a living area, not an empty monument. This is in line with a study by Umara et al., who showed that the Grand Mosque of the Buton Sultanate and the *Sara Kidhina* apparatus remain at the core of the spiritual and social landscape of Buton Palace Fortress [8]. This argument is further reinforced by Mansyur et al., who show that Wolio's sustainability in the Society 5.0 era rests on five main strategies: preserving Wolio customs and culture, strengthening traditional and cultural institutions, strengthening the role of government, strengthening the role of the family, and utilizing the latest social media; these findings confirm that the sustainability of Wolio identity cannot be separated from the continuity of cultural practices, local institutions, and intergenerational transmission [35].

The literature on participation and local values highlights the importance of this community position. Lin shows that residents in Quanzhou construct meanings of heritage through daily values, emotional bonds, and lived experiences, not solely through official OUV categories [17]. Bonnin and Moore-Cherry assert that livelihood practices can be a legitimate form of everyday heritage worthy of protection [18]. Tenzer demonstrates that individually held values and hidden value communities can provide important information for heritage planning, but are often overlooked in the language of AHD [22]. When these three findings are read together, Wolio residents must be understood not simply as recipients of impacts, but as bearers of the values, memories, and practices that keep the fortress alive.

The problem is that such participation is not automatically recognized within official management structures. Baker et al. warn that heritage consultation can lead to consultation fatigue and symbolic violence when core communities are merely used as collateral for legitimacy [11]. Pastor Pérez and Colomer point out that authorized participation makes participation appear open, but actually limits public influence [24]. Santikarn adds that World Heritage discourse can weaken local community rights when universal values are used as a justification for prioritizing official management regimes over local claims [29]. These risks are particularly relevant for Wolio.

To clarify the position of local communities in the management of Wolio Fort, the main findings regarding participation and distribution of benefits are presented briefly in Table 2.

Table 2. Community position, participation and benefit sharing

Participation Dimension	Main Findings	Key Indicators / Issues	Implications for Area Management
Presence of core communities	The fortress area is still inhabited by local communities that have historical and social ties to the site.	The presence of *the Kaomu and Walaka nobility*, customary leaders, and religious leaders.	This shows Wolio as a living heritage, not an empty monument.
Traditional institutions	Customary and religious structures still retain functions in the life of the area.	The role of *Sara Kidhina*, customary institutions, and ritual practices.	This becomes social capital for people-centred governance.
Bearers of local values	Residents preserve the memory, practices, and meanings of the area in everyday life.	Daily values, lived spatial experience, and emotional attachment.	Communities must be understood as bearers of value, not merely as inhabitants.
Quality of participation	Community involvement does not necessarily mean real influence over decision-making.	The risk of tokenistic participation and authorised participation.	This calls for strengthening substantive participation.

Access to information and bargaining position	Communities do not necessarily have adequate access to regulations and management agendas.	Information, decisions, and formal processes are more controlled by official actors.	This creates inequality of influence.
Benefit-sharing	The economic benefits of the area are not yet fully structured for core communities.	There is not yet a fair and clear benefit-sharing scheme.	This hampers long-term community support.

Table 2 shows that the people of Wolio Fortress are not only residents of the area but also bearers of the values, memories, and cultural practices that underpin the site's sustainability. However, their benefits and influence in management have not yet been fully structured, so a more substantive participation model remains an urgent need.

In this context, community participation in Wolio should not be measured by the number of forums or invitations, but by four elements: involvement in agenda-setting, access to information and regulations, position within management mechanisms, and opportunities to obtain economic benefits that do not marginalize the area's residents. If these four elements are not met, the phrase "community-based" will sound good in reports but will be elusive in practice. This is crucial for nomination preparation, as the sustainability of the area depends heavily on the community's acceptance, sense of ownership, and a concrete position within the governance structure.

4.3. The Tension Between Concervation and Tourism Development

The nomination proposal documents show that Wolio Fort is increasingly developing as a vibrant cultural tourism destination. The increase in visits and the designation of this area in tourism planning documents reflect a strong push to expand the use of heritage as a tourist destination. However, this push coincides with the reality that the fort area faces threats from spatial changes, residential growth, changes in the shape of traditional houses, and intense urban traffic [1]. This means that conservation and tourism have not yet fully converged within a mutually supportive framework.

This gap is most evident at the level of heritage attributes and values. The proposed document maps various important attributes, both tangible and intangible, and emphasizes that the function and use of several key elements remain intact, such as the Grand Mosque of the Sultanate, the palace, the tombs of the kings, and traditions related to traditional and religious institutions [1]. However, without a strong control mechanism, this area is at risk of developing into tourism that emphasizes solely visual aspects, without considering the organic relationship between heritage attributes, spatial functions, and community life.. In this context, the findings of Rey-Pérez et al. are relevant, emphasizing that without clear identification of attributes and values, the impact of interventions is difficult to measure, and it is difficult to distinguish between changes that are still tolerable and those that begin to diminish the significance of heritage [10]. Therefore, the imbalance between conservation and tourism development in the Wolio Fortress Landscape needs to be understood as a fundamental issue requiring more integrated management. A summary of findings related to this is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The tension between conservation and tourism development

Tension Dimension	**Main Findings**	**Key Indicators / Issues**	**Implications for the Area**
Tourism development drive	The fortress area is increasingly being directed as a cultural tourism destination.	Rising visitor numbers, area promotion, and the growing tourism function.	This opens up economic opportunities and increases site visibility.
Threats to attributes	Tourism growth is occurring alongside pressures on the area’s attributes and living space.	Spatial changes, settlement growth, and traffic pressure.	This may reduce authenticity and integrity.
Attributes and functions of the area	Several important attributes are still functioning, but they are vulnerable to losing their organic relationships.	The mosque, palace, tombs, traditions, and customary-religious elements.	Control is needed so that these attributes do not become merely display objects.

Commercialisation and staged authenticity	Tourism risks developing without integration with local needs and everyday values.	Over-commercialisation, visual imaging, and shallow experiences.	This encourages forms of use that are not sensitive to living heritage.
Quality of the tourism experience	Well-managed tourism can strengthen support for conservation.	Service quality, meaningful interpretation, and perceived value.	Tourism must be designed to support heritage protection.
Conservation-tourism gap	There is not yet a strong bridge between heritage attributes, the management system, and visitor experience.	Tourism is growing faster than the capacity for interpretation and control.	This leads to crowding without depth of meaning.

Table 3 shows that the main problem lies not with the existence of tourism itself, but rather with the weak integration between heritage attributes, area control systems, and meaningful tourism experiences. Under these conditions, tourism growth risks simply generating crowds without being supported by in-depth interpretation and without adequate protection for the quality of life of the area's residents.

Findings from recent literature indicate that commercialization is not solely caused by ill-intentioned efforts, but is often rooted in a breakdown in dialogue between heritage stakeholders and tourism developers. Lin's study of the Quanzhou case study demonstrates that over-commercialization and the emergence of staged authenticity occur because tourism development is not integrated with local values and the daily needs of the community [17]. Similar findings were also shown by Wang et al. in the case of Datong, where tourism investment was accompanied by homogenization of business functions and actors, pressure on authenticity and integrity, and friction in coordination between stakeholders. [28]. Meanwhile, Mele and Egberts emphasized that tourism representations that overemphasize aesthetic aspects tend to ignore local experiences and counter-narratives from the community. [26]. The lesson for Wolio is that tourism growth that outpaces interpretation and management capacity will only result in superficial crowds.

From a tourism experience perspective, good heritage tourism should be able to strengthen support for conservation efforts. Nian et al. showed that the quality of the tourism experience, perceived value, and attractiveness of the area will encourage tourists' intentions to support heritage protection [13]. Fernández Gallardo and Hernández Rojas also added that service quality linked to sustainability principles has a positive influence on tourist satisfaction and loyalty [34]. Therefore, tourism development in the Wolio Fortress Landscape should not be solely focused on increasing visitor numbers, but rather should be designed to create meaningful experiences that are sensitive to values and support preservation. Therefore, the primary issue is not whether tourism should be developed, but rather how it should be managed to remain rooted in the heritage values and livelihoods of the local community.

4.4. Community-Based Entrepreneurship Opportunities

The research results indicate that Wolio Fort offers significant opportunities for developing unique and contextual community-based entrepreneurship. The proposed nomination document opens up the possibility of developing various subzones, such as traditional village tourism, creative tourism, souvenir centers, homestays, culinary stalls, and community craft production centers [1]. However, this potential will be more meaningful if it is positioned within the framework of a living heritage landscape, not simply as an additional economic activity in the surrounding area.

Conceptually, entrepreneurial opportunities in Wolio can be mapped into three main paths. First, interpretive entrepreneurship, which focuses on conveying narratives through tour guides, historical tours, and storytelling practices related to elements such as lawa, baluara, limbo, and the Buton Sultanate's governance system. Second, cultural product entrepreneurship, which includes the development of crafts, interpretive artifacts, popular manuscripts, or souvenir products rooted in the symbols, philosophy, and history of Wolio-Buton. Third, experience-based entrepreneurship, which provides tourists with direct involvement in local cultural life, such as living, learning, interacting, and participating in the community's daily activities.

These three pathways are in line with the concept of tourism economic resilience which emphasizes community involvement, cultural creativity, and a symbiotic relationship between hosts and tourists [9]. In this context, entrepreneurship serves not only as a source of income but also as a means of reinforcing heritage significance and enhancing the quality of the tourism experience. To clarify the forms of business most relevant to regional development, the main opportunities for community-based entrepreneurship in the Wolio Fortress Landscape are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Community-based entrepreneurship opportunities

Entrepreneurship Dimension	Potential Forms	Heritage / Identity Basis	Main Actors	Capacity-Building Needs	Contribution to the Area
Interpretive entrepreneurship	Heritage guiding, historical tours, storytelling walks, and thematic tours of Wolio Fortress area	The history of the Buton Sultanate, fortress structure, spatial narratives, and local philosophy	Local guides, local youth, and cultural figures	Interpretation training, narrative curation, and service standards	Strengthens heritage meaning and improves the quality of visitor experience
Cultural-product entrepreneurship	Souvenirs based on Wolio symbols, popular publications, and creative heritage products	Wolio symbols, manuscripts, fortress icons, and local motifs	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, craftsman, and creative communities	Product design, branding, market access, and protection of cultural identity	Adds local economic value based on identity
Experiential entrepreneurship	Homestays, local culinary ventures, traditional village tourism, and cultural experiences	Everyday life in the area, local traditions, and the fortress's living landscape	Resident families, culinary actors, and customary communities	Business mentoring, experience curation, cleanliness, and service standards	Connects tourism with community life
Performance-based entrepreneurship	Cultural performances, historical readings, and immersive experiences	Rituals, collective memory, traditional arts, and local narratives	Arts communities, customary leaders, and youth	Program curation, performance scheduling, and promotional support	Revitalizes heritage as an experience, not merely as an object
Educational entrepreneurship	Educational tours, site-based learning modules, and school/university visit packages	Historical, religious, governmental, and architectural values of the fortress	Academics, teachers, and local communities	Material development, school partnerships, and interpretive media	Expands the educational function and social legitimacy of the area

As shown in Table 4, business opportunities in the Wolio Fortress Landscape are growing most strongly in the areas of heritage interpretation, cultural products, spatial experiences, performances, and educational services. This finding confirms that the most relevant form of entrepreneurship is not generic commercialization, but rather ventures rooted in the identity, memory, and life practices of the local community.

The supporting literature provides a stronger basis for this development direction. Bonnin and Moore-Cherry demonstrate that livelihood practices can develop into forms of grassroots heritage that simultaneously support community sustainability [18]. Wang, Zheng, and Hou assert that community-based conservation efforts, especially among the younger generation, will thrive when cultural identity, cultural self-confidence, and institutional support are mutually reinforcing [32]. Meanwhile, Moneta et al. show that heritage can be brought to life through immersive performances, sensory experience mapping, and community engagement [33]. Meanwhile, Yang et al. added that tourists' aesthetic experiences are greatly influenced by how cultural spaces are constructed and interpreted [27]. Thus,

entrepreneurship development in Wolio should be based on identity and experience, not on generic commercialization that can be applied in various locations without considering the local context.

The local context of Buton provides a differentiating force that many other sites lack. Local wisdom values, the Kaomu–Walaka social structure, the role of Sara Kidhina, traditional ceremonial practices, ancient manuscripts, and the spatial configuration of the fort are all highly potent cultural resources [1], [8]. If what develops instead is kiosks, souvenirs, and generic services, economic activity will increase, but the identity of the heritage will become increasingly obscured. In such circumstances, what develops is not cultural interpretation, but merely commercial activity.

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4.5. Model Co-Management Model for Nomination Readines

All of the above findings point to one primary need: the development of a clear, operational, and area-based co-management model. The nomination proposal document itself recommends the establishment of a dedicated management body, the development of area regulations, the strengthening of the capacity of cultural stakeholders, the internalization of the fort's historical and sacred values, and the implementation of a periodic monitoring and evaluation system [1]. When read within the framework of heritage governance literature, these recommendations essentially point to a co-management approach, although the term is not always stated explicitly.

In the Wolio context, a relevant co-management model encompasses at least five key components. First, a coordinating authority, namely an institution or forum capable of connecting the government, communities, traditional and religious institutions, and tourism actors. Second, recognition of the core community, namely the acceptance that local communities and traditional stakeholders are not merely participants but also possessors of knowledge authority. Third, a framework of attributes and values, as a shared basis for determining what should be protected, what can be developed, and how change is assessed [10]. Fourth, a benefit distribution mechanism is in place to ensure that tourism development truly supports conservation and community well-being. Fifth, a monitoring and feedback system ensures that area management does not stop at planning, but is continuously evaluated and adjusted.

Based on field findings and literature support, the proposed co-management model for the Wolio Fortress Landscape can be summarized into the components presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Co-Management Model for Heritage Governance

Co-management Component	Description	Key Actors	Main Function	Expected Outcomes
Coordinative authority	A dedicated management body/forum for the fortress area	Local government, cultural office, tourism office, Cultural Preservation Center, and customary authorities	Integrating policy, programs, and supervision	More integrated and effective management coordination
Recognition of core communities	Positioning local communities, customary institutions, and religious institutions as a core part of management	the Kaomu and Walaka nobility, customary leaders, Sara Kidhina, and religious leaders	Ensuring substantive involvement in agendas and decisions	Social legitimacy and people-centred governance
Framework of attributes and values	A shared basis for defining what should be protected and how changes should be assessed	Expert teams, government, communities, and academics	Setting protection priorities and intervention limits	Management based on heritage attributes and values
Benefit-sharing mechanism	A fair scheme for distributing economic benefits	Government, communities, business actors, and tourism managers	Ensuring that tourism benefits are not concentrated in certain actors	Community support and local economic sustainability

Two-way communication system	Regular forums for dialogue, consultation, and feedback	All stakeholders	Reducing the gap between policy and on-the-ground needs	More responsive and inclusive management
Joint monitoring and evaluation	A system for monitoring attributes, spatial functions, tourism, and participation	Management body, communities, experts, and government	Assessing changes and responding to threats adaptively	Strong adaptive management
Integration into area planning	Linkages between conservation, spatial planning, and tourism development	Municipal government, planners, and area managers	Ensuring that heritage is not managed separately from urban dynamics	Alignment between protection and development

4.6. Monitoring Framework for Sustainaible Heritage Tourism

The final aspect that emerges strongly from the proposal document is the need for a more systematic monitoring system. The document recommends establishing a responsible party for preparing annual monitoring and evaluation reports, providing easily accessible reports, and developing further research to strengthen property descriptions and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) assessments [1]. This demonstrates the awareness that areas of high heritage value cannot be managed without mechanisms capable of periodically assessing conditions and changes.

Based on the findings of this study, a monitoring framework for the Wolio Fortress Landscape should ideally encompass five main dimensions. First, the physical condition of key attributes, such as forts, gates, bastions, mosques, palaces, tombs, and other architectural elements. Second, changes in spatial use, including the transformation of traditional houses, the density of commercial activity, and the use of regional zones. Third, tourism pressures, such as the number of visitors, the concentration of activities, and their impact on specific attributes. Fourth, the quality of participation and benefit distribution, reflecting the community's position in management and the economic benefits received. Fifth, the adaptive capacity of management, namely the area's ability to respond to threats, conflicts, and the dynamics of change [1], [10], [14], [15].

To support more adaptive management, this study proposes the main dimensions of the Wolio Fortress Landscape monitoring system as summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Dimensions and monitoring indicators for sustainable heritage tourism at Wolio Fort

Monitoring Dimension	**Main Indicator**	**Examples of Measures / Operational Indicators**	**Monitoring Objective**
Physical condition of key attributes	Integrity of the fortress, lawa-baluara, mosque, tombs, and other architectural elements	Structural condition, level of damage, maintenance records, and material changes	To preserve the physical integrity of heritage attributes
Changes in spatial use	Shifts in the functions of spaces and buildings within the area	Transformation of traditional houses, growth of commercial functions, and intensity of zone use	To control changes that may damage the area’s values
Tourism pressure	Intensity of visits and concentration of tourism activities	Number of visits, visitor congestion points, circulation patterns, and activity load	To assess the area’s capacity in relation to tourism pressure
Quality of interpretation and experience	Legibility of heritage and visitor experience	Availability of interpretive signage, quality of guides, and visitor satisfaction	To ensure that tourism supports heritage meaning-making

Community participation	Level of community influence in management	Number of forums, community representation, and position in decision-making	To assess the quality of people-centred governance
Benefit-sharing	Distribution of local economic benefits	Involvement of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, job opportunities, and the position of community-based businesses	To ensure that tourism provides fairer benefits
Adaptive management capacity	Ability to respond to threats and change	Availability of SOPs, periodic evaluation, and follow-up on monitoring results	To support adaptive management
Environmental and urban risks	External pressures on the area	Vehicle traffic, settlement growth, landscape change, and weather/environmental factors	To reduce threats to the area's sustainability

Table 6 shows that monitoring of the Wolio Fort area cannot be limited to just physical inspection of buildings. The monitoring system needs to encompass changes in spatial function, tourism pressure, interpretation quality, level of community participation, distribution of benefits, and adaptive management capacity to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the area's sustainability. Thus, monitoring in Wolio serves not only as a documentation tool but also as a basis for decision-making that is responsive to the dynamics of change.

The literature provides relevant operational examples for the development of these systems. Wang et al. demonstrated the application of ex-ante risk maps and ex-post baseline monitoring with simple yet auditable indicators, such as asset condition, maintenance records, visitor numbers, business composition, signage suitability, and participation levels [28]. Zalbidea-Muñoz et al. asserted that continuous environmental data-based monitoring can strengthen preventive conservation efforts [15], while Rong emphasized that monitoring tools are now an essential part of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach and urban heritage management [16].

In the Wolio context, monitoring should not stop at periodically documenting physical damage. What needs to be monitored is whether the area still maintains the interconnectedness between heritage attributes, community life, cultural functions, and spatial dynamics. Heritage is not only damaged when its physical structure collapses, but also when its meaning and function are detached from the social life that should sustain it.

4.7. Integrated Conceptual Framework

Based on the research findings and theoretical synthesis outlined in the previous subsection, this study proposes an integrated conceptual framework to explain the World Heritage nomination readiness of the Wolio Fortress Landscape. This framework systematically connects the dimensions of governance, community participation, community-based entrepreneurship, and adaptive monitoring in a single, interconnected model. Through this integration, nomination readiness is not understood solely as fulfilling administrative requirements or strengthening the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) narrative, but rather as the result of a dynamic interaction between heritage attributes, institutional systems, social practices, and sustainable management mechanisms. This framework also emphasizes that managing living heritage landscapes requires a collaborative, adaptive approach, and one that balances conservation and community well-being. A visualization of this conceptual framework is presented in the following section as the main synthesis of this research.

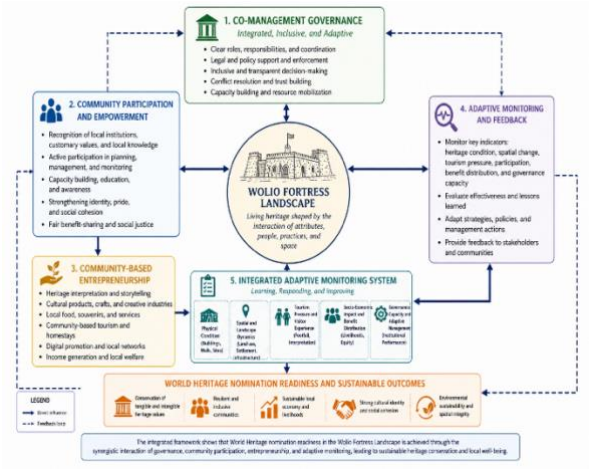


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of World Heritage nomination readiness for the Wolio Fortress landscape

The conceptual framework in the figure above shows that the readiness for World Heritage nomination in the Wolio Fortress Landscape is shaped by the interplay of four key dimensions: governance, community participation, community-based entrepreneurship, and adaptive monitoring. Governance serves as a foundation that regulates the direction of area management through the distribution of authority, institutional coordination, and the provision of regulatory instruments. Community participation is a key element that determines the extent

to which the community is not only present but also plays a substantive role in decision-making and the distribution of benefits. On the other hand, community-based entrepreneurship serves as a connecting mechanism between heritage preservation and strengthening the local economy, emphasizing the importance of cultural identity and authentic experiences as the basis for development.

These four dimensions do not stand alone, but are linked by an adaptive monitoring system that enables continuous evaluation of physical conditions, spatial dynamics, tourism pressures, and the quality of participation and governance. Within this framework, monitoring serves as a feedback mechanism, ensuring that any changes can be responded to appropriately and sustainably. Effective interaction between these dimensions ultimately determines the achievement of nomination readiness, which is characterized not only by a strong narrative of heritage value but also by the area's ability to sustainably maintain the linkages between attributes, spatial functions, and community social life.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The Wolio Fortress Landscape possesses strong historical, spatial, and cultural potential for World Heritage nomination. However, the primary challenge lies not in the lack of heritage value, but rather in the limitations in managing this value consistently through an integrated governance system. This research demonstrates that nomination readiness must be built through strengthening institutional coordination, increasing substantive community participation, and developing community-based entrepreneurship rooted in local cultural identity. The findings also confirm that the Wolio Fortress Landscape cannot be understood solely as a defensive structure, but as a living heritage landscape formed through the interaction of physical attributes, social practices, and local institutions. In this context, community-based entrepreneurship plays a crucial role as a bridge between conservation and community well-being, while simultaneously strengthening the meaning of heritage within the tourism experience.Therefore, efforts towards World Heritage nomination require an approach that goes beyond strengthening the Outstanding Universal Value narrative, namely through the implementation of a collaborative co-management model, an adaptive monitoring system, and an equitable benefit distribution scheme. This approach is not only crucial for enhancing nomination readiness but also for ensuring the long-term sustainability of heritage landscape management. As a limitation, this research focused on a single case study, so generalizations of the findings should be made with caution. Future research could develop a comparative approach across living heritage sites to enrich governance models and provide more contextualized conservation strategies.

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