

WikiDesa: A Community-Driven Program to Preserve Hyper-Local Knowledge on Wikipedia

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Abstract. Wikipedia extensively documents general knowledge but often neglects hyper-local wisdom, encompassing artisanal practices, oral histories, and culinary traditions unique to specific communities. The WikiDesa initiative addresses this gap by enabling local residents to actively preserve their heritage through three phases. First, it facilitates the recording of unique cultural elements, such as bamboo water rituals in Desa X or Sumbanese ikat weaving. Second, it anchors this knowledge to real-world sites via QR codes placed in markets, cultural centers, and heritage locations. Third, it introduces a validation system in which cultural elders authenticate submissions, ensuring accuracy beyond conventional crowd-editing. Pilot projects in South Sulawesi demonstrate significant outcomes: documentation of Bugis textile motifs previously transmitted orally now supports academic and tourism sectors, while recording Pallubasa soup variations enhances culinary preservation and business visibility. WikiDesa thus highlights how digital platforms achieve stronger cultural fidelity when emphasizing hyper-local specificity and community-driven validation.

Keywords: Hyper-Local Knowledge, Cultural Preservation, Wikipedia, Community Empowerment