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# The Impact of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program on the Community's Economy in Tadui Village, Mamuju District

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A R T I C L E I N F O

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A B S T R A C T

As a tactical and strategic response to national nutrition challenges, the Indonesian government launched the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) as one of the national flagship policies. This study aims to determine the Impact of the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) on the Community Economy in Tadui Village, Mamuju District. This study uses two types of data, namely qualitative data and quantitative data, with a dominance of qualitative data. The population is 71 people with a sample of 16 respondents selected using purposive sampling. Data is collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Then analyzed with qualitative interactive models. The results of the study show:1. Supplier recruitment is still dominated by large distributors due to formal administrative constraints of SPPG, so that the involvement of independent agricultural communities in Tadui Village is still partial and limited daily. 2. Daily free nutritious feeding has been proven to significantly save food consumption expenditures of beneficiary families by IDR 300,000 to IDR 500,000. 3. The Local Supply Chain Connectivity Index (KRPL) between SPPG kitchens and local producers in Tadui Village is still relatively low to moderate

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## INTRODUCTION

Economic development is essentially not only directed to increase output growth in aggregate, but also to expand human capabilities to be able to live productively, independently, and prosperously. In the perspective of modern development economics, the quality of human resources (HR) occupies a central position as the main determinant of labor productivity, economic competitiveness, and long-term sustainability of economic growth. In the real context in Indonesia, the problem of community nutrition is still a structural challenge that is quite serious and requires targeted policy intervention. As a tactical and strategic response to the national nutrition challenge, the Indonesian government launched the Free Nutritious Eating Program (MBG) as one of the national flagship policies. Although the MBG Program has a large potential multiplier effect theoretically, the effectiveness of its real impact is largely determined by empirical conditions in the field. This qualitative research is purely focused on researching the real phenomenon that is taking place in Tadui Village, Mamuju District, West Sulawesi Province.

The selection of Tadui Village as the research site was based on very strong academic, technical, and economic reasons. First, Tadui Village is a unique semi-urban transitional area; it is located near the capital of West Sulawesi Province yet still retains strong rural characteristics, where the primary sector (rice farming, coconut and cocoa plantations, small-scale capture fisheries, and smallholder livestock farming) serves as the mainstay of its residents' livelihoods.

Current sociological conditions on the ground indicate that the community of Tadui Village has not yet played a systematic, active role as the primary supplier of foodstuffs for the local SPPG kitchen. Most food supplies are still provided sporadically, without long-term cooperation contracts that guarantee price stability for local farmers. This lack of active involvement constitutes the primary research gap addressed in this study.

Based on the research gap described above, the researcher considers it crucial to draft a research proposal titled: "The Impact of the Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) Program on the Local Economy in Tadui Village, Mamuju District."

## LITERATUR REVIEW

Economic growth is an indicator of the government's success in promoting economic development in every country. Every country strives to achieve the most optimal economic growth, as high-quality economic growth brings benefits to the broader public. (Rahardjo Adisasmita, 2013: 55). According to Djojohadikusumo (1987), economic growth is based on the process of increasing goods and services in the economy.

Generally, sustainability is defined as "continuing without lessening," which means continuing activities without reducing them. Sustainable development is often an elusive concept, even though it has become a development buzzword worldwide. (Fauzi, 2007:81).

According to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLH, 1990), development—which is fundamentally more economically oriented—can be assessed for sustainability based on three criteria: 1. There is no wasteful use of

natural resources or depletion of natural resources. 2. There is no pollution or other environmental impacts. 3. The activities must be able to increase usable resources or replaceable resources.

Nusi and Djaba (2025) emphasize that optimizing the MBG multiplier effect depends heavily on locally-based procurement design and efficient distribution management.

Putikadyanto et al. (2025) argue that the transformation of education toward the Golden Generation 2045 through the MBG program will only be achieved if the program is implemented in an integrated, transparent, and participatory manner. Husin et al. (2025) have shown that street vendors are the most vulnerable to these negative impacts and therefore require support strategies and business diversification.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs both qualitative and quantitative data, with a focus on qualitative data. The population consists of 71 individuals, with a sample of 16 respondents selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, and were subsequently analyzed using an interactive qualitative model.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of a study conducted in Tadui Village, Mamuju Subdistrict, Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi Province—titled "The Impact of the Free Nutritious Meals Program (MBG) on the Local Economy in Tadui Village, Mamuju Subdistrict"—data was obtained through an interactive qualitative data analysis model.

### Amount of Real Expenditure Savings for Farming and Fishing Households

Prior to the implementation of the MBG Program in Tadui Village, daily expenditures on children's pocket money and breakfast constituted a significant daily cash flow burden for families of farm laborers and traditional fishermen. Their income structure, which is seasonal and characterized by unpredictable daily earnings (informal), often forced parents to borrow money from the nearest grocery store to ensure their children still had pocket money to go to school. With the provision of free, nutritious lunches and breakfasts from the Nutrition Service Unit (SPPG) at the Tadui Village kitchen, this daily cash flow burden has been drastically reduced to virtually zero.

The impact of this freed-up cash flow is invaluable for enhancing the economic resilience of poor families. Before the program began, a daily allowance of Rp15,000 per child might seem small in nominal terms to urban residents, but for farm laborers earning less than Rp1,500,000 per month, the cumulative cost of pocket money for two children can reach Rp300,000 to Rp450,000 per month—equivalent to one-third of the family's total monthly income.

**Analysis of the Allocation Pattern of Real Excess Income Diversion**

Based on the results of a qualitative interview analysis of beneficiary families in Tadui Village, the pattern of allocation for redirected household savings is systematically divided into three main categories, namely:

a) Household Savings Category (Liquidity Risk Mitigation). For families with irregular livelihoods, such as traditional fishermen and coconut climbers in Tadui Village, cash savings from the MBG are immediately transferred into physical household piggy banks or personal savings accounts. This is done as a precautionary measure to protect families from sudden economic shocks, such as illness, crop failure, or extreme weather-induced marine shortages.
b) Additional Microenterprise Capital Account (Empowerment of Women-Owned MSMEs). A particularly noteworthy positive impact is the growth of capital investment in the rural informal sector managed by women. Housewives in Tadui Village who run mobile microbusinesses or sell traditional pastries use the money left over from their grocery shopping to expand the scale of their sales operations. This excess liquidity serves as inexpensive additional working capital without having to rely on informal credit schemes or middlemen.
c) Human Capital Investment (Children's Non-Food Education). In addition to physical nutrition, improvements in human capital are also achieved through non-food education. Parents allocate the savings from the MBG budget to provide their children with the necessary learning materials, which were previously often neglected. Proper notebooks, well-fitting school uniforms, new shoes to replace torn ones, and even daily motorcycle taxi fares have become essential expenses for schoolchildren's education that can now be adequately funded.

Data Source Triangulation: Cross-Verification with Village Administrators and the Village Government

To ensure the validity and reliability of the qualitative findings regarding the impact of these domestic expenditure savings, verification was conducted through rigorous data source triangulation. The researcher cross-checked the statements of beneficiary parents by interviewing internal administrators of the Nutrition Fulfilment Service Unit (SPPG) and the Village Secretary as a representative of the local government.

Final verification was conducted through interviews with village government officials who observed the macro-level changes in the social welfare of the Tadui Village community. The Secretary of Tadui Village confirmed that the daily MBG program has proven effective in reducing complaints from low-income households regarding daily school-related expenses.

Based on the alignment of accounts (source triangulation) from various informants (Inf) among target household heads (Inf. housewives

Based on the consistency of accounts (source triangulation) from various informants (Inf.)—including target household heads (Inf. housewife (Inf. 13)), female micro-entrepreneurs (Inf. 14), school educators (Inf. 16), the SPPG

treasurer (Inf. 2), and a village government representative (Inf. 6)—scientifically proves the positive impact of the program. By redirecting savings from household spending—ranging from Rp300,000 to Rp500,000 per child per month—toward productive activities, the Daily MBG Program has successfully served as a stimulus for the actual well-being of rural households in Tadui Village, Mamuju District.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion outlined in Chapter IV regarding the impact of the Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) Program on the local economy in Tadui Village, Mamuju District, the research conclusions are formulated tactically and specifically to address the three research questions posed as follows:

1. Implementation and Suppliers of the Tadui Village SPPG Kitchen.

The daily provision of free food is coordinated by the Tadui Village SPPG with suppliers consisting of basic foodstuffs distributors and local residents. Although the kitchen's operations run smoothly, supplier recruitment is still dominated by large distributors due to the SPPG's formal administrative constraints, resulting in limited involvement of Tadui Village's agricultural community.

2. Impact on Household Expenditures

The Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) program has been shown to reduce food expenditures for beneficiary families by Rp300,000–Rp500,000 per child per month. These savings are redirected toward three productive needs: savings, additional capital for microenterprises, and non-food investments such as school supplies, uniforms, and transportation for children.

3. Local Supply Chain Connectivity (KRPL)

The Local Supply Chain Connectivity Index (KRPL) between the SPPG kitchens and local producers in Tadui Village remains low to moderate. This situation is influenced by the lack of access to formal banking and logistics infrastructure, which increases transaction costs between farmers, fishermen, and livestock breeders and the SPPG management, thereby causing economic leakage of state budget expenditures outside Tadui Village.

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