

Analysis of The Prabowo–Gibran Free Nutritious Meal Policy and Its Impact on The Socio-Economic Conditions of Indonesian Society

Muhamad Fachri Rizal^{*1}, Puti Andini¹, Atiqah Nurr Firyaa¹, Gilang Nugroho¹, Reviza Putra Syarif¹

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: fachrijal1909@gmail.com

Keywords

*Free Nutritious Meal Program;
public policy;
library research;
socio-economic impact;
welfare.;*

How to cite:

Abstract

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (Makan Bergizi Gratis/MBG) is a strategic public policy aimed at improving the quality of human resources through the fulfillment of community nutritional needs, particularly for students and vulnerable groups. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the MBG policy and examine its socio-economic impacts on Indonesian society. The research employs a qualitative method with a library research approach based on a constructivist paradigm. The data used are secondary data obtained from various scientific literature sources, including journals, books, research reports, and policy documents. Data analysis is conducted using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, with data validity ensured through source triangulation. The results indicate that the MBG program has significant potential to improve nutritional status, health, and educational quality by enhancing students' concentration and learning participation. From a socio-economic perspective, the program contributes to reducing household expenditures, improving community welfare, and stimulating local economic growth through the involvement of farmers, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and distribution sectors. Furthermore, the program creates employment opportunities and strengthens local food supply chains. Therefore, optimizing the MBG program requires strengthening governance, improving cross-sector coordination, enhancing transparency, and ensuring continuous supervision to make it an effective policy instrument in promoting community welfare and inclusive, sustainable economic development in Indonesia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of human resources is one of the key factors supporting national development. One important aspect influencing human resource quality is the fulfillment of adequate nutritional needs from an early age. However, Indonesia continues to face a number of nutritional challenges, including stunting, malnutrition, and unequal access to nutritious food. These conditions may affect health, cognitive development, academic achievement, and future productivity. Therefore, policies are needed that can simultaneously address nutritional problems and support sustainable improvements in human resource quality (Fatimah Yuliani, 2026).

As an effort to address these issues, the Indonesian government introduced the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) as one of its national priority programs. The program targets students, toddlers, pregnant women, and breastfeeding mothers, with the objectives of improving nutritional status, reducing stunting, and supporting the realization of Indonesia's Golden Generation 2045. The MBG Program is viewed not only as a health intervention but also as a long-term investment in the development of high-quality and competitive human resources (Muhammad Basit, 2025).

From a public policy perspective, the MBG Program is a cross-sectoral policy involving education, health, food systems, and the economy. Its success is determined not only by the availability of funding but also by implementation effectiveness, inter-agency coordination, human resource readiness, and continuous monitoring. Previous studies indicate that MBG implementation still faces a number of challenges, including uneven food distribution, limited supporting infrastructure, variations in food quality, and suboptimal monitoring and coordination among implementing institutions (Arfriani Maifizar, 2025).

At the same time, the MBG Program has the potential to generate significant social impacts. The program may improve equitable access to nutrition among vulnerable groups, reduce the risks of stunting and malnutrition, and enhance students' concentration and school attendance. It may also reduce household expenditure burdens, particularly among low-income families, thereby contributing to improved social welfare. Several studies have shown that students who receive adequate nutritional intake tend to experience better learning conditions than those without similar support.

In addition to its social impact, the MBG Program may also generate broad economic effects. The large-scale demand for food supplies encourages the participation of local farmers, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), as well as distribution and transportation sectors. The program may create a multiplier effect by stimulating regional economic activity, generating new employment opportunities, and strengthening local food supply chains. Thus, MBG functions not only as a nutritional support program but also as an instrument for community economic empowerment (Muhammad Basit, 2025).

Previous studies suggest that the Free Nutritious Meal Program has considerable potential to improve public nutrition while simultaneously stimulating local economic growth. Nevertheless, its implementation continues to face challenges related to infrastructure readiness, food distribution, food quality control, and inter-agency coordination, all of which may influence program effectiveness. In addition, the economic effects of the program require further examination, particularly regarding MSME participation, job creation, and regional economic circulation. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program policy in Indonesia and examining its economic impacts on local communities.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research method using a library research approach. The qualitative method was selected because the study aims to understand, analyze, and interpret various forms of information related to the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) and its economic impacts on society. Through a qualitative approach, the study seeks to generate an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon based on relevant scientific sources.

This study is grounded in the constructivist paradigm, which views social reality as a construction shaped by multiple perspectives, experiences, and interpretations developed within society. In the context of this research, the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program is understood as a policy phenomenon that generates diverse perspectives and interpretations across social, economic, educational, and health dimensions. Therefore, the study seeks to understand and construct meaning based on findings derived from various scientific sources.

A library research approach was employed as the primary strategy for obtaining research data. Library research involves reviewing, examining, and analyzing various written sources related to the research topic. This approach enables the researcher to obtain comprehensive information concerning relevant concepts, theories, previous research findings, and policies associated with the Free Nutritious Meal Program.

The data used in this study consisted of secondary data obtained from various scientific sources, including books, national and international journals, scholarly articles, conference proceedings, research reports, government policy documents, and publications issued by institutions concerned with nutrition, food security, public policy, and community economic development. Data sources were selected based

on their relevance, credibility, and currency in supporting the research focus. Data collection was conducted through a systematic literature search. Relevant references were gathered and subsequently identified, selected, recorded, and categorized according to the focus of the study.

Data were analyzed using the interactive analysis model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of three stages: *data condensation*, *data display*, and *conclusion drawing and verification*. During the data condensation stage, the researcher selected, focused, simplified, and organized information obtained from various literature sources. The condensed data were then presented in narrative form and through thematic categorization to facilitate interpretation. In the final stage, conclusions were drawn based on patterns, relationships, and tendencies identified in the data, while continuous verification was conducted to strengthen the accuracy of the research findings.

The trustworthiness of the data was examined through source triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing and confirming information obtained from various references, including books, scientific journals, research articles, government reports, and relevant policy documents. Through this technique, the researcher was able to assess data consistency, reduce potential bias, and strengthen the credibility and validity of the findings, thereby ensuring that the results can be scientifically justified.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the literature review conducted, the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) constitutes one of the strategic public policies introduced by the Prabowo–Gibran administration to improve the quality of human resources through the fulfillment of nutritional needs, particularly among students. The policy is oriented not only toward improving children's health and nutritional status but also toward promoting more equitable access to education, reducing social disparities, and stimulating community economic growth through the involvement of multiple sectors in its implementation. Nevertheless, the implementation of the program continues to face a number of challenges, including governance issues, inter-agency coordination, transparency, and socio-economic impacts emerging at the community level.

No.	Aspect of Discussion	Research Findings
1	Policy	The findings indicate that the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) is effective in strengthening nutritional security and community welfare through cross-sectoral collaboration, budgetary support, and continuous monitoring (Ida Zubaedah, 2025).
		The findings show that the success of the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) largely depends on effective program governance through integrated planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring functions (Rizqianafi Cahya Putra, 2026).
		The findings indicate that successful implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) is influenced by leadership, actor coordination, accountability, and compliance with implementation procedures at the school level (Rahmad Nasir, 2026).
		The findings show that the MBG policy has been implemented relatively well in supporting students' nutritional needs, although challenges remain in terms of governance and budget limitations (Ikka Febryanti, 2025).
		The findings indicate that the MBG policy faces challenges related to limited information transparency, fragmented communication among stakeholders, and the emergence of public resistance and negative perceptions toward the government program (Afriaji, 2026).
2	Socio-Economic Impact	The findings show that the socio-economic impacts of the MBG Program include reducing household expenditure burdens, improving students' readiness to learn, and stimulating local economic growth through the absorption of agricultural products and the creation of new employment opportunities in rural communities (Mustapa Kamil Alga Beruh, 2026).

No.	Aspect of Discussion	Research Findings
		The findings indicate that the MBG Program has a positive impact on community welfare by improving nutritional status, reducing household expenditures, increasing educational participation, and strengthening local economies through the involvement of MSMEs and expanded employment opportunities (Afrija Khoirun Nissa, 2025).
		The findings show that MBG has the potential to reduce social inequality and improve community welfare through more equitable access to nutrition; however, its implementation continues to face challenges related to targeting accuracy, transparency, and distribution priorities, particularly in frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged (3T) regions (Anifatul Kiftiyah, 2025).
		The findings indicate that the MBG Program provides socio-economic benefits in the form of improved health quality and reduced household economic burdens, but it may also create market distortions, such as rising food prices and reduced economic activity among small-scale vendors around schools (Sumantri, 2026).
		The findings show that the MBG Program can contribute to improving human resource quality, educational participation, and local economic growth through the involvement of MSMEs and farmers; however, its effectiveness remains constrained by overlapping authority and weak inter-agency coordination (Abd Rahman, 2025).

Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) Policy

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG), initiated by the Prabowo–Gibran administration, represents one of Indonesia's national strategies to improve the quality of human resources through the fulfillment of nutritional needs, particularly among school-age children. Based on various research findings, the policy is considered to have substantial potential to strengthen nutritional security and improve community welfare because it is supported by cross-sectoral collaboration involving the central government, local governments, educational institutions, the private sector, and the wider community. Synergy among these actors is an important factor in ensuring that nutritious food is available and can be distributed equitably to target groups. In addition, adequate budgetary support and a sustainable monitoring system are also crucial in determining the program's effectiveness in achieving national health and education development objectives (Ida Zubaedah, 2025).

The success of MBG implementation is also strongly influenced by the quality of program governance. Research findings indicate that management functions, including planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision, need to operate in an integrated manner to ensure that the program can be implemented effectively and sustainably. Careful planning is required to ensure accurate beneficiary targeting and the readiness of necessary resources. Meanwhile, effective organizational arrangements can clarify the division of tasks and responsibilities among institutions and reduce the risk of overlapping authority. Accordingly, effective governance constitutes a fundamental foundation for ensuring the successful implementation of the MBG Program across different regions (Rizqianafi Cahya Putra, 2026).

In addition to governance, MBG implementation is influenced by leadership, coordination among actors, accountability, and compliance with implementation procedures at the school level. Strong leadership is necessary to direct stakeholders toward a shared commitment to program implementation. Effective inter-agency coordination can facilitate food distribution, nutritional quality control, and program reporting. At the same time, accountability and compliance with operational procedures serve as important instruments for maintaining transparency and the quality of services provided to students. Therefore, the success of the program depends not only on the scale of allocated funding but also on institutional capacity to manage the program professionally and responsibly (Rahmad Nasir, 2026).

Although the MBG policy has generally shown relatively positive implementation in supporting students' nutritional needs, a number of challenges remain. Several studies have identified problems related to governance, budget limitations, insufficient information transparency, and fragmented communication among stakeholders. In addition, resistance and negative public perceptions have emerged in some communities, partly due to limited socialization and insufficient openness regarding program mechanisms. These conditions indicate that the government needs to strengthen public

communication systems, improve implementation transparency, and enhance inter-agency coordination in order to build greater public trust in the MBG Program and optimize the achievement of its policy objectives (Ikka Febryanti, 2025).

Socio-Economic Impacts on Society

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) generates several significant socio-economic impacts on society. One of the most tangible effects is a reduction in household expenditure burdens, particularly among lower- and middle-income families. By providing nutritious meals free of charge at school, parents no longer need to allocate additional spending for their children's meals during school hours. These savings allow households to redirect financial resources toward other pressing needs. In addition, the fulfillment of students' nutritional requirements may improve their readiness to learn, concentration, and productivity during the educational process (Mustapa Kamil Alga Beruh, 2026).

From a social welfare perspective, the MBG Program contributes to improving nutritional status, particularly among school-age children as one of its principal target groups. Better nutritional intake can positively affect students' health, physical growth, and cognitive development. These improvements not only enhance individual quality of life but may also support educational participation by reducing absenteeism associated with health problems. Furthermore, the program strengthens government efforts to reduce stunting and other nutritional problems that continue to pose challenges to human development in Indonesia (Afrija Khoirun Nissa, 2025).

The MBG Program also creates broader economic effects through the participation of local economic actors in its supply chain. The demand for food commodities required for program implementation can stimulate demand for agricultural, livestock, fisheries, and locally produced food products. This condition creates opportunities for farmers, fishers, cooperatives, and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to become program suppliers. The implementation of MBG may also create new employment opportunities in food processing, distribution, and logistics. Thus, the program functions not only as a nutritional intervention but also as an instrument of community economic empowerment capable of stimulating economic activity at the local level (Mustapa Kamil Alga Beruh, 2026).

Nevertheless, the implementation of the MBG Program may also generate socio-economic challenges that require government attention. Several studies indicate that increased demand for large quantities of food commodities may contribute to higher prices for certain products and create distortions in local markets. In addition, the program may reduce the economic activity of small-scale vendors around schools who previously depended on food sales to students. Other challenges include accurate beneficiary targeting, implementation transparency, distribution priorities in disadvantaged regions, and weak inter-agency coordination, all of which may constrain program effectiveness. Therefore, stronger governance, stricter monitoring, and active community involvement are necessary to ensure that the socio-economic benefits of the MBG Program are distributed more equitably without generating substantial negative effects on local economies (Anifatul Kiftiyah, 2025).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the literature review, the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) represents a strategic public policy aimed at improving the quality of human resources in Indonesia through the fulfillment of nutritional needs, particularly among school-age populations. The program has demonstrated significant contributions to improving health status, nutritional conditions, learning concentration, and educational participation, while also supporting efforts to reduce stunting and malnutrition.

From a socio-economic perspective, the implementation of the MBG Program generates positive impacts by reducing household expenditure burdens, improving community welfare, and strengthening local economies through the involvement of various economic actors, including farmers, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and distribution sectors. In addition, the program contributes to job creation and the strengthening of regional food supply chains.

Nevertheless, program implementation continues to face several challenges, including weaknesses in governance, limited inter-agency coordination, insufficient transparency, and suboptimal targeting of beneficiaries. Furthermore, potential negative effects must also be anticipated, particularly market distortions and declining income among small-scale vendors operating around school environments.

Therefore, optimizing the effectiveness of the MBG Program requires stronger governance, improved cross-sectoral coordination, greater transparency in implementation, and sustainable

monitoring mechanisms. With effective management, the program has the potential to function as an important policy instrument for improving social welfare and promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development in Indonesia.

References

- Abd Rahman, M. F. (2025). Reformasi Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Untuk Pemenuhan Hak Sosial Ekonomi. *Jurnal Legislatif*, 82-104.
- Afriaji, M. (2026). Komunikasi Kebijakan dalam Meningkatkan Kepercayaan Publik Terhadap Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG). *Jurnal Riset Ilmiah*, 302-311.
- Afria Khoirun Nissa, M. C. (2025). Kebijakan Makanan Bergizi Gratis: Analisis Ekonomi Politik dan Dampaknya Terhadap Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Studi Kasus: SMP Negeri 4 Tanjungpinang . *Jutnal Penelitian Ilmu-ilmu Sosial*, 33-37.
- Anifatul Kiftiyah, F. A. (2025). Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) dalam Perspektif Keadilan Sosial dan Dinamika Sosial Politik . *Jurnal Keindonesiaan*, 101-112.
- Arfriani Maifizar, S. M. (2025). Analisis Implementasi Program Makan Bergizi Gratis 2025: Studi Literatur Dilema Efektivitas dan Kualitas. *Jurnal Sosiohumaniora Kodepena*, 134-139.
- Fatimah Yuliani, W. J. (2026). Kebijakan Makan Bergizi Gratis Di Indonesia: Analisis Implementasi, Dampak Terhadap Sumber Daya Manusia, Dan Implikasinya Pada Kebijakan Sistem Pendidikan Nasional. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar*, 212-223.
- Ida Zubaedah, S. R. (2025). Analisis Kebijakan Publik Terhadap Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) Sebagai Strategi Pemerintah Dalam Meningkatkan Kesejahteraan dan Ketahanan Gizi Masyarakat. *Jurnal Studi Interdisipliner Perspektif*, 14-17.
- Ikka Febryanti, I. M. (2025). Implementasi Kebijakan Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) Studi Kasus Pada SDN 3 Kepanjen Kabupaten Malang. *Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Publik*, 67-79.
- Muhammad Basit, H. R. (2025). Analisis Implementasi Program Makan Bergizi Gratis Terhadap Perkembangan Ekonomi. *Journal of Economics Development Research*, 49-54.
- Mustapa Kamil Alga Beruh, L. (2026). Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) dan Implikasi Sosial, Ekonomi, dan Politik Terhadap Masyarakat Kabupaten Aeh Tenggara, Aceh, Indonesia. *Indonesian Social Science Review*, 59-67.
- Rahmad Nasir, B. T. (2026). Implementasi Kebijakan Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG) di Sekolah: Analisis Tata Kelola, Akuntabilitas, dan Koordinasi Aktor. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, 2548-2553.
- Rizqianafi Cahya Putra, M. A. (2026). Analisis Fungsi Manajemen Dalam Operasional Program Makan Bergizi Gratis (MBG): Studi Literatur dan Analisis Kebijakan. *Jurnal Prima Manajemen*, 789-799.
- Sumantri, G. (2026). Masalah Sosial dan Distorsi Dalam Program Makan Bergizi Gratis: Analisis Kebijakan Publik Dalam Perspektif Maqasid Al-syari'ah. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Hukum Ekonomi Syariah*, 3084-3094.