

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FREE NUTRITIOUS MEAL PROGRAM: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) is a strategic initiative launched by the Indonesian government in January 2025 to accelerate stunting reduction and enhance human capital quality in support of the Indonesia Emas 2045 vision. This study aims to consolidate scientific evidence regarding MBG implementation through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) following PRISMA 2020 guidelines. Literature searches conducted on the Scopus database yielded 11 articles that met the inclusion criteria for analysis. The findings demonstrate that the MBG program provides significant positive impacts across three main dimensions: health and nutrition (stunting prevention and food security), education (improved concentration, academic achievement, and attendance rates), and socio-economics (reduced household burdens and local economic empowerment through MSMEs). Program evaluation employs four indicator groups: health, education, governance, and socio-economic resilience. While substantial opportunities for long-term human resource development were identified, serious structural challenges remain, including logistical constraints in remote and underserved areas, infrastructure limitations, fiscal risks, and the need for governance transparency to prevent corruption. The success of MBG is highly dependent on the collaborative commitment of stakeholders in building an accountable and participatory governance system.

Keywords: Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG); Systematic Literature Review; PRISMA

INTRODUCTION

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) is one of the strategic initiatives of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, officially launched on 6 January 2025 as part of the national effort to accelerate stunting reduction and improve the quality of human capital in support of the Indonesia Emas 2045 (Golden Indonesia 2045) vision (Mursalin et al., 2026; Rahmah et al., 2025). The program targets students across all educational levels, from early childhood education (PAUD) to senior secondary schools, through the provision of balanced and nutritious meals delivered by Nutrition Fulfillment Service Units (SPPG) established across districts and municipalities throughout Indonesia. As one of the government's flagship national priority programs, MBG is projected to reach 82.9 million beneficiaries by the end of 2026, making it one of the largest social protection and nutrition intervention programs ever implemented in Indonesia (Biro Hukum dan Humas Badan Gizi Nasional, 2026).

The urgency of this program is driven by the persistently high prevalence of stunting, which remains a major public health challenge across many regions of Indonesia. Furthermore, evidence indicating that approximately 41% of Indonesian children attend school without eating breakfast, while only 10% regularly consume a nutritionally balanced breakfast, highlights the need for school-based nutrition interventions as a critical strategy for enhancing the quality of human capital over the long term (Agustini, 2025). Beyond addressing nutritional deficiencies, the MBG program represents a strategic investment in human capital development. Adequate nutritional intake has been shown to improve students' cognitive performance, educational outcomes, and productivity, which ultimately contributes to long-term economic growth and national development (Bütikofer et al., 2018; Liang et al., 2025).

The implementation of the MBG program involves extensive cross-sectoral collaboration, including the participation of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), the Indonesian National Police (Polri), religious organizations, cooperatives, and non-profit foundations. More than 5,800 Nutrition Fulfillment Service Units (SPPGs) are currently operating across all 38 provinces of Indonesia. In addition to improving nutritional outcomes, the program has generated approximately 290,000 jobs in food preparation facilities and engaged nearly one million farmers, fishers, livestock producers, and micro- and small-scale enterprises within its supply chain, thereby creating significant multiplier effects on local and regional economies (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, 2025). Nevertheless, the implementation of such a large-scale program is not without challenges. Several issues have been reported, including food safety incidents in certain regions, logistical constraints in remote and underserved areas, and increasing demands for transparent, accountable, and effective governance.

Although the MBG program has demonstrated remarkable progress within a relatively short period, a comprehensive assessment of its implementation, impacts, and challenges remains necessary to ensure its long-term sustainability and effectiveness. Previous studies have examined the program from various perspectives, including its effects on health and educational outcomes, governance practices, and local economic empowerment. However, the existing evidence remains fragmented and has yet to be systematically synthesized. Therefore, this study aims to consolidate the available scientific evidence on the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Specifically, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the program's impacts, evaluation indicators, implementation opportunities, and challenges, thereby offering evidence-based insights to support future policy improvements and the sustainable implementation of the program.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) is part of a broader social protection and human capital development policy that has been implemented in various forms across many countries. Globally, school feeding programs are widely recognized as essential interventions for addressing food insecurity, improving health outcomes, and enhancing educational achievement, particularly in developing countries (Herwawan et al., 2026). In Indonesia, similar initiatives had previously been implemented on a limited scale; however, the MBG program represents the first nationwide initiative designed to simultaneously serve tens of millions of beneficiaries. Previous studies have demonstrated that free nutritious meal programs generate positive outcomes across three major dimensions: health and nutrition, education, and socio-economic development. From a health perspective, these programs have been shown to improve children's nutritional status and contribute to stunting prevention, aligning with the principle of preserving life (*hifz al-nafs*) by enhancing children's access to adequate nutrition (Kholis et al., 2025). In addition, technological innovations, such as the application of artificial intelligence (AI) to map marine protein resources, have supported the sustainability of protein supply, thereby improving the nutritional quality of meals provided to beneficiaries.

From an educational perspective, the MBG program has consistently been associated with improvements in students' learning concentration, academic performance, school attendance, and participation. Evidence from various countries further indicates that school-based nutrition interventions produce long-term educational benefits, including increased years of schooling and higher transition rates to secondary and tertiary education. From a socio-economic perspective, the program enables low-income households to reallocate part of their household expenditures toward other essential needs, strengthens social cohesion and community solidarity, and promotes job creation and community empowerment through local food supply chains (Bütikofer et al., 2018).

The implementation and outcomes of the MBG program have been evaluated using four major groups of indicators: (1) health and nutrition indicators, (2) educational indicators, (3) implementation and governance indicators, and (4) socio-economic and household resilience indicators. Health and nutrition indicators include improvements in nutritional status and stunting prevention, the reduction of short-term hunger, and the quality and diversity of food that complies with food safety standards (Pradita et al., 2025). Educational indicators encompass school attendance and participation rates, students' concentration and academic achievement, and educational continuity, as reflected by increased years of schooling and higher enrollment rates in advanced levels of education.

Implementation and governance indicators include the Average Daily Participation (ADP) rate as a measure of program coverage, transparency and accountability in financial management, logistical efficiency encompassing kitchen infrastructure and distribution capacity, and regulatory flexibility to accommodate emergency situations and local conditions. Meanwhile, socio-economic and household resilience indicators assess households' capacity to manage resources productively, the strengthening of local economic development through employment generation

and the involvement of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), as well as the enhancement of social solidarity at the community level.

METHOD

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to comprehensively examine the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) in Indonesia. The review process followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines to ensure transparency, methodological rigor, and reproducibility. The PRISMA framework was selected because its standardized and systematic approach enhances the reliability and validity of evidence synthesis (Ardianov Kukuh; Rahyadi, Irmawan, 2025).

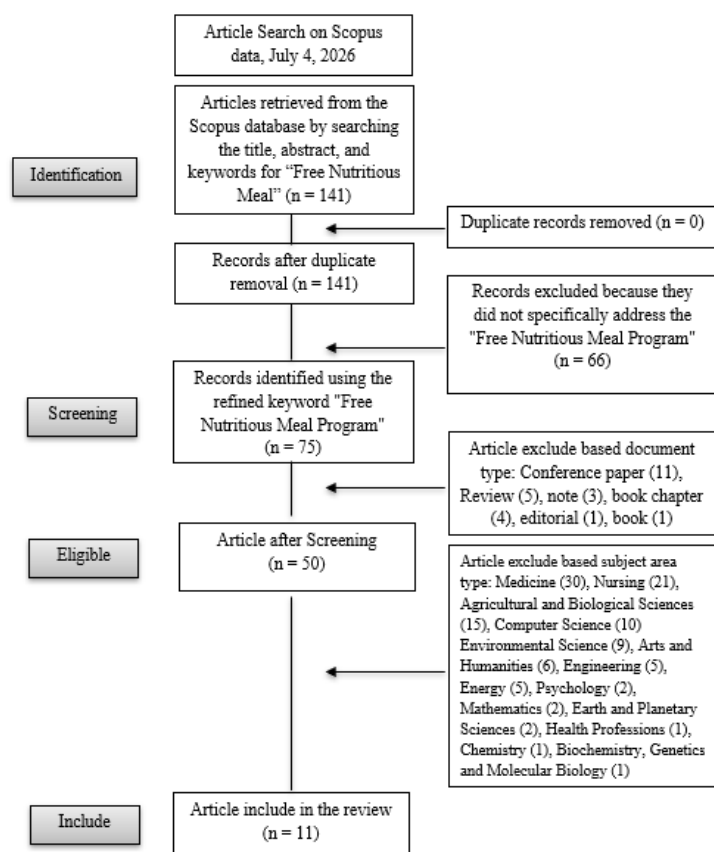


Figure 1: PRISMA

The literature search was conducted in the Scopus database on 4 July 2026 in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The initial search employed the keyword "Free Nutritious Meal" within the title, abstract, and keyword fields, yielding 141 records. To improve the relevance of the retrieved literature, the search strategy was subsequently refined by adding the term "Program," resulting in the search phrase "Free Nutritious Meal Program." This refinement reduced the search results to 75 records that were more closely aligned with the objectives of this study. A screening process was then performed based on document type, retaining only peer-reviewed journal articles. Consequently, 25 documents were excluded, comprising 11 conference papers, 5 review articles, 3 notes, 4 book chapters, 1 editorial, and 1 book. Following this screening stage, 50 articles remained and were subjected to a full-text eligibility assessment. During the eligibility phase, all selected articles were reviewed in full and evaluated against predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Upon completion of the assessment, 11 studies met all eligibility criteria and were included in the final Systematic Literature Review (SLR).

This study aims to comprehensively synthesize previous research on the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The scope of the review was developed using the PICOC framework, consisting of Population (P): studies addressing the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG); Intervention (I): the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG); Comparison (C): not considered the primary focus of this review; Outcome (O): reported impacts, evaluation indicators, opportunities, and challenges associated with the program's implementation; and Context (C): the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program in Indonesia. Based on the PICOC framework, three research questions were formulated to guide the identification, classification, and synthesis of evidence extracted from studies that met the inclusion criteria in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines.

RQ1. What impacts of the Free Nutritious Meal Program have been reported in previous studies?

RQ2. What indicators have been used to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the Free Nutritious Meal Program?

RQ3. RQ3. What opportunities and challenges have been identified in the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is a widely used method for systematically identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing scientific evidence to provide a comprehensive understanding of the development of a research topic (Obidallah et al., 2020; Vidoni, 2022). Through this approach, researchers can map research trends, identify research gaps, and formulate future research directions based on available empirical evidence (Vidoni, 2022). Therefore, this section presents the synthesis of 11 articles that met the inclusion criteria regarding the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program in Indonesia.

A descriptive analysis of the literature's characteristics is a common initial step in a systematic literature review to obtain a general overview of the profile of the studies under review. One of the aspects analyzed in this stage is the distribution of articles based on the country of origin. This analysis plays an important role in identifying countries that pay attention to the implementation of nutritious meal programs, while also illustrating the distribution of the research contexts that serve as the foundation for synthesizing empirical evidence in this study. Information regarding this geographical distribution contributes to explaining the scope of the literature reviewed and provides an initial context prior to further discussion on the main findings regarding the impact of the Free Nutritious Meal Program. The distribution of articles based on the country of origin is presented in Figure 2.

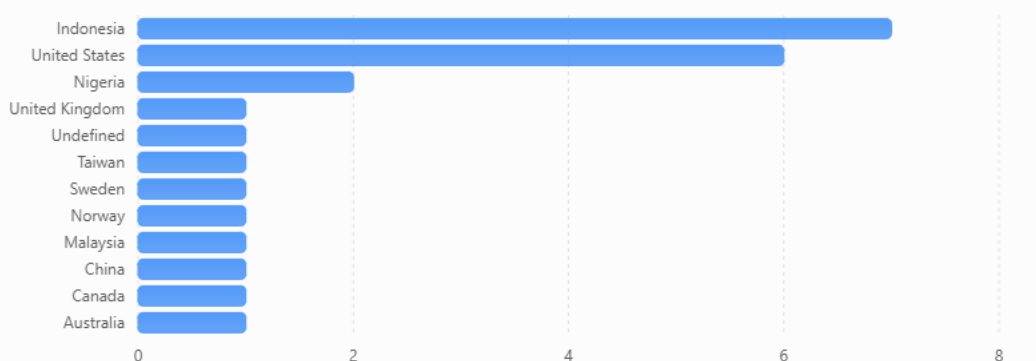


Figure 2 : Distribution of Articles Based on the Country of Origin

Based on the results of the literature identification, it can be noted that studies on the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program or school feeding programs have been conducted in a number of countries, although the distribution remains concentrated in only a few nations. Indonesia is recorded as the highest contributor of publications with seven articles ($n=7$), followed by the United States with six articles ($n=6$). Nigeria occupies the next position with two articles ($n=2$), while Australia, Canada, China, Malaysia, Norway, Sweden, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom each contribute one article ($n=1$), along with one article with an unidentified (undefined) country affiliation. This distribution pattern indicates that studies related to nutritious meal programs do not solely develop in developing nations but also receive substantial attention in developed countries. This finding strengthens the view that the issue of nutritional fulfillment through government policy interventions is a global phenomenon.

Consequently, it is examined from various scientific perspectives, ranging from public health, education, food security, and social protection to human resource development.

RQ1. What are the impacts of the Free Nutritious Meal Program reported in prior research?

Based on prior research, the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program demonstrates significant positive impacts, particularly on the aspects of education, behavior, and household economics, in addition to broader socio-economic impacts. The MBG is viewed as a strategic government program that has the potential to provide social benefits; however, at the same time, it presents challenges in the form of substantial budget requirements, implementation risks, and demands for better governance (Buehler, 2026). Other studies also state that the MBG Program offers significant benefits for public health, education, social, and economic sectors. Nonetheless, these benefits have not been optimally achieved due to various constraints in program implementation and governance. Therefore, improvements in logistics, funding, coordination, and program management are required so that the objectives of the MBG can be achieved more effectively (Herwawan et al., 2026).

In terms of health and nutritional fulfillment, the MBG Program is proven to significantly contribute to improving children's nutritional status while acting as a stunting prevention effort. This is reinforced by research findings in Maluku showing that the program aligns with the principle of *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life) through improved access to nutrition for children (Herwawan et al., 2026; Humaeroh, Awalia, Madali, et al., 2025). The success of this program is also inseparable from the role of technological innovation, such as the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in mapping marine protein potential, which helps maintain a stable supply of protein sources like fish, shrimp, and seaweed as essential components in improving the nutritional quality of beneficiaries (Caraka et al., 2025). Empirical evidence from abroad further strengthens the overview of the effectiveness of similar programs; in the United States, for instance, the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) has proven to play a crucial role in suppressing household food insecurity levels, particularly during crisis periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Stacy et al., 2022). These various findings confirm that school-based nutritious meal interventions possess great potential to improve children's nutritional status while preventing chronic nutritional issues, especially when supported by technological innovation and adequate program governance.

In the aspect of education, the MBG Program consistently demonstrates positive impacts on students' learning concentration and academic achievements. A number of studies reveal that this program is capable of significantly improving students' learning focus as well as academic performance (Herwawan et al., 2026; Okah et al., 2025). Experience from China through its national nutrition program shows an increase in the average duration of education by 0.14 years, indicating that school-based nutrition interventions provide a long-term impact on educational attainment (Liang et al., 2025). Furthermore, the provision of free meals is also proven to boost student attendance and participation rates in schools. In China, this long-term impact is evident from a 5.8% increase in high school enrollment rates and a 4.2% increase in university enrollment rates, alongside the reduced opportunity cost of education for low-income families (Herwawan et al., 2026; Liang et al., 2025; Pradita et al., 2025b). These findings reaffirm that the MBG Program not only provides short-term nutritional benefits but also serves as a strategic investment in human resource development, particularly through enhancing education quality and school participation for children from underprivileged families.

From a social and economic perspective, the benefits of the MBG Program are not limited to nutrition and education alone. The program helps low-income families reallocate a portion of their household budget to other urgent needs, such as additional education costs or healthcare services, thereby easing family economic pressures (Pradita et al., 2025a). Evaluated from a socio-cultural aspect, this program also plays a role in strengthening social cohesion and solidarity at the grassroots level, while fostering a sense of togetherness in the Muslim community through the spirit of mutual assistance (*ta'awun*) (Pradita et al., 2025a). On a local economic scale, the program is proven to drive job creation and community empowerment through the food supply chain, as observed in Maluku and Canada, where the diversity of involved food ingredients also supports social inclusivity (Herwawan et al., 2026). These findings show that the MBG Program has a multiplier effect that impacts not only individual beneficiaries but also communities and the broader local economic ecosystem, making this program potentially an inclusive instrument for socio-economic development.

Overall, the synthesis of various prior studies indicates that the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program exerts a positive impact on three main dimensions. On the health and nutrition dimension, the program contributes to the improvement of children's nutritional status, stunting prevention, and the reinforcement of food security, supported by technological innovations in providing protein sources. On the education dimension, the program is proven to enhance learning concentration, academic achievement, attendance rates, and school participation, with evidence of long-term impacts on the duration of education and access to higher education levels. On the social and economic

dimension, the program alleviates the household economic burden, strengthens social solidarity and cohesion, and drives local economic empowerment through job creation and the reinforcement of the food supply chain.

RQ2. What indicators are used to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of the Free Nutritious Meal Program?

Based on the review of various prior studies, the evaluation of the implementation and outcomes of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program employs four main groups of indicators, namely: health and nutrition indicators, education indicators, implementation and governance indicators, as well as socio-economic and family resilience indicators. These four indicator groups are interrelated and provide a comprehensive overview of the program's effectiveness, both in terms of direct impacts on beneficiaries and in terms of operational processes and program governance.

In the health and nutrition outcome indicator group, prior research focuses on the direct impact on the physical well-being of beneficiaries. The first indicator is nutritional status and stunting prevention, where the program's success is measured by the improvement in children's nutritional status and the program's effectiveness in preventing stunting (Herwawan et al., 2026; Humaeroh, Awalia, Madali, et al., 2025). The second indicator is hunger alleviation, which measures the extent to which the program is able to eliminate short-term hunger within the school environment (Okah et al., 2025). The third indicator is the quality and diversity of food ingredients, which evaluates the availability of protein (such as marine protein) as well as food standards that must meet the *halalan thayyiban* (lawful and wholesome) criteria to guarantee consumption safety and quality (Caraka et al., 2025). These indicators are essential to ensure that the program does not merely provide food, but rather high-quality and optimally nutritious food for children's growth and development.

In the education outcome indicator group, this program is frequently positioned as a long-term human resource investment strategy. The first indicator is the attendance and participation rate, which measures the increase in the number of students consistently attending school as a result of providing nutritious meals (Herwawan et al., 2026; Pradita et al., 2025a). The second indicator is concentration and academic performance, which measures students' ability to focus during learning and the resulting grades or academic achievements as an impact of fulfilling nutritional needs (Herwawan et al., 2026; Okah et al., 2025). The third indicator is educational sustainability; in China, success indicators include an increase in the average school duration by 0.14 years, as well as a 5.8% rise in high school enrollment and a 4.2% rise in university enrollment as evidence of the program's long-term impact on educational participation (Liang et al., 2025). These indicators demonstrate that the MBG program serves not only as a short-term nutritional intervention but also as a strategic instrument to enhance the quality of human resources in the long run.

In the implementation and governance (management) indicator group, evaluation focuses on the program's operational processes. The first indicator is the Average Daily Participation (ADP), which is the average number of participants participating each day compared to the target population, measuring the scope and coverage of the program quantitatively. The second indicator is transparency and accountability, which measures the extent to which fund management is conducted openly and responsibly as a form of good governance in public program management. The third indicator is logistical efficiency, which evaluates kitchen infrastructure, distribution capacity in remote areas, and the timeliness of fund disbursement as key factors for successful program operations. The fourth indicator is regulatory flexibility, such as the use of special policies (waivers) to adjust food distribution to emergency situations or specific local needs. These indicators are crucial to ensure that the program runs effectively, efficiently, and sustainably under various diverse geographical and social conditions.

In the socio-economic and family resilience indicator group, the evaluation looks at the program's impact beyond the school environment. The first indicator is family economic resilience, which measures the family's ability to manage resources productively and reduce the household expenditure burden as a result of the program reducing the need for children's food expenses at school (Pradita et al., 2025a). The second indicator is local economic empowerment, which includes the creation of new jobs for the local community and the involvement of local MSMEs in the food supply chain as a form of the program's multiplier effect on the community's economy (Herwawan et al., 2026). The third indicator is social solidarity, which measures the strengthening of social cohesion and the spirit of mutual assistance (*ta'awun*) at the grassroots level as a social impact of the program that involves collective community participation (Pradita et al., 2025a). These indicators show that the MBG program has impact dimensions that transcend health and education aspects, contributing to household economic welfare and the reinforcement of social capital at the community level.

Overall, the evaluation indicators for the Free Nutritious Meal Program identified from various prior studies encompass four main dimensions: the health and nutrition dimension, the education dimension, the implementation

and governance dimension, and the socio-economic and family resilience dimension. These indicators are comprehensive and complementary, providing a complete picture of the program's effectiveness from both the process side (implementation and governance) and the outcome side (impacts on public health, education, social, and economic sectors). The integrated use of these indicators within a program monitoring and evaluation system is a critical prerequisite to ensure that the Free Nutritious Meal Program can achieve its goals optimally and sustainably, while identifying areas that require improvement in future program implementation.

RQ3. What are the opportunities and challenges identified in the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program?

Based on the review of various research sources, the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) Program presents a number of strategic opportunities that can be maximized, along with significant challenges that must be addressed to ensure the program's success and sustainability. Overall, the opportunities presented by this program are immense in supporting human resource development and the local economy; however, various structural, operational, and governance challenges require serious attention from all stakeholders. The MBG Program holds great opportunities for improving the quality of human resources, where it is viewed as a long-term strategy to build the "Golden Generation 2045" by enhancing student health, learning concentration, and academic performance (Fidiyanti & Kholiq, 2026). In addition, this program offers a major opportunity to reduce the national stunting prevalence, which still stands at 21.5%, and ensure the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*) through equitable access to nutrition for children from various socio-economic backgrounds (Pradita et al., 2025). From an economic perspective, MBG has the potential to create new jobs, revitalize the local food ecosystem, and support the downstream processing of agricultural and fishery products by involving MSMEs and cooperatives as main partners in the food supply chain (Herwawan et al., 2026). The optimization of technology, such as artificial intelligence (AI)-based marine protein mapping, also presents an opportunity to ensure the sustainability of nutritious food supplies and supply chain efficiency, allowing the program to run more effectively and measurably (Caraka et al., 2025).

In addition to physical and economic benefits, the MBG program also strengthens social solidarity and religious values through the spirit of mutual assistance (*ta'awun*), acting as an economic redistribution instrument that aligns with the principles of justice in *fiqh siyasah* (Islamic political jurisprudence) (Pradita et al., 2025a). This indicates that the program functions not merely as a technical intervention but also possesses a socio-cultural dimension that strengthens social cohesion at the community level. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to integrate Islamic social funds such as *zakat*, *infaq*, and productive *waqf* to support the sustainability of the program budget, so that the burden on the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBN) can be reduced and community participation in program funding can be increased (Pradita et al., 2025a). These opportunities show that MBG has the potential to become a holistic and sustainable development program if managed properly and if it involves all elements of society.

Despite its vast opportunities, the implementation of the MBG Program faces various significant challenges that must be overcome. First, logistical and geographical barriers present major obstacles, particularly in distributing food to the forefront, outermost, and disadvantaged (3T) regions as well as archipelagic areas that face severe infrastructure and shipping capacity constraints (Herwawan et al., 2026). Second, limited infrastructure and technical capacity, where the lack of adequate central kitchen facilities and uneven operational standards across schools become main technical barriers to providing hygienic and nutritious food (Humaeroh, Awalia, Omar, et al., 2025; Michnik & Engler-Stringer, 2025). Third, fiscal and budgetary risks pose a serious challenge because this program requires enormous costs that can narrow the country's fiscal space and pose risks to budgetary stability if not managed carefully and sustainably (Buehler, 2026).

Fourth, governance and transparency issues represent a major challenge requiring serious attention, particularly regarding the potential inaccuracy of beneficiary data, lack of transparency in fund management, and the risk of corruption or abuse of authority that could threaten the program's effectiveness and credibility (Herwawan et al., 2026). Fifth, menu acceptance and food quality pose equally vital operational challenges, given the variation in food preferences among diverse students and the need to ensure *halalan thayyiban* standards alongside consistent nutritional content across all regions, requiring menu standardization without neglecting local wisdom and food culture diversity. Sixth, the risk of social dependency emerges as a concern that communities might become passive recipients of aid and over-reliant on the state, which could weaken the work ethic and long-term economic independence of families (Humaeroh, Awalia, Madali, et al., 2025). Seventh, inter-institutional coordination frequently hampers program effectiveness, where coordination gaps among central government agencies, regional governments, field implementers, and food service providers often impede program effectiveness and cause inefficiencies in execution (Caraka et al., 2025; Herwawan et al., 2026).

Overall, the implementation of the Free Nutritious Meal Program encounters a dynamic interplay between massive strategic opportunities and significant structural challenges. The primary opportunity of this program lies in its potential to improve the quality of human resources toward the Golden Generation 2045, reduce stunting prevalence, empower the local economy through MSME involvement, optimize AI technology for supply chain efficiency, strengthen social solidarity and religious values, and leverage alternative funding sources from Islamic social funds. However, all these opportunities cannot be optimized without addressing the existing challenges, including logistical and geographical barriers in 3T regions, limited infrastructure and technical capacity, fiscal and budgetary risks, governance and transparency issues, variations in menu acceptance and quality standards, the risk of social dependency, and weak inter-institutional coordination. Therefore, the success of the MBG program heavily depends on the commitment of all stakeholders to collaboratively address these challenges and to build a transparent, accountable, and participatory governance system so that the strategic opportunities inherent in this program can be realized optimally and sustainably.

CONCLUSION

Based on the systematic literature review (SLR) conducted in this study, the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) in Indonesia has been proven to provide significant positive impacts across three main dimensions: health and nutrition through improved child nutritional status, stunting prevention, and strengthened food security; education through enhanced learning concentration, academic achievement, attendance rates, as well as increased school duration and access to higher education; and social and economic aspects through reduced household expenditure burdens, job creation, and local economic empowerment through the involvement of MSMEs and cooperatives in the food supply chain. The program's success is evaluated through four interrelated key indicator groups, encompassing health indicators (stunting prevention and food quality), educational indicators (attendance and educational sustainability), governance indicators (daily participation coverage, transparency, and logistical efficiency), and socio-economic resilience indicators (household economic resilience and strengthening social solidarity). This study also identifies a dynamic between significant strategic opportunities, such as MBG's potential as a long-term strategy toward the Golden Generation 2045, revitalization of local food ecosystems, optimization of artificial intelligence (AI) technology for supply chain efficiency, and integration of Islamic social funds (zakat, infaq, waqf) to support budget sustainability, alongside various structural challenges including logistical constraints in remote and underserved areas, infrastructure limitations, fiscal risks to the state budget, and the demand for transparency to prevent corruption and inaccuracies in beneficiary data. Overall, the MBG program holds great potential as an inclusive instrument for human development; however, its success heavily depends on the collaborative commitment of all stakeholders in building a transparent, accountable, and participatory governance system to address various operational challenges on the ground.

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