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After Subsistence Prosperity: Food Security Challenges for Residents in Remote Papua

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Papua, with its incredible natural wealth and biodiversity, holds great potential to achieve sustainable prosperity. The introduction of this paper highlights the background of the challenges faced by Papua, including food security in remote areas, as well as the research objectives and methodologies used. Subsistence prosperity is the main focus, describing how Papuans live from traditional natural products. However, economic and social changes have shifted this paradigm, bringing significant impacts to life and food security in Papua. The study then evaluates the current state of food security in Papua, identifying key factors that affect access and availability of food in remote areas. Based on these findings, short-term and long-term policy recommendations to improve food security and prosperity in Papua were prepared. These recommendations include strategies to increase local food production, diversify food sources, improve infrastructure, and strengthen the capacity and participation of local communities in resource management. With a holistic approach that involves collaboration between the government, local communities, and the private sector, this research offers sustainable solutions to address food security challenges in Papua. The results of this study are expected to be a guide for stakeholders in formulating policies that support the welfare and prosperity of the Papuan people, especially in remote areas that are vulnerable to food insecurity.

1. Introduction

Development is one of the efforts to improve the welfare of the community and create a better life. In Indonesia, especially in the land of Papua, development goals also lead to the achievement of welfare on par with other regions in the country. However, the reality faced often shows different results. Various development challenges in Papua, especially in remote areas, are important issues that require in-depth attention.

Papua, with its abundant biodiversity and natural resources, has great potential to achieve economic sustainability. However, unique geographical, social, and cultural conditions create its own dynamics in development. One of the main challenges faced is the problem of food security in remote areas. The subsistence prosperity system, which was previously the mainstay of society to meet traditional food needs, is now facing pressure due to social and economic changes. This transformation raises questions about how indigenous Papuans can survive, adapt, and even take advantage of these changes to improve their well-being.

This study aims to explore the condition of food security in Papua with a literature study-based approach. Through this analysis, it is hoped that the main factors affecting access and availability of food in remote areas can be identified, as well as provide policy recommendations for the short and long term. Thus, the results of this study are expected to be able to contribute to the formulation of policies that support the improvement of the welfare of the Papuan people and answer the food security challenges faced.

2. Method

This study uses a literature study method to analyze food security challenges in remote areas of Papua. This literature study was carried out by collecting, analyzing, and analyzing various relevant secondary data sources, such as official reports, statistical data, previous research results, and academic literature related to food security and socio-economic dynamics in Papua. This approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of the changing subsistence prosperity system and food security challenges faced by local communities.

The first stage of the research is secondary data collection. Data is obtained from official publications, such as reports from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), local government documents, reports from international organizations, and academic references in the form of scientific journals and books. This data includes information on local food production, people's consumption levels, dependence on imported food, and the impact of socio-economic changes on the lifestyle of the Papuan people. With diverse data sources, this study aims to provide a holistic picture of the condition of food security in Papua.

After the data is collected, the analysis is carried out with a descriptive-qualitative approach. This approach aims to understand the patterns that emerge in the data and identify the factors that affect food access and availability in remote areas of Papua. This analysis also focuses on the evaluation of the subsistence prosperity system that was previously characteristic of the Papuan people, as well as how the system has changed due to modernization, external influences, and the entry of imported food.

The results of the analysis are used to prepare policy recommendations aimed at increasing food security in Papua, both in the short and long term. These recommendations include strategies to increase local food production, diversify food sources, strengthen infrastructure, and empower local communities. With an evidence-based approach, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of policies that support the welfare of the Papuan people in a sustainable manner.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of this study show that food security in remote areas of Papua is experiencing complex challenges due to social, economic, and environmental changes. One of the key findings is that Papuans, who previously relied on a subsistence prosperity system, are now facing a shift to a pattern of food consumption that relies more on imported foodstuffs. The subsistence prosperity system, which was once characterized by the availability of traditional food from garden products and the environment, has changed significantly with the entry of modernization and economic integration with the outside world.

One of the main indicators of this change is the increasing dependence of the community on rice as a staple food, even though local rice production in Papua is very limited. Data shows that subsidized rice distribution (Raskin) is one of the main sources of meeting food needs in mountainous and remote areas of Papua. However, limited access to transportation and minimal infrastructure often hampers the distribution of Raskin to these regions. This causes people to be increasingly vulnerable to uncertainty in food availability, especially when supply is disrupted.

On the other hand, sweet potatoes remain the main food source in many regions, especially in the highlands of Papua. Sweet potato production in several districts still meets local needs, although there is a significant variation in production levels between regions. Districts such as Pegunungan Bintang, Nduga, Yalimo, Puncak, and Deiyai show a sweet potato production ratio per capita that is sufficient to meet the needs of the local community. However, several

other districts have low production levels, so they have the potential to experience food insecurity.

In addition to sweet potatoes, other local food commodities such as cassava, yam, potatoes, and sago also still have an important role, although their contribution is relatively small compared to sweet potatoes. In lowland areas, sago is one of the staple food sources, but the potential of sago is often not utilized to its full potential due to the lack of integrated management. In some cases, the conversion of agricultural land and changes in people's consumption patterns have also reduced the availability of local food.

The discussion of this study highlights that dependence on imported foods, such as rice, meat, and processed foods, not only affects consumption patterns but also has an impact on the cultural values and traditional life systems of the Papuan people. This rapid change often causes people to lose access to their traditional gardens, which used to be a major source of food security. In addition, the limited cash income of people in remote areas further exacerbates the vulnerability to the scarcity of imported food, especially when food prices increase.

The results of this study also confirm that the transformation of the subsistence prosperity system in Papua has reached a point where people cannot return to the traditional pattern completely. Therefore, a holistic policy strategy is needed to support food security in Papua. These policies must include increasing local food production and productivity, diversifying food sources, and strengthening the capacity of local communities through training and empowerment. In addition, the development of transportation and logistics infrastructure is also a priority to ensure an even distribution of food to remote areas.

Overall, this study shows that the challenges of food security in Papua are not only related to food availability, but also to access, consumption patterns, and complex socio-cultural changes. An approach that collaboratively involves the government, local communities, and the private sector is needed to create sustainable solutions and support the well-being of Papuans in the future.

4. Conclusion

This research reveals that food security in remote areas of Papua faces major challenges due to social, economic, and cultural changes. The subsistence prosperity system that used to be a characteristic of Papuan people is now undergoing a significant shift due to modernization and increasing dependence on imported food, such as rice and processed foodstuffs. This

transformation not only affects people's consumption patterns, but also threatens the sustainability of traditional food systems and local cultural values.

Key findings show that local food production, especially sweet potatoes as a staple food, still has an important role to play in meeting the needs of communities in some regions. However, uneven distribution, low productivity levels in some regions, and dependence on imported food are the main obstacles that increase the risk of food insecurity in remote areas of Papua. In addition, limited infrastructure and transportation have also worsened access to food in hard-to-reach areas.

This study confirms that the change in the subsistence prosperity system in Papua has reached a point where people cannot fully return to traditional patterns. Therefore, a holistic approach involving various parties is needed to support food security in Papua. Strategic policies that include increasing local food production, diversifying food sources, developing infrastructure, and empowering local communities are essential to ensure adequate food availability and access. In addition, strengthening the local economy through the use of traditional food commodities is also an important step to create sustainable food security.

With collaboration between the government, local communities, and the private sector, the challenges of food security in Papua can be effectively addressed. The results of this study are expected to be the basis for formulating policies that support the welfare of the Papuan people, especially in remote areas that are vulnerable to food insecurity.

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