

**Evaluation of the Government's Agroindustry MSME Based Community Empowerment Program**



**Evaluasi Program Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Berbasis Industri Agro UMKM yang Dilaksanakan oleh Pemerintah**

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**ARTICLE INFORMATION**

<p><b>Keywords</b>  <i>Policy Evaluation;                  Agro-industry;                  MSMEs;                  Community;                  Empowerment;                  William N. Dunn;                  North Nias;</i></p>	<p><b>ABSTRACT</b>  <i>This study aims to evaluate the implementation of community empowerment policies based on agro-industry MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) implemented by the local government of North Nias Regency, with a case study in Afulu District. This research is a descriptive study adopting a qualitative approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Research informants consisted of officials from the Department of Cooperatives and MSMEs of North Nias Regency, field extension officers, and agro-industry MSME actors. Data analysis was conducted descriptively using William N. Dunn's policy evaluation criteria, which include effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness. The findings indicate that the implementation of agro-industry MSME empowerment policies in North Nias Regency has been carried out and shows a policy direction aligned with local agricultural and plantation potential. The program has encouraged the formation of agricultural product processing business groups and increased community awareness of the importance of adding value to agricultural products. However, the effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness of the program still face various constraints, particularly limited budgets, low intensity of field assistance, weak inter-agency synergy, and unequal community access to the program. These conditions hinder the achievement of program objectives to establish a sustainable agro-industry empowerment system, increase value-added agricultural products, and foster rural entrepreneurship. Therefore, improvements in policy implementation are needed through strengthening field mentoring quality, enhancing cross-sectoral coordination, and designing training programs that better match the needs of local agro-industry MSMEs.</i></p>
<p><b>Kata Kunci</b>  <i>Evaluasi Kebijakan;                  Industri Pertanian;                  UMKM;                  Masyarakat;                  Pemberdayaan;                  William N. Dunn;                  Nias Utara;</i></p>	<p><b>ABSTRAK</b>                  Penelitian ini bertujuan mengevaluasi implementasi kebijakan pemberdayaan masyarakat berbasis UMKM agroindustri Pemerintah Daerah di Kabupaten Nias Utara, dengan studi kasus di Kecamatan Afulu. Penelitian ini merupakan studi deskriptif yang mengadopsi pendekatan kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Informan penelitian terdiri atas aparat Dinas Koperasi dan UMKM Kabupaten Nias Utara, tenaga penyuluh lapangan, serta pelaku UMKM agroindustri. Analisis data dilakukan secara deskriptif dengan menggunakan kriteria evaluasi kebijakan William N. Dunn yang meliputi efektivitas, efisiensi, kecukupan, pemerataan, responsivitas, dan ketepatan program. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi kebijakan pemberdayaan UMKM agroindustri di Kabupaten Nias Utara telah berjalan dan memiliki arah kebijakan yang tepat sesuai potensi daerah berbasis pertanian dan perkebunan. Program telah mendorong terbentuknya kelompok usaha pengolahan hasil pertanian dan meningkatkan kesadaran masyarakat terhadap pentingnya nilai tambah produk. Namun, efektivitas, efisiensi, kecukupan, pemerataan, responsivitas, dan ketepatan program masih menghadapi berbagai kendala, terutama keterbatasan anggaran, rendahnya</p>

	<p>intensitas pendampingan, lemahnya sinergi antarinstansi, serta belum meratanya akses masyarakat terhadap program. Kondisi tersebut menyebabkan tujuan program untuk mewujudkan sistem pemberdayaan agroindustri berkelanjutan, meningkatkan nilai tambah produk pertanian, serta menumbuhkan wirausaha desa belum sepenuhnya tercapai secara optimal. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan perbaikan implementasi kebijakan melalui peningkatan kualitas pendampingan, penguatan koordinasi lintas sektor, serta perancangan program pelatihan yang lebih sesuai dengan kebutuhan UMKM agroindustri lokal.</p>
<p><b>Article History</b>                  Send 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026                  Review 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026                  Accepted 21<sup>th</sup> February 2026</p>	<p>Copyright ©2026 <a href="#">Jurnal Aristo (Social, Politic, Humaniora)</a>                  This is an open access article under the <a href="#">CC-BY-NC-SA</a> license.                  Akses artikel terbuka dengan model <a href="#">CC-BY-NC-SA</a> sebagai lisensinya.</p>



## Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a strategic role in driving regional economic growth and absorbing a large workforce. MSMEs also serve as drivers of the local economy, a means of community empowerment, and a source of innovation based on regional potential. In many developing regions, the existence of MSMEs has proven effective in increasing community income while strengthening an inclusive and sustainable economic structure (Rahma, 2024).

The Indonesian government has provided a strong regulatory basis for MSME development through Government Regulation Number 7 of 2021 concerning the facilitation, protection, and empowerment of cooperatives and MSMEs (Fuat & Salomo, 2023). At the regional level, the North Nias Regency Government follows up on this policy through Regional Regulations and Regent Regulations that regulate relevant agency institutions and community economic empowerment programs. This policy serves as the legal basis for local governments in designing and implementing MSME empowerment programs based on local potential (Desrinelti et al., 2021).

North Nias Regency is a region rich in natural resources, particularly in the agriculture, plantation, fisheries, and forestry sectors. Statistics Indonesia (BPS) data shows that more than 49% of the region's Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) comes from the agricultural sector and MSMEs (BPS, 2023). Leading commodities such as coconuts, kepok bananas, rubber, and fishery products have significant potential for development into value-added agro-industrial products. However, most of these products are still sold raw, resulting in relatively low economic value for the community. wilayah (Desrinelti et al., 2021; Gustiana et al., 2022; Sibuea, 2021; Wulandari et al., 2025). Tren

Evaluation of MSMEs in North Nias focuses on strengthening the regional economy through empowering small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by leveraging local potential,

such as agricultural, marine, and forest products (Nik Amah et al., 2023). The North Nias Regency Government supports this through various programs, including training, business process innovation development, and product quality improvement (Joko Pramono, 2020). Utilizing Local Resources: MSMEs in North Nias utilize agricultural, marine, and forest products to produce unique, value-added products (Dakhi & Khoiri, 2022). Business Process Innovation, a key component of business process innovation, aims to create services relevant to the needs of MSMEs in North Nias, thereby increasing their efficiency and competitiveness (Wulandari et al., 2025). Government MSME empowerment focuses on programs that support MSME empowerment, including improving access to capital, marketing, and technology.

Studies evaluating community empowerment and MSME development policies over the past ten years show increasing attention to the role of local governments in promoting local economic independence (Isnatul Huda et al., 2024). Various studies confirm that community economic empowerment programs are determined not only by the availability of assistance, but also by the appropriateness of policy design, implementation mechanisms, and the program's suitability to regional potential (Gash, 2022; Sibuea, 2021; Yuniar et al., 2024) Recent trends in MSME empowerment studies emphasize the importance of a local-potential-based approach, community participation, and systematic policy evaluation to measure the effectiveness of regional economic development programs.

Research (Ratu Wulan Nur Cahya et al., 2024) evaluated the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes) program using William N. Dunn's evaluation theory. The results indicated that the program was ineffective because the objectives of establishing village institutions had not been fully achieved. This study contributes to understanding the importance of policy evaluation in assessing the success of empowerment programs. However, the research focus is still limited to village institutions and has not examined real economic sectors such as agro-industry-based MSMEs, which are the backbone of the economy in underdeveloped regions.

Research (Buci Morisson & Aula Ahmad Hafidh Saiful Fikri, 2025) evaluated community empowerment programs in Gowa Regency. While the program was quite effective in infrastructure development, it provided limited capital assistance and strengthened community economic capacity. These findings suggest that the success of empowerment programs often focuses more on physical aspects than on productive economic aspects. This study did not address specific sectoral analysis, such as the

development of agro-industrial MSMEs, thus opening up opportunities for further research focused on natural resource-based local economic sectors.

Research (Darmika et al., 2021) highlighted the role of local government as a facilitator, regulator, and catalyst in empowering MSMEs in Mataram City. The results showed that synergy between the government and the community significantly impacted local economic growth. However, this study focused more on the role of government institutions and community participation, without in-depth evaluation of the accuracy and effectiveness of program policies based on specific leading sectors. This demonstrates the limited evaluative studies linking MSME empowerment policies to local agro-industrial potential.

A study (Widowati, 2025) examined the evaluation of MSME empowerment programs through corporate social responsibility (CSR). This study found that CSR programs effectively increased MSME turnover and ensured relatively equitable aid distribution. However, communication between stakeholders still needs to be strengthened. This study demonstrates that non-governmental actors can play a role in strengthening MSMEs, but it does not address the role of local governments, as key actors, in designing and evaluating MSME empowerment policies based on regional potential.

Meanwhile, (Galilei, 2024) emphasized that community empowerment based on local potential can create a resilient entrepreneurial system through a participatory approach. This study reinforces the importance of utilizing local resources as a basis for economic development. However, this research does not prioritize government policy evaluation as a primary focus of analysis, particularly in the context of implementing agro-industry-based MSME programs.

This presentation on MSMEs in North Nias will highlight the potential and challenges faced by MSMEs in the region. The presentation will cover various aspects, including promising MSMEs and frequently encountered obstacles. Nias is renowned for its diverse handicrafts, such as weaving, woodcarving, and woven fabrics (Rahayu, 2022). This could be a key focus for developing MSMEs in the craft sector. Nias boasts a variety of delicious and unique traditional foods. MSMEs that focus on traditional food production could have a broad market (Putri, 2020). Nias has significant potential for agro-industrial development, particularly related to local agricultural products such as coffee, coconut, and spices (Insani, 2022).

Research by (Isnatul Huda et al., 2024) indicates that the implementation of empowerment programs has been suboptimal due to a lack of coordination between

institutions, uneven capital distribution, and a lack of monitoring and mentoring tailored to the needs of business actors. This indicates that policy effectiveness has not been maximized in increasing the competitiveness of MSMEs at the local level. Evaluation of MSME Empowerment in Surabaya.

Another study (Meliana et al., 2025) examines the empowerment level of local food processing MSMEs in Kuningan, which contributes to measures of MSME productivity but does not publicly evaluate the role or implementation of empowerment policies. Many studies focus on MSMEs in general (general evaluation of empowerment programs), rather than specifically on agro-industry MSMEs. Research using policy evaluation models (such as Dunn's) has not been widely applied to the context of agro-industry MSMEs in island regions or areas with limited infrastructure, such as North Nias. Meanwhile, research (Tri Saputra & Fachri, 2025) states that agro-industry-based MSME empowerment programs can increase the added value of agricultural products and strengthen the rural economy. However, previous research has generally focused on increasing business capacity or access to capital for MSMEs, while studies specifically evaluating the implementation of agro-industry MSME empowerment policies in island and underdeveloped regions are still limited (Salwa Aidilla Fitri, 2024). This situation indicates a research gap, particularly regarding how local government policies in areas with limited infrastructure and market access implement agro-industry MSME empowerment programs (Widowati, 2025).

Based on previous studies, it can be concluded that research on MSME empowerment and policy evaluation has flourished over the past decade, but most still focuses on village institutional aspects, government roles, or CSR programs. Studies specifically evaluating agro-industry MSME-based community empowerment policies using William N. Dunn's evaluation criteria, particularly in underdeveloped areas such as North Nias Regency, are still very limited. In Afulu District, North Nias Regency, the vast natural resource potential has not been fully offset by improvements in community welfare. The majority of the population works as farmers and fishermen, but limited access to technology, capital, markets, and business mentoring prevents MSMEs from optimally developing their agro-industry businesses (Insani, 2022). Therefore, evaluating agro-industry MSME empowerment policies is crucial to determine the extent to which local government programs have been implemented, as well as the factors that support and hinder their success (Hulu et al., 2022).

Based on these conditions, this study focuses on the evaluation of agro-industry MSME-based community empowerment policies in Afulu District, North Nias Regency, using William N. Dunn's policy evaluation criteria. This approach was chosen to obtain a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness of the program in encouraging community economic independence. The purpose of this study is to analyze the policies of the North Nias Regency Government in implementing agro-industry MSME-based community empowerment programs in Afulu District, as well as to identify factors that influence the success and obstacles in implementing the policy.

## Method

This study employs a descriptive research design with a qualitative approach, referring to the framework proposed by (Endang Widi, 2021). The study aims to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of community empowerment policies, specifically agro-industry-based MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) empowerment policies in Afulu District, North Nias Regency. The data used in this study consist of primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from key informants selected through purposive sampling techniques (Sugiyono, 2011). The sources of data in this research therefore include both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected directly from purposively selected informants, as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Research Informants and Reasons for Selection**

<b>Research Informants</b>	<b>Informant Criteria</b>	<b>Reasons for Selection</b>
Officials of the Office of Cooperatives and MSMEs of North Nias Regency	Officials or staff directly involved in the planning and implementation of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs	Selected due to their authority and comprehensive understanding of policies, objectives, and implementation mechanisms of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs implemented by the local government
MSME extension officers or facilitators in Afulu District	Field facilitators directly involved in coaching, training, and assisting MSME actors	Selected because of their empirical experience in assisting MSMEs, enabling them to provide information regarding the implementation process, field constraints, and the effectiveness of the assistance
Agro-industry MSME actors in Afulu District	MSME actors who are the target group and beneficiaries of the empowerment programs	Selected because they directly experience the impacts of the empowerment programs, including improvements in business capacity, income, and business sustainability

Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews conducted online using virtual communication media, guided by a structured interview guide developed in accordance with the research focus. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from various relevant written sources, including official documents of the North Nias Regency Government, reports on the implementation of MSME empowerment programs, laws and regulations related to MSMEs and agro-industry, regional statistical data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), as well as scientific journal articles and other supporting literature. These secondary data were collected through document searches at relevant institutions, official government websites, and scientific journal databases. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted to explore information related to policy planning, implementation processes, challenges encountered, and the impacts of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs. Field observations were carried out to directly observe business environments, production activities, and the utilization of local resources by MSME actors in Afulu District. Documentation studies were used to complement and strengthen interview and observation data through the examination of policy documents, activity reports, and archives from relevant institutions. The validity of data was ensured through triangulation techniques, including source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from government officials, facilitators, and MSME actors. Technique triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation studies to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the data (Endang Widi, 2021).

Data analysis was conducted qualitatively through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The collected data were classified based on the research focus and analyzed using William N. Dunn's policy evaluation theory as the analytical framework. The evaluation was based on six policy evaluation criteria, namely effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and appropriateness, to assess the alignment between policy objectives, implementation processes, and program impacts on enhancing the capacity and independence of agro-industry MSMEs in North Nias Regency. The analysis results were subsequently interpreted to explain the level of success of policy implementation and the factors influencing the achievement of program objectives.

## Results and Discussion

### Profile of Afulu District

Understanding the regional profile of Afulu District is essential to provide an initial overview of the socio-economic conditions of the community and the key sectors that support local livelihoods. As part of North Nias Regency, Afulu District exhibits regional characteristics closely associated with agricultural and plantation activities, both in terms of livelihoods and local economic structure. This overview serves as an important foundation for examining the relationship between district-level conditions and broader regional economic dynamics. Field data indicate that the majority of community economic activities are concentrated in the agriculture, plantation, and fisheries sectors. Approximately 70% of respondents are engaged as farmers and small-scale business actors based on local natural resources.

Type of Occupation	Population (Persons)	Percentage (%)
Agriculture and Plantation	1,420	55.0
Fisheries	380	14.7
Small Trade and Services	420	16.3
Home Industries / MSMEs	210	8.1
Civil Servants / Military / Police	150	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,580</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 2. Occupational Structure of the Population in Afulu District**

*Source: Badan Pusat Statistik of North Nias Regency, Afulu District in Figures, processed by the researcher.*

Based on the occupational structure of the population in Afulu District, the agriculture, plantation, and fisheries sectors dominate, accounting for nearly 70% of the working population. This high proportion indicates that community economic activities remain heavily dependent on primary sectors based on natural resource utilization. Meanwhile, the proportion of residents engaged in home industries or agro-industry MSMEs remains relatively small, at less than 10%. This condition reflects that local economic activities have not been widely oriented toward sustainable processing of production outputs.

According to Statistical Data of North Nias Regency (Statda) 2025, the agriculture and plantation sectors serve as the main pillars of the regional economy, with leading commodities such as coconut, food crops, and horticultural products. This condition aligns with the profile of Afulu District, which shows the dominance of livelihoods based on natural resource-based agriculture. Although production levels are relatively high, the data indicate that economic activities are still largely characterized by primary production

without further processing. This finding reinforces field observations that most agricultural products in Afulu District are marketed in raw form, resulting in suboptimal economic value added for the local community.



**Figure 1. Condition and Potential of the Agriculture and Plantation Sector in Afulu District**

*Source: (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2025)*

This livelihood structure further demonstrates limitations in creating added economic value at the local level. Low community involvement in agricultural processing and industrial activities has resulted in the economic potential being underutilized. Consistent with these findings, the data indicates that the economic structure of the Afulu District community remains heavily dependent on the use of natural resources. The main commodities produced include coconut, oil palm, and other food crops. However, interviews revealed that most of these commodities are still sold as raw materials without further processing. This situation results in relatively low economic added value for the community compared to the potential of available resources.

The results of the study indicate that the development of agro-industry-based MSMEs in Afulu District has not been optimal. This is evident in the small number of MSMEs processing agricultural products and limited access to markets and business capital.

These findings align with the opinion of (Musthofa & Haidlir, 2022), who stated that limited capital, skills, and production facilities are factors inhibiting the competitiveness of MSMEs in rural areas.

From a social and demographic perspective, interview and observation data indicate a relatively low level of community education, with the majority of the population only primary and secondary school graduates. Although the majority of the population is of productive age, limited entrepreneurial skills and low marketing literacy hinder business development. This situation reinforces the findings (Isnatul Huda et al., 2024) that the social and cultural structures of the community influence the dynamics and development of local economic activity. Based on these findings, Afulu District was selected as the research location because it has significant natural resource potential but has not been matched by optimal management of agro-industry MSMEs. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the implementation of agro-industry MSME-based community empowerment policies, as well as the obstacles and opportunities for their development from the perspective of business actors and stakeholders.

### **Evaluation of Agro-Industry MSMEs by the Local Government of North Nias Regency**

Based on interviews with officials from the Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, and Manpower of North Nias Regency, it was found that the local government has implemented agro-industry MSME empowerment programs through various activities, including entrepreneurship training, business mentoring, and the provision of production equipment to MSME groups. These programs are intended to encourage communities not only to sell agricultural products in raw form, but also to process them into value-added products. Field observations in Afulu District indicate that several business groups have begun producing processed coconut, banana, and other agricultural products with support from the local government.

However, field findings also reveal that the implementation of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs has not yet been fully optimal. Based on interviews with MSME actors, several constraints were identified, including limited human resources, production equipment that does not function optimally due to damage, limited market access, and weak inter-agency coordination. Some MSME actors stated that the assistance received has not been sufficient to sustainably improve production capacity and business competitiveness.

**Table 3. Agro-Industry MSME Empowerment Programs Implemented by the Local Government of North Nias Regency**

<b>Type of Program</b>	<b>Number of Activities (Year)</b>	<b>Number of Participants / MSMEs (Units)</b>	<b>Form of Support</b>	<b>Implementation Notes</b>
MSME entrepreneurship training	3 activities	75 MSMEs	Business and production management training	Implemented gradually
Business mentoring	2 activities	40 MSMEs	Technical and managerial assistance	Not yet sustainable
Provision of production equipment	2 activities	25 MSMEs	Agricultural processing machines/equipment	Some equipment not functioning optimally
Facilitation of business groups	2 groups	2 MSME groups	Strengthening business institutions	Still limited
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 activities</b>	<b>140 MSMEs</b>		

*Source: Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, and Manpower of North Nias Regency (MSME Empowerment Program Reports), interviews and field observations, processed by the researcher.*

Based on Table 3, the local government of North Nias Regency has implemented various agro-industry MSME empowerment programs through entrepreneurship training, business mentoring, and the provision of production equipment. These programs demonstrate the local government’s commitment to encouraging MSME actors to process agricultural products into value-added goods. This finding is consistent with field observations in Afulu District, which indicate the emergence of coconut, banana, and other agricultural processing businesses supported by the local government. Nevertheless, the data in the table also show that the program coverage and the number of MSMEs benefiting from the programs remain limited. In addition, interviews with MSME actors revealed that the effectiveness of the programs has not been optimal, particularly in terms of the sustainability of mentoring, the condition of production equipment that does not fully function, and limited access to markets. These conditions have resulted in program impacts that have not yet been able to sustainably enhance MSME production capacity and competitiveness.

These findings indicate that agro-industry MSME empowerment policies in North Nias Regency have begun to be implemented and have generated initial positive impacts on the growth of agro-industry based business activities. However, the effectiveness of program

implementation still requires strengthening, particularly in the areas of mentoring quality, maintenance of production facilities, and expansion of market access, in order to optimally achieve the objective of improving community welfare.

### Effectiveness of Agro-Industry MSME Empowerment Programs

Effectiveness in policy evaluation theory, as proposed by William N. Dunn, refers to the extent to which a program is able to achieve its predetermined objectives, both in terms of outputs and the tangible impacts experienced by the target groups (Ratu Wulan Nur Cahya et al., 2024). In this study, the effectiveness of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs in North Nias Regency is analyzed through improvements in community business capacity, the processing of agricultural products into value-added goods, and the expansion of market access for MSME actors. Based on the Work Plan documents and performance reports of the Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, and Manpower of North Nias Regency, the local government has gradually implemented agro-industry MSME empowerment programs through entrepreneurship training, agricultural product processing training, and the provision of production equipment assistance. These programs are designed to encourage communities not only to sell agricultural products in raw form, but also to begin developing processed products based on local commodities.

**Table 4. Agro-Industry MSME Empowerment Programs in North Nias Regency**

Type of Program Activity	Number of Activities (2023–2024)	Number of MSME Beneficiaries	Source of Documents
MSME entrepreneurship training	6 activities	180 MSMEs	Performance Report of the Department of Cooperatives and MSMEs of North Nias Regency
Agricultural product processing training	4 activities	120 MSMEs	Work Plan (Renja) of the Department of Cooperatives and MSMEs
Provision of agro-industry production equipment	3 phases	65 MSME groups	MSME Assistance Distribution Reports
MSME business mentoring	Ongoing	±90 MSMEs	MSME Mentoring Documents

*Source: Processed from official local government documents (2023–2024).*

These findings indicate that agro-industry MSME empowerment programs have generated initial impacts on the increase of business activities based on local agricultural potential. This result is consistent with the findings of (Ferry Duwi Kurniawan dan Luluk Fauziah, 2020) who argue that government interventions in the form of training and production facility assistance can stimulate the growth of micro-enterprises based on local potential. However, interviews with MSME actors also reveal that the effectiveness of the programs has not been evenly perceived. Some MSMEs have received training and production equipment assistance, while others have not been directly reached by the programs and continue to rely on traditional production methods. Limited production facilities and restricted market access remain the main constraints in increasing production volume and expanding market reach.

Therefore, the effectiveness of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs in North Nias Regency can be considered to have shown positive initial outcomes. Nevertheless, this effectiveness still needs to be enhanced through more equitable access to training and production facility assistance, as well as strengthening field-level mentoring systems, so that all MSME actors can optimally and sustainably benefit from the programs.

### **Efficiency of Program Implementation**

Efficiency in policy evaluation, as emphasized by William N. Dunn, refers to the extent to which the resources used in a program are able to generate outputs that are proportional to the intended objectives (Irsal Basda et al., 2022). In this study, the efficiency of the implementation of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs in North Nias Regency is analyzed through budget utilization, activity financing patterns, and their impacts on program sustainability at the field level. Based on documents of the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) of North Nias Regency and the Work Plan (Renja) of the Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, and Manpower, the local government has allocated a specific budget to support agro-industry MSME empowerment programs. The budget is directed toward entrepreneurship training, agricultural product processing, procurement of production equipment, and the development of MSME business groups. From a planning perspective, this budget allocation reflects the local government's commitment to promoting MSME development based on local potential.

**Table 5. Budget Allocation and Utilization for Agro-Industry MSME Programs**

<b>Type of Activity</b>	<b>Financing Scheme</b>	<b>Budget Utilization Focus</b>
Agro-industry MSME training	Regional budget (APBD)	Speaker honoraria and training materials
Provision of production equipment	Regional budget (APBD)	Simple processing machines
MSME mentoring	Limited regional budget (APBD)	Transportation and operational costs for facilitators
MSME institutional development	Regional budget (APBD)	Coordination and monitoring activities

*Source:*(niasutara.go.id, 2026)

Nevertheless, interviews with officials from the Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, and Manpower as well as field facilitators indicate that limited regional fiscal capacity affects the efficiency of program implementation. The available budget has not been sufficient to reach all MSME actors simultaneously, resulting in program implementation being carried out gradually and selectively (Novalia et al., 2022). This condition has led to relatively low intensity and lack of continuity in field-level mentoring.

Limited operational budgets also have implications for the optimization of training outcomes. Several MSME actors stated that the skills acquired from training programs could not be fully applied due to the lack of follow-up mentoring and limited supporting production facilities. This finding indicates that although planning and budget allocation have been carried out, the ratio between inputs (budget) and outputs (strengthening of MSME businesses) still needs to be improved (Lesmono & Siregar, 2021).

Based on these findings, the efficiency of the implementation of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs in North Nias Regency can be considered adequate at the planning and initial budget allocation stages. However, at the implementation stage, budget limitations continue to affect program coverage, continuity of mentoring, and post-training strengthening of MSME businesses. Therefore, increasing budget support and diversifying funding sources are strategic steps to promote more optimal program efficiency in the future.

### **Adequacy of Programs in Addressing Community Needs**

Adequacy in policy evaluation, according to William N. Dunn, refers to the extent to which a program is able to address the primary needs of its target groups (Joko Pramono, 2020). In this study, the adequacy of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs in Afulu District, North Nias Regency, is analyzed through the suitability of training programs, the provision of production facilities, and business development support provided to the

community. Based on interviews with officials from the Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, and Manpower of North Nias Regency, the local government has provided basic entrepreneurship training, agricultural product processing training, and production equipment assistance for MSME groups. These programs serve as an initial step for the community to initiate agro-industry businesses and to acquire fundamental knowledge related to business management. Field findings indicate that MSME actors who participated in the programs experienced initial benefits in the form of improved understanding of entrepreneurship and agricultural product processing techniques.

However, interviews with MSME actors revealed that the training materials provided remain relatively general and have not yet fully aligned with the specific needs of local agro-industry businesses. In addition, MSME actors reported that after completing basic training, adequate follow-up mentoring has not been available to support sustainable business development. Further needs such as product packaging, marketing strategies, financial record-keeping, and product quality improvement have not yet been fully accommodated within the existing programs.



**Figure 2. Provision of Coconut Oil Production Equipment in North Nias Regency**

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that agro-industry MSME empowerment programs in Afulu District have been adequate in meeting basic needs, particularly through training and the provision of production equipment. Nevertheless, the adequacy of the programs remains at an initial stage and has not yet fully addressed the advanced and long-term needs of MSME actors. This finding is consistent with the study by (Darmadi et al., 2021) which emphasizes the importance of continuous mentoring and strengthening marketing aspects in the development of agro-industry based MSMEs.

### Equity of Program Access

Equity in policy evaluation, according to William N. Dunn, refers to the extent to which program benefits can be accessed fairly by all target groups, regardless of location, social conditions, or proximity to service centers (Salwa Aidilla Fitri, 2024). In the context of agro-industry MSME empowerment in Afulu District, equity of access is analyzed through the distribution of training programs, production equipment assistance, and the intensity of mentoring received by MSME groups across different villages.

**Table 6. Distribution of MSME Empowerment Programs by Village Area in Afulu District**

Village Area Category	Number of Villages	District		
		MSMEs Receiving Training	MSMEs Receiving Equipment Assistance	Mentoring Intensity
Near sub-district center	4 villages	18 MSMEs	12 MSMEs	Regular
Intermediate areas	3 villages	9 MSMEs	6 MSMEs	Irregular
Remote areas	3 villages	4 MSMEs	2 MSMEs	Very limited
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 villages</b>	<b>31 MSMEs</b>	<b>20 MSMEs</b>	—

*Source: Interviews and field observations (2025)*

Based on interviews with MSME actors in Afulu District, the findings indicate that access to empowerment programs has not been evenly experienced by all business groups (Haryadi et al., 2025) MSME groups located in villages closer to the sub-district center tend to have easier access to program information and are more likely to participate in training activities compared to MSME groups located in remote areas (Yahya et al., 2020). Other MSME actors also reported that distance and limited transportation access constitute major barriers to participation in empowerment programs. Business groups in remote areas are perceived to receive less attention, both in terms of access to program information and the intensity of mentoring. These findings indicate that although the programs have been implemented, equitable access has not yet been fully achieved. Therefore, the equity of access to agro-industry MSME empowerment programs in Afulu District still requires strengthening. Enhancing information dissemination systems, providing transportation support, and increasing the intensity of mentoring in remote areas are essential steps to ensure that all MSME groups can benefit from the programs fairly and equally (Hamirul & Alamsyahril, 2020).

### Government Responsiveness to MSME Needs

Responsiveness in policy evaluation, according to William N. Dunn, refers to the government’s ability to recognize, respond to, and fulfill the needs of program target groups (Lovita et al., 2022). In this study, the responsiveness of the local government in North Nias Regency is analyzed through the alignment of programs with MSME needs and the mechanisms for absorbing community aspirations. Based on interviews with officials from the Department of Cooperatives, MSMEs, and Manpower of North Nias Regency, the local government has sought to respond to MSME needs through the design of training programs and the provision of production equipment assistance to MSME groups considered to have potential (Supriana et al., 2021). The department stated that MSME actors’ aspirations are taken into account when determining the types of assistance and program activities (Naufal, 2022).

Interviews with MSME actors indicate that government responses are perceived as quite helpful, particularly in the form of skills training and the provision of basic production equipment. However, in practice, not all MSME needs can be immediately fulfilled. Budget constraints and planning processes that must go through administrative stages have resulted in some MSME groups having to wait their turn to receive assistance (Faturrahman et al., 2025).

**Table 7. Number of Micro and Small Enterprises and MSME Development Activities**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Unit</b>
Number of Micro and Small Enterprises	1,248	1,312	Business units
Number of MSMEs in Agriculture & Agro-industry Sectors	742	781	Business units
Number of MSMEs Receiving Training	96	124	Business units
Number of MSMEs Receiving Production Facility Assistance	58	73	Business units
MSME Development Activities by Local Government	12	15	Activities

*Source:(BPS, 2023)*

### in North Nias Regency

Statistical data show an increase in the number of MSMEs and government-led development activities from 2022 to 2023. The rising number of MSMEs receiving training and production facility assistance indicates that the local government has responded to the needs of business actors, particularly in the agriculture and agro-industry sectors. However, when compared to the total number of MSMEs, the proportion benefiting from training and assistance remains relatively limited. This condition suggests that government

responsiveness has been present, but has not yet been able to reach all MSME actors quickly and evenly. These findings indicate that the local government has been reasonably responsive in recognizing and addressing MSME needs, but continues to face challenges related to the speed and continuity of service delivery. This is consistent with previous studies (Aldo Hardi Sancoko, 2021; Beddu, 2020; Tri Saputra & Fachri, 2025), which note that government responsiveness in MSME empowerment programs is often constrained by limited budgets and bureaucratic procedures.

### Appropriateness of the Program

Appropriateness in policy evaluation refers to the extent to which a program is designed and implemented in accordance with the needs, potential, and real conditions of the target groups (Gustiana et al., 2022). In this study, the appropriateness of agro-industry MSME empowerment programs in Afulu District is analyzed through the alignment of target sectors, beneficiaries, types of assistance, and the timing of program implementation.

**Table 8. Alignment of Program Targets and Assistance for Agro-Industry MSMEs**

Indicator	Number (MSME Units)	Percentage (%)
Active agro-industry MSMEs	34	100
MSMEs receiving program assistance	18	52.9
Active MSMEs not yet receiving assistance	16	47.1
MSMEs receiving small-scale production equipment	14	41.2
MSMEs receiving assistance aligned with business capacity	6	17.6
Programs implemented according to planned schedule	11	32.4

*Source: Interviews and field observations (2025)*

The data indicate that although the target sector of the agro-industry MSME empowerment program in Afulu District has been appropriate, its implementation has not been fully precise in reaching all active business groups. Nearly half of active agro-industry MSMEs have not yet received program assistance. In addition, most assistance provided remains small-scale and has not been fully adjusted to the production capacity of each business group. Based on these overall findings, it can be concluded that conceptually, the agro-industry MSME empowerment program in Afulu District has been appropriate in selecting target sectors and policy intervention instruments. However, at the implementation stage, there are still issues related to inaccurate targeting of beneficiaries, mismatches between types of assistance and business needs, and delays in program implementation. These conditions indicate that program appropriateness needs to be strengthened through

improvements in MSME data systems, alignment of assistance with business capacity, and enhanced cross-sectoral coordination (Suhardi et al., 2022).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the analysis using William Dunn's policy evaluation criteria, it can be concluded that the implementation of community empowerment policies based on agro-industrial MSMEs in North Nias Regency has been carried out and is generally aligned with regional potential and development direction. However, the effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and program accuracy still face various challenges, particularly limitations in human resources, budget constraints, weak inter-agency synergy, and unequal community access to the programs.

These conditions have caused the program objectives—namely, the establishment of a sustainable agro-industrial empowerment system, the enhancement of agricultural product value-added, and the growth of rural entrepreneurship—to not yet be optimally achieved. Therefore, improvements in policy implementation are required through enhancing the quality of mentoring, strengthening cross-sectoral coordination, and improving training designs to better match the actual needs of local agro-industrial MSMEs.

This study also has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, this research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach, which has not been able to quantitatively measure the magnitude of the economic impact of agro-industrial MSME empowerment programs on income growth and community welfare. Second, the research area is limited to Afulu District, which means the findings cannot be fully generalized to other regions with different MSME characteristics. In addition, limitations in secondary data availability and variations in MSME participation in mentoring programs have also influenced the depth of analysis.

Based on these limitations, future studies are recommended to expand the research area and apply quantitative or mixed-method approaches to more precisely and objectively measure the economic impacts of MSME empowerment programs. Further research is also expected to examine the effectiveness of training design, the quality of mentoring, and the level of cross-sectoral coordination in supporting the sustainability of agro-industrial MSMEs. From a policy perspective, local governments need to improve the quality and intensity of assistance by increasing the number of field facilitators, enhancing the capacity of MSME development officers, and strengthening inter-agency coordination to ensure that MSME empowerment programs are implemented in an integrated and sustainable manner.

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