



Assistance with the Financial and Budget Reports of the East Tanjung Jabung Regency's Food Security Service for the Fiscal Year 2024

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Abstract:

This research aims to analyze the effectiveness of the assistance program in improving the quality of financial reports of the East Tanjung Jabung Regency Food Security Office, identify the main obstacles in preparing accountable reports, and determine the most effective methods to enhance Human Resource capacity in budget management. The methodology used is a qualitative approach with a case study method, involving in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. The research results show that the assistance program successfully improved compliance with accounting standards and report accuracy, although obstacles such as limited human resources, technology, and regulatory understanding remain significant. In conclusion, continuous practice-based training methods, intensive mentoring, and the use of technology are the most effective ways to enhance Human Resource capacity. The recommendation given is the need for continuous training, modernization of technology, and the establishment of a work culture that supports accountability and transparency in the preparation of financial reports.

Keywords:

Assistance, Financial Reports, Human Resource Capacity, Budget Management.



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INTRODUCTION

Food security has become one of the important strategic issues in sustainable development, especially in areas with a high dependence on the agricultural sector, such as Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency. As a region with agricultural potential, this district faces challenges in maintaining food production stability and equitable distribution to the community. In the 2024 Fiscal Year, the East Tanjung Jabung Regency Food Security Agency has been entrusted with planning and implementing programs that support regional food security. However, the implementation of the program is not without challenges in budget management and the preparation of accountable and transparent financial reports.

The main issue that often arises regarding budget management in regional government institutions is the low capacity of human resources in preparing financial reports that comply with government accounting standards (Najimi, 2018). Empirical facts show that many local governments still struggle to prepare budget reports in accordance with regulations, such as Law Number 17 of

2003 on State Finance, and Government Regulation Number 71 of 2010 on Government Accounting Standards (Moynihan & Andrews, 2010). In Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency, despite efforts to improve the quality of financial reports, various evaluations indicate that there are still shortcomings in terms of transparency and reporting accuracy.

In theory, good financial statements are one of the main pillars in achieving good governance (Barr & McClellan, 2018). According to public sector accounting theory, properly prepared financial statements will provide relevant information for decision-making, assist in evaluating government performance, and enhance public trust. Transparency and accountability in the preparation of financial statements are also in line with the principles of efficient and effective public financial management (Foster, 2017; Moynihan & Andrews, 2010). Therefore, improvements in budget report preparation have become a priority in creating good governance at the East Tanjung Jabung Regency Food Security Office.

In addressing this issue, a comprehensive assistance program is needed for the Food Security Agency to enhance their capacity in budget management and financial reporting (Rasmussen et al., 2003). This assistance is not just technical training, but also includes continuous mentoring throughout the budgeting process to reporting (Oktari et al., 2020). Through this assistance program, it is expected that accurate, transparent, and accountable financial reports will be produced, in accordance with applicable regulations (Pribadi et al., 2020).

A more in-depth study related to budget management issues at the Food Security Office of Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency can be conducted using a financial performance evaluation approach. Several indicators that can be used in this study include the level of conformity between the planned budget and the actual budget realization, the accuracy of reporting time, and compliance with established accounting standards. In addition, the evaluation can also include an analysis of the human resources involved in the preparation of financial statements, so that solutions can be found to improve the quality of HR in this field (Bandiyono, 2020; Nasri et al., 2022).

Based on the aforementioned issues, several research questions can be formulated as a basis for improving the financial reporting system at the Food Security Office. The first question, to what extent can the implementation of the assistance program improve the quality of financial and budget reports? Second, what are the main obstacles in preparing accountable financial reports at the Food Security Office? Third, what is the most effective method to enhance human resource capacity in budget management?

METHOD

This research will use a qualitative approach with a case study method to delve into budget management and financial report preparation at the East Tanjung Jabung Food Security Office in the 2024 Fiscal Year. The case study method was chosen because the focus of the research is on a specific organizational unit, namely the Food Security Office, with the aim of deeply understanding the process of budget preparation and financial reporting within a specific context (Stake, 2006). Data collection will be conducted through in-depth interviews with financial officers and related staff, direct observation of the report preparation process, and analysis of the produced budget

documents and financial reports (Kapur, 2018). This interview is expected to uncover the inhibiting and driving factors in the preparation of accountable and transparent financial statements.

In addition, a descriptive-analytical approach will be used to analyze the obtained data (Jokiniemi, 2022). This research will analyze the conformity between the budgeting process and financial reports with the applicable government accounting standards, such as Government Regulation Number 71 of 2010 concerning Government Accounting Standards. This analysis will be reinforced with secondary data including audit reports, evaluations from the Financial Audit Agency, and financial planning documents. With this approach, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of the assistance program as well as concrete recommendations for future improvements.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of the Assistance Program in Improving the Quality of Financial and Budget Reports at the East Tanjung Jabung Regency Food Security Office

In this study, the main finding identified is that the implementation of the assistance program plays a significant role in improving the quality of financial and budget reports at the Food Security Office of Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency. The assistance program, designed to provide technical support and guidance in the report preparation process, has successfully improved several important aspects of financial governance, including data accuracy, regulatory compliance, and report transparency. However, the impact of this assistance also depends on several factors, such as institutional commitment, the quality of human resources, and the sustainability of the mentoring program.

One of the main findings is the increased compliance with government accounting standards, particularly in the implementation of Government Regulation Number 71 of 2010. Before the assistance, the financial reports prepared by the Food Security Agency often fell short of meeting those standard requirements, particularly regarding account classification and accurate recording. However, after the assistance program was implemented, there was a significant improvement in the accuracy of account classification, the use of appropriate formats, and the presentation of more transparent financial information. This shows that the assistance program is capable of providing a positive impact in the technical aspects of financial report preparation (Ramadhan, 2009).

In addition, assistance also enhances employees' capacity to use accounting software used for managing budgets. Previously, many staff at the Food Security Agency were less skilled in operating complex accounting systems. This causes delays in report preparation and often results in data input errors. After participating in the training program that was part of the assistance, the staff's ability to use accounting software improved, allowing financial reports to be prepared more quickly and accurately. In this case, the implementation of assistance has proven effective in improving employees' technical skills (Rasmussen et al., 2003).

However, the effectiveness of the assistance program is also influenced by the extent of the commitment from the management of the Food Security Agency. Research findings show that in

institutions where management fully supports this program, positive changes are more easily observed. Proactive management in encouraging employees to actively participate in training and mentoring programs creates an environment conducive to change. Conversely, in an environment with high resistance to change, the impact of assistance tends to be suboptimal. Thus, management support becomes a key factor in the successful implementation of the assistance program (Pribadi et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, the sustainability of the program is also an important aspect that affects the outcomes of the assistance program. The findings indicate that although the improvement in the quality of financial reports was evident during the program, there are concerns about whether this improvement can be sustained in the long term. Temporary assistance programs, without ongoing efforts to maintain the quality and skills that have been acquired, risk rendering the improvements achieved futile. Therefore, a continuous mentoring program is needed that periodically evaluates and improves financial performance (Bandiyono, 2020).

Besides technical aspects, the assistance program also contributes to increasing transparency in budget management. With the training on the importance of transparency and accountability, the employees of the Food Security Agency have become more aware of their responsibility in preparing accountable financial reports. This is evident from the improved quality of documentation and more detailed reporting, allowing relevant parties, such as the Financial Audit Agency and the general public, to more easily access accurate financial information. This transparency ultimately increases public trust in regional financial governance (Maryanti, 2023). However, there are also several obstacles identified in the implementation of the assistance program. One of them is the limited time allocated for training and mentoring. Many employees feel that the duration of the assistance program is not sufficient to provide a deep understanding of all aspects of financial report preparation, especially for new or less experienced employees. Therefore, a more flexible and in-depth scheduling is needed so that all employees can master the material well (Sundara et al., 2021).

Additionally, another challenge identified is the high dependency on external parties providing assistance. In some cases, employees at the Food Security Agency tend to rely more on consultants or mentors who assist them, rather than striving to be independent in preparing reports. This raises concerns that after the assistance program ends, the employees' ability to maintain the quality of financial reports may decline. Therefore, it is important to include elements that enhance independence in the assistance program (Suwarno et al., 2023).

From these findings, it can be concluded that the assistance program significantly contributes to the improvement of the quality of financial and budget reports at the East Tanjung Jabung Regency Food Security Office. However, the effectiveness of this program is greatly influenced by internal factors, such as management commitment and employee involvement, as well as the sustainability of the mentoring program. Therefore, there needs to be a policy that ensures that the assistance program not only focuses on short-term improvements but also on the establishment of a sustainable system to maintain the quality of financial reports in the future (Prasetyo & Mais, 2019).

Overall, these findings indicate that the implementation of the assistance program is an

important strategic step in efforts to enhance the accountability and transparency of local government finances. With strong commitment and sustainable programs, higher quality and accountable financial reports can be realized, which will ultimately support the achievement of good governance in Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency.

2. Main Obstacles in Preparing Accountable Financial Reports at the Tanjung Jabung Timur District Food Security Office

This research reveals several major obstacles faced by the East Tanjung Jabung Regency Food Security Agency in preparing accountable financial reports. One of the most prominent obstacles is the lack of human resource capacity in the field of government accounting. Although some staff at the Food Security Agency have an administrative background, many of them do not have specialized expertise in accounting or financial management. This causes errors in transaction recording, inability to follow applicable accounting standards, and inability to understand changes in regulations related to regional financial management (Rasmussen et al., 2003).

In addition to the limited human resources, the lack of infrastructure and technology also hinders the preparation of accountable financial reports. This finding indicates that the Food Security Agency does not have an integrated and modern accounting system. Many financial reports are still managed manually or using outdated software, which is prone to data input errors and takes longer for preparation and reporting processes. As a result, financial reports are often not on schedule, and there are significant discrepancies between the planned budget and the realized budget (Al-Okaily, 2023). Another obstacle found is the lack of understanding of the applicable financial regulations, such as Government Regulation Number 71 of 2010 concerning Government Accounting Standards. In the interview process, several employees admitted that they did not fully understand the technical rules related to the preparation of financial reports that must be followed. This results in a discrepancy between the financial reports prepared and the applicable regulations, which ultimately diminishes the quality of accountability of those reports. The inability to follow regulations properly often results in reports needing to be revised, thereby hindering work efficiency (Rasmussen et al., 2003).

Other findings indicate that managerial support at the Food Security Office is often inconsistent. On several occasions, employees feel that they do not receive clear guidance or adequate support from management in the process of preparing financial reports. Management that is not proactive in facilitating training or providing access to necessary resources adds to the challenges faced by the staff (Abidin, 2020). In this case, weak management support becomes the main obstacle for employees in performing their duties well, especially in facing the continuously evolving technical and regulatory challenges (Moynihan & Andrews, 2010).

In addition, an organizational culture that does not support openness and transparency in financial management becomes another significant obstacle. Some staff expressed that there is resistance to change, particularly regarding the implementation of new accounting standards or a more transparent financial management system. This often stems from old habits that are difficult to change, where the process of preparing financial statements is carried out in a less accountable

manner or merely to fulfill formalities without adhering to the principles of transparency and accountability. This hinders the expected improvements in the preparation of financial statements (Barr & McClellan, 2018).

Overall, these obstacles illustrate the structural and cultural challenges that hinder the Food Security Agency's ability to prepare accountable financial reports. Solutions to overcome these obstacles require a comprehensive approach, ranging from enhancing human resource capacity through training, updating information technology systems, improving understanding of regulations, to strengthening managerial support and transforming the organizational culture towards more transparent financial governance. By addressing these obstacles, the Food Security Agency will be able to prepare more accurate, transparent, and accountable financial reports in accordance with applicable standards.

3. The Most Effective Methods for Enhancing Human Resource Capacity in Budget Management

The findings of this study indicate that the most effective method for enhancing human resource capacity in budget management at the East Tanjung Jabung Regency Food Security Office is a continuous and practice-based training approach integrated with intensive mentoring. Training that is conducted only once or twice has proven insufficient to provide employees with a deep understanding of the complexities of budget management. Practice-based training offers employees the opportunity not only to learn the theory but also to directly apply new skills in their work environment. Thus, they find it easier to understand the real context of budget management tasks (Mardinan et al., 2018; Sundara et al., 2021).

- 1) Practice-based training, intensive mentoring by consultants or government accounting experts is also very effective. This mentoring aims to provide direct guidance during the budgeting and financial reporting process. In this case, the employees receive direct guidance and corrections when they encounter technical issues or errors in the reporting process. Continuous mentoring helps ensure that employees understand each step of the process more deeply, and they do not only rely on theory but also on direct experience in real situations. This method is very effective because it reduces the risk of errors and allows employees to obtain immediate solutions when problems arise.
- 2) Training and mentoring methods, this research also found that the use of technology can be very helpful in enhancing the capacity of Human Resources in budget management. The modern accounting information system specifically designed for government budget management makes it easier for employees to record and report financial data. The implementation of an integrated system can help reduce manual workload and minimize the chances of errors. To optimize the use of this technology, intensive training on the use of accounting software and relevant financial systems is necessary. The use of technology not only increases efficiency but also enhances accuracy and speed in budget management.
- 3) Internal empowerment through mentoring programs or the formation of cross-divisional work teams has also proven effective. In some cases, more experienced employees can help mentor

new or less proficient employees in accounting material. This team-based learning encourages collaboration among employees and creates a work environment that supports direct knowledge exchange. Such mentoring programs ensure that knowledge and skills continue to develop among employees, even without always relying on external training or consultants. This also creates a learning culture in the workplace that supports the sustainable enhancement of Human Resource capacity.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that a combination of practice-based training, intensive mentoring, the use of technology, and internal empowerment are the most effective methods for enhancing Human Resource capacity in budget management. This approach provides a balance between theory and practice, and supports continuous learning. By using this method, employees at the Food Security Office of Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency are expected to have better skills in managing the budget effectively, accurately, and in accordance with applicable regulations, so that accountable financial reports can be realized more optimally.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions regarding the implementation of the assistance program, main obstacles, and effective methods in enhancing Human Resource capacity, it can be concluded that the improvement in the quality of financial reports at the Food Security Office of Tanjung Jabung Timur Regency is greatly influenced by several key factors. The implementation of sustainable assistance based on proven practices is capable of improving the accuracy and transparency of reports, although there are still obstacles such as limited human resources, technological infrastructure, and understanding of regulations. Management support and organizational culture change are also important to support that success. The most effective method for enhancing Human Resource capacity is a combination of practical training, intensive mentoring, technology utilization, and sustainable internal empowerment programs. With this comprehensive approach, it is hoped that regional financial governance will be better, more accountable, and in accordance with applicable standards.

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