

# Analysis of the Strategy for Determining Basic Unit Price Standards for Construction in Tanah Laut Regency

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## ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the process of compiling the Basic Unit Price Standard (SHS) in Tanah Laut Regency, Indonesia, which is used for planning and budgeting public construction projects. The current SHS system is characterized by a uniform pricing model that fails to account for significant geographical and logistical cost variations across the regency, leading to inefficient and inequitable budget allocation. The primary objective of this research is to identify the dominant factors influencing construction price variations and to formulate an ideal strategy for a more accountable SHS framework. The methodology involved a quantitative survey of 50 key stakeholders, including government officials and construction professionals, with data analyzed using index and variance techniques. The results identified six dominant factors, with logistical challenges—specifically location remoteness (Index = 71), material transport distance (Index = 69), and distance from material source (Index = 67)—ranking as the most influential. Other significant factors included the accuracy of survey data input, inflation, and the lack of material specifications. Based on these findings, the study proposes a comprehensive mitigation strategy, centered on a short-term solution of

dividing the regency into distinct pricing zones and a long-term solution of developing an integrated digital application for SHS management. This approach aims to create a more realistic, transparent, and effective SHS system that supports sustainable infrastructure development.

**Keywords:** SHS preparation, index and variance, dominant factors, construction cost, price standard strategy

## INTRODUCTION

Tanah Laut Regency, a region situated in the southern part of South Kalimantan, Indonesia, is currently channeling significant investment into its public infrastructure. For the 2024 fiscal year, the regency has allocated a planned budget of around IDR 2.8 trillion. A substantial portion of this, IDR 519.24 billion, which constitutes 76.70% of total capital spending, is allocated for capital expenditures on buildings, roads, networks, and irrigation systems. Public investments play a pivotal role in the economic and social development of countries, acting as a catalyst for growth, innovation, and well-being.

At the heart of this fiscal process is the Standard Unit Price (SHS), a government-mandated price list that functions as the official benchmark for all material, labor, and equipment costs associated with public construction projects. The SHS is another

widely used tool to help integrate planning and budgeting is a public investment program. Accurate cost estimation is crucial for project planning, scheduling, and decision-making, ensuring that projects are completed on time and within budget (Loishyn *et al.*, 2021).

However, the methodology currently employed to establish the SHS in Tanah Laut Regency suffers from a fundamental and systemic flaw. It utilizes a simplistic, "one-size-fits-all" approach that is starkly misaligned with the region's diverse geographical and economic landscape. The system imposes a single, uniform price standard across all 11 of its districts, which range from the accessible urban center of Pelaihari to remote, hard-to-reach rural villages. This administrative uniformity completely disregards the significant cost variations driven by logistical complexities and geographical realities (Santoso *et al.*, 2023).

To compound this issue, the current SHS framework incorporates a flat 2.43% increase based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as a blanket measure to anticipate inflation. While intended to account for economic shifts, this approach is overly simplistic and fails to capture the more nuanced and variable cost drivers that truly impact construction expenses. Evaluating the Impact of Transportation Costs, Supply Chain Reliability, and Operational Efficiency on Global Import Decisions are not adequately reflected in this generalized inflation adjustment (Laurentia *et al.*, 2022).

The reliance on administrative convenience over fiscal precision creates severe and predictable downstream consequences. A uniform standard allows investors to compare investment opportunities across the economy more easily. It increases the quantity of capital in the economy and lowers the cost of capita, project budgets become artificially inflated, creating opportunities for the inefficient use and potential waste of public funds. This misallocation represents a significant loss of value for taxpayers and undermines the goal of maximizing the

impact of public investment (Lukita *et al.*, 2023).

Conversely, and perhaps more damagingly, in these areas, commercial activity is also least viable because of high transport costs and lack of market access, among other factors. This chronic underfunding triggers a cascade of negative outcomes that disproportionately affect outlying communities. There may be tendency for the Contractor to cut corners on quality and scope of work by saving on resources employed. Low budgets force the use of cheaper, lower-quality materials. The local government budget delay has become a huge issue as it is not only delaying the delivery but also lowering the capacity of local government. Contracting firms involved project construction need qualified, trained personnel and managers to plan and construct projects in time, cost and quality, further entrenching development inequality and directly contradicting the government's stated objective of ensuring equitable infrastructure distribution across the entire regency.

Previous research has consistently shown that logistical and geographical factors are paramount in determining construction costs in similar contexts. Studies have highlighted that transport is a key component of the logistics process, that material prices are directly correlated with distance from urban centers and that Materials management comprises all activities pertaining to the acquisition of raw materials, components, and finished goods from suppliers (Sokop *et al.*, 2018). Confirmed significant price variations based on regional factors. This study is therefore positioned to address this critical deficiency by providing a rigorous, evidence-based analysis of the factors that genuinely influence construction costs within Tanah Laut. The research is guided by two primary objectives: first, to empirically identify and rank the dominant factors that cause variations in construction material prices across the regency. Second, based on these findings, to formulate an ideal, actionable strategy for the SHS compilation

team to develop a more accountable, effective, and efficient standard that accurately reflects the true cost of construction in its diverse territories, thereby fostering more sustainable and equitable development.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In a construction project, the total cost of the project is the sum of the cost components which include labor costs, material costs, equipment costs, indirect costs, and profits. In the context of public sector projects in Indonesia, this process is formalized through instruments like the Budget Plan (RAB) and the Owner's Estimate (HPS), which rely on the SHS as their primary data source. The HPS, as defined by government regulations, is a comprehensive estimate that includes not only direct costs but also indirect costs, profit, and taxes, serving as a ceiling to ensure fair and reasonable pricing in public procurement (Pranata *et al.*, 2023). The accuracy of these estimates is therefore entirely dependent on the validity of the underlying SHS data.

Bondarenko & Ustymenko (2015) provides a robust framework for identifying the multitude of factors that can influence construction material costs. These factors can be broadly categorized into five key areas, which formed the basis for this study's data collection instrument.

**Economic Factors:** Macroeconomic conditions are a well-established influence on material prices. Inflation directly increases the cost of production and distribution. Other economic variables, such as exchange rate fluctuations and market speculation by suppliers, can also introduce significant price volatility.

**Location Factors:** To how to estimate the building construction cost with a high level of accuracy to prevent client's money from unexpected fluctuations and provide most suitable design within client's budget. Geographical conditions, such as terrain and climate, can impact construction methods and timelines. However, the most significant location-based factor is often remoteness,

which directly affects logistics and labor availability. The further a project is from supply centers, the higher the associated costs.

**Material Resource Factors:** More resource constraint, less supplies; less market constraint, more demands; the double constraints influence the price of the materials. This includes the availability of local versus imported materials, the form of the material (raw, processed, finished), its physical properties like weight and size, and its condition, all of which affect handling and transportation requirements (Adribroto *et al.*, 2019).

**Transportation Factors:** Logistics includes all the activities to move product and information to, from, and between members of a supply chain. Key variables include the transport distance, the condition of the road network (paved, unpaved, mountainous), the capacity and type of transport vehicles, and associated costs like fuel and vehicle rental. Traffic density and transport time are also relevant considerations.

Dewi & Muryati (2017), technical and Process Factors: Not only human factors but also informational resources used in the cost estimation process. The accuracy of the initial price surveys, the clarity and completeness of material specifications in the SHS document, and the potential for human error during data input are all critical factors that can undermine the integrity of the final standard price. This is supported by national standards for unit price analysis.

By synthesizing these factors from established literature, this study developed a comprehensive model to assess which of these theoretical influences are most pronounced in the specific context of Tanah Laut Regency.

## **MATERIALS & METHODS**

This study employed a non-experimental, quantitative survey design to empirically assess the factors influencing the determination of the SHS in Tanah Laut Regency. This approach was selected as the most effective method for capturing the

collective perceptions, experiences, and expert opinions of the diverse group of professionals directly involved in the region's construction budgeting and execution cycle.

### Population and Sampling

The research population comprised 50 key stakeholders who possess direct, expert knowledge of the SHS process. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to ensure the relevance and quality of the data collected. The sample was strategically drawn from four distinct groups to provide a holistic view of the system:

- a. SHS Compilation Team (20 individuals): Members of the official government team responsible for drafting the annual SHS document.
- b. HSPK Consultants (4 individuals): Private sector consultants tasked with preparing the detailed Unit Price Analysis for Construction Work (HSPK).
- c. SHS Review Team (8 individuals): Officials from the Regency Inspectorate responsible for auditing and reviewing the proposed SHS for fairness and accuracy.
- d. Project Commitment Officials (PPK/PPTK) (17 individuals): Government officials and technical staff responsible for managing and implementing construction projects, who use the SHS daily.

The demographic profile of the 50 respondents included 58% male and 42% female, with the majority (60%) holding a bachelor's degree (S1) and 20% holding a master's degree (S2). Respondents were distributed across all 11 districts of Tanah Laut, ensuring a geographically representative sample.

### Data Collection and Instrumentation

The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire developed based on the five-factor theoretical framework identified in the literature. The instrument contained 28 indicator questions, each representing a potential influence on construction material prices (e.g., inflation,

location remoteness, transport distance). Respondents were asked to rate the degree of influence for each indicator on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Sangat Tidak Berpengaruh / Highly Uninfluential) to 5 (Sangat Berpengaruh / Highly Influential).

To ensure the robustness of the data collection instrument, rigorous statistical validation was performed.

- a. **Validity:** The construct validity of the questionnaire was tested using Spearman's Rank correlation. The results showed that all 28 indicator questions had a significance value (p-value) of less than 0.05, confirming that each item was a valid measure of the underlying construct. All indicators were therefore retained for analysis.
- b. **Reliability:** The internal consistency of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. The analysis yielded high reliability scores for all five factors: Economic (0.758), Location (0.739), Material Resources (0.817), Transportation (0.801), and Technical Process (0.797). As all values exceeded the common threshold of 0.60, the instrument was deemed highly reliable [23].

### Data Collection and Instrumentation

The collected data was analyzed using an Index and Variance method to identify and rank the dominant influencing factors. This multi-step process was executed as follows :

- a. **Weighting:** The Likert scale responses were assigned numerical weights to quantify the perceived level of influence: Highly Uninfluential (-100), Uninfluential (-50), Neutral (0), Influential (+50), and Highly Influential (+100).
- b. **Index Calculation:** An influence index (X) was calculated for each of the 28 indicators using the formula:

$$\text{Indeks } (X_m) = \frac{\sum_i^s = 1 \text{ ni bobot } i}{n}$$

where  $n_i$  is the frequency of responses for scale  $i$ ,  $bobot_i$  is the assigned weight for scale  $i$ ,  $s$  is the number of scales (5), and  $n$  is the total number of respondents (50). A higher index value signifies a greater perceived influence.

c. **Variance Calculation:** To differentiate between indicators that might have similar index scores, the variance (V) was calculated. A lower variance indicates greater consensus among respondents regarding the indicator's level of influence. The formula used was:

$$V = \frac{1}{n - 1} \sum_{i=1}^s n_i (bobot_i - 1 (X_m))^2$$

where  $X_m$  is the index value for the specific indicator.

d. **Ranking and Interpretation:** The indicators were ranked based on their index scores. The results were then categorized into five levels of dominance based on the index value: Very Dominant (81-100), Dominant (61-80), Moderately Dominant (41-60), Not Dominant (21-40), and Very Not Dominant (0-20).

## RESULT

The analysis of the survey data provides a clear, empirical hierarchy of the factors that stakeholders perceive as most influential in determining construction unit prices in Tanah Laut Regency. The findings point overwhelmingly towards logistical and procedural challenges as the primary drivers of cost variation, often eclipsing broader economic factors.

### Quantitative Analysis of Influencing Factors

The primary analytical approach involved an index and variance method applied to the 28 distinct indicators identified in the theoretical framework. This technique allowed for a quantitative ranking of each factor's perceived influence based on the collective expert opinion of the 50 stakeholders surveyed. A higher index score signifies a greater degree of influence, providing a clear hierarchy of importance.

The comprehensive results of this analysis, which ranks all 28 indicators from most to least influential, are presented in Table 1. This table serves as the foundational dataset for our discussion, offering a granular view of how each specific variable is perceived to impact construction costs within the regency.

**Table 1. Comprehensive Index and Variance Analysis of All Indicators**

Factor	Code	Indicator	Index	Variance	Overall Rank
Location	X2.5	Location Remoteness	71	4,305,286.06	1
Transportation	X4.2	Material Transport Distance	69	3,367,451.86	2
Transportation	X4.1	Distance of Material Source to Project Location	67	2,985,714.80	3
Technical	X5.3	Accuracy of Survey Input Results	66	2,733,847.35	4
Economic	X1.1	Inflation	64	3,639.71	5
Technical	X5.2	Unlisted Material Specifications	62	1,996,351.51	6
Transportation	X4.5	Rental Cost of Transport Equipment	59	1,629,122.80	7
Technical	X5.1	Survey Evidence from Fewer than 3 Sources	56	1,285,359.84	8
Location	X2.4	Geographical Conditions	55	1,283,532.14	9
Location	X2.3	Seasonal Patterns at Project Location	55	872,949.59	10
Transportation	X4.6	Condition of Roads Traveled	54	1,148,361.00	11
Material Resources	X3.2	Readiness State of Material (Raw, Processed, Finished)	53	1,061,653.12	12
Economic	X1.5	Market Speculation on Transport Wages	51	95,865.29	13
Transportation	X4.3	Transport Load Capacity	50	765,676.94	14
Economic	X1.4	Market Speculation on Material Prices	49	95,661.53	15
Transportation	X4.4	Condition of Transport Equipment	49	673,055.61	16

Economic	X1.6	Transport Laborer Wages	48	86,130.41	17
Location	X2.1	Work Site Situation (Crowded, Quiet, Safe)	47	660,842.29	18
Location	X2.2	Work Site Condition (Wet, Dry, Soft, Hard)	47	501,929.00	19
Material Resources	X3.3	Material Weight	46	500,174.53	20
Economic	X1.7	Equipment Operator and Assistant Wages	43	70,966.88	21
Material Resources	X3.5	Material Storage/Stockpiling System	43	363,742.71	22
Transportation	X4.7	Traffic Density on Transport Route	38	236,307.71	23
Location	X2.6	Availability of Local Labor/Workers	36	144,159.18	24
Material Resources	X3.4	Material Condition (Wet, Dry)	36	178,515.71	25
Economic	X1.3	Bank Indonesia Middle Exchange Rate	29	30,096.02	26
Economic	X1.2	Consumer Price Index (IHK)	28	23,234.59	27
Material Resources	X3.1	Material Size/Shape	25	46,682.82	28

Upon examining the comprehensive ranking, a clear pattern emerges. The highest-ranked indicator is "Location Remoteness" (X2.5) with an index score of 71, firmly placing it in the "Dominant" category. This immediately highlights the significance of geography in the minds of local stakeholders. It suggests that the sheer difficulty of accessing certain project sites is the single most powerful driver of cost variation.

Following closely are two indicators from the Transportation factor: "Material Transport Distance" (X4.2) with an index of 69, and "Distance of Material Source to Project Location" (X4.1) with an index of 67. The tight grouping of these top three indicators underscores a singular, overarching theme: logistics are paramount. The cost of physically moving materials from their point of origin to the construction site is perceived as the most critical challenge.

The fourth-ranked indicator, "Accuracy of Survey Input Results" (X5.3) with an index of 66, introduces a different but equally critical dimension: procedural integrity. Its high ranking suggests that stakeholders have significant concerns about the reliability of the data entry process itself, viewing human error as a major factor that compromises the validity of the final SHS document.

The fifth-ranked indicator is "Inflation" (X1.1), with an index of 64. While still considered a dominant factor, its position below several logistical and procedural

issues is telling. It implies that while broad economic trends are important, they are seen as less impactful than the practical, on-the-ground challenges of geography and process within Tanah Laut Regency.

The final indicator to fall within the "Dominant" category is "Unlisted Material Specifications" (X5.2), with an index score of 62. This reinforces the theme of procedural weakness, indicating that the lack of detailed material descriptions in the SHS creates ambiguity and price discrepancies, a problem seen as highly influential by the respondents.

Other factors, while still influential, were ranked lower. For instance, the highest-ranking indicator for Material Resources, "Readiness State of Material" (X3.2), only achieved an index of 53, placing it in the "Moderately Dominant" category. This further reinforces that the physical characteristics of materials are seen as less critical than the logistics of their delivery and the accuracy of their pricing.

This detailed breakdown reveals that stakeholders do not view all cost factors equally. There is a strong consensus that the practicalities of location and transportation, combined with internal procedural flaws in the SHS compilation process, are the most significant challenges that need to be addressed.

To crystallize these findings, the analysis isolates the six indicators that achieved an

index score between 61 and 80, classifying them as "Dominant." These factors represent the most critical pressure points that must be the focus of any reform effort. They are summarized in Table 2.

These six factors form the empirical foundation for the strategic

recommendations that follow, as they represent the areas where intervention is most needed and likely to have the greatest positive impact on the accuracy and fairness of the SHS.

**Table 2. Summary of Dominant Factors Influencing SHS Determination**

No.	Factor	Indicator Code	Indicator	Index Value
1.	Location	X2.5	Location Remoteness	71
2.	Transportation	X4.2	Material Transport Distance	69
3.	Transportation	X4.1	Distance of Material Source to Project Location	67
4.	Technical Process	X5.3	Accuracy of Survey Input Results	66
5.	Economic	X1.1	Inflation	64
6.	Technical Process	X5.2	Unlisted Material Specifications	62

### Quantitative Analysis of Influencing Factors

The quantitative results paint a vivid picture, establishing a clear "hierarchy of pain" for those involved in construction budgeting within Tanah Laut. The data compellingly argues that in a geographically diverse region, the tangible, everyday challenges of logistics and location are perceived as far more significant drivers of cost than abstract, generalized economic factors. This insight is the cornerstone of the proposed reform.

The most profound finding is the dominance of logistical factors. The highest-ranked indicator, Location Remoteness (Index 71), followed immediately by Material Transport Distance (69) and Distance from Material Source (67), forms a powerful triad. This demonstrates that the cost to transport a basic material like cement to a remote village can easily double or triple its base price. This multiplicative, non-linear impact far outweighs the marginal, linear increase from national inflation, which ranked lower at 64. This directly invalidates the current SHS system's primary adjustment mechanism a flat CPI increase revealing it as a fundamental miscalculation that addresses a lesser problem while ignoring the primary cost drivers identified by the region's own experts.

The analysis also casts a harsh light on internal procedural weaknesses. The high ranking of two technical process factors,

Accuracy of Survey Input Results (66) and Unlisted Material Specifications (62), points to critical failures within the compilation system itself. These are not external market forces but institutional shortcomings. The lack of clear specifications means the SHS is effectively comparing "apples to oranges," as the price of a material can vary dramatically based on its quality, grade, or brand details not currently captured. Sorokina & Shaparina (2017), the perceived inaccuracy of data input suggests a lack of robust verification, introducing human error that directly compromises the integrity of the final budget benchmark.

In response to these empirically identified issues, a synergistic, two-tiered mitigation strategy is proposed. This strategy is not merely theoretical; it was validated and refined through consultation with a subject matter expert from the Indonesian Ministry of Home Affairs, ensuring it is both practical and aligned with national policy frameworks, thus adding a layer of real-world credibility. The first tier of the strategy is a short-term, high-impact intervention: the implementation of Zonal Pricing. To directly attack the highest-ranking factors of remoteness and transport distance, the primary recommendation is to abolish the flawed uniform pricing model. Instead, Tanah Laut Regency should be divided into distinct pricing zones, with each zone having its own standardized unit prices that are

adjusted to reflect its unique logistical cost profile.

Putri & Desi (2020), Based on expert validation, a model of four distinct zones is recommended. This classification would be based on measurable criteria such as distance from the regency capital, road conditions, and typical transport times. This would involve creating a formal zonal map (as

conceptualized in Figure 1), establishing a transparent formula for calculating the cost uplift for each zone as a separate line item in the SHS, and conducting targeted market surveys within each zone to capture real local prices. This single measure would immediately make project budgets more realistic and equitable.

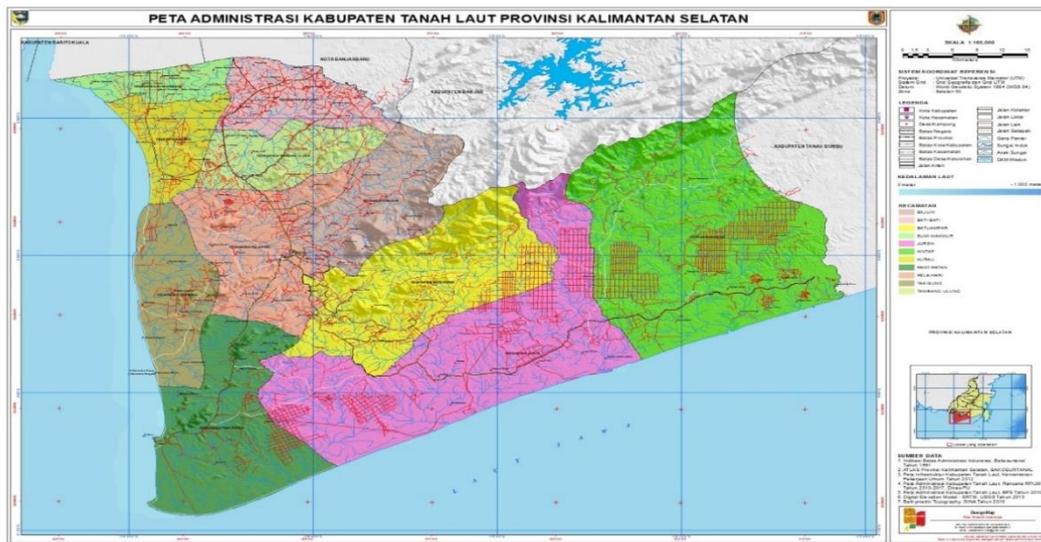


Figure 1. Administrative Area Map of Tanah Laut Regency

The second tier is a long-term strategy focused on systemic improvement: the development of an Integrated Digital SHS Management Application. This solution is designed to address the critical technical and human factors of data inaccuracy and lack of specifications by embedding procedural discipline into the workflow.

This digital system would have several key features. First, it would make the inclusion of detailed material specifications a mandatory field, programmatically preventing the submission of incomplete or ambiguous price data. The system would simply reject any entry that lacks this crucial information. Second, it would incorporate automated verification protocols, such as flagging anomalous price entries that deviate significantly from norms and requiring multi-level approval before a price is accepted into the official database, thereby minimizing the risk of input error (Karpenko & Tkach, 2020).

The ultimate vision for this long-term strategy is the full integration of this SHS application with the broader Regional Government Information System (SIPD). This would create a seamless, transparent, and fully documented workflow from the initial price survey all the way to final budget approval, enhancing accountability at every step. Naturally, the successful implementation of this technology must be paired with a robust program of training and capacity building for the SHS compilation team.

Finally, to provide a safeguard against unpredictable market volatility, the expert validation recommended a crucial policy addition: incorporating a force majeure clause into the regent's regulation on the SHS. Abdul et al., (2015), this clause would establish a formal, legal mechanism to adjust project budgets mid-year in the event of extraordinary, unanticipated inflation, offering a necessary safety valve to prevent

project stalls and failures due to sudden, drastic price hikes.

## CONCLUSION

This study set out to analyze the strategy for determining construction unit price standards in Tanah Laut Regency, identifying the dominant factors that influence price variation and proposing an ideal framework for reform. The research concludes that the current uniform SHS system is fundamentally flawed, as it fails to account for the most significant cost drivers identified by local experts.

The analysis empirically confirmed the existence of six dominant factors that undermine the accuracy and effectiveness of the current SHS. The most influential of these are logistical and geographical: location remoteness, material transport distance, and the distance from material sources. These are followed by critical procedural weaknesses, including the accuracy of data input and the lack of clear material specifications, and the macroeconomic factor of inflation.

In response to these findings, a two-tiered strategic recommendation is proposed:

- a. **Short-Term Strategy:** Immediately implement a zonal pricing model. This involves dividing the regency into several zones, each with a price standard adjusted to its specific logistical costs. This action directly addresses the most pressing issue of geographical price disparity and will lead to more realistic and equitable project budgeting.
- b. **Long-Term Strategy:** Develop and deploy an integrated digital application for SHS compilation. This technological solution is designed to enforce procedural discipline, mandate complete material specifications, minimize data entry errors, and create a transparent, accountable workflow by integrating with the central government financial system (SIPD).

The adoption of these strategies offers a clear, evidence-based roadmap for the Tanah Laut government to reform its construction

budgeting process. The expected outcomes are greater control over construction costs, enhanced budget efficiency, and the promotion of more stable and predictable pricing, ultimately supporting higher quality and more equitable infrastructure development across the entire regency.

For future research, several avenues are suggested. It would be valuable to conduct a follow-up study to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the proposed zonal strategy. Further research could also explore the potential of using local or prefabricated materials to mitigate logistical costs, analyze the specific impact of road infrastructure conditions on material distribution, and perform a comparative analysis of SHS methodologies with other Indonesian regencies that share similar geographical characteristics.

## Declaration by Authors

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