



EFFORTS TO ARRANGE TRADERS BASED ON ECONOMIC ZONES TO IMPROVE CONSUMER ACCESSIBILITY AND COMFORT IN GOWA REGENCY

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Abstract

This community service activity aims to support efforts to organize traders based on economic zones in order to improve accessibility and consumer comfort in Gowa Regency. The background of the activity is based on the problem of suboptimal trader arrangement, characterized by low spatial order, obstacles to pedestrian access, and decreased consumer comfort in traditional trading areas. The method used is a participatory and collaborative approach through the stages of problem identification, economic zoning design, mentoring and educating traders, and monitoring and evaluation. The results of the activity indicate that the implementation of economic zoning can improve stall order, improve area accessibility, and create a cleaner and more comfortable trading environment. In addition, active participation of traders in the arrangement process increases a sense of ownership and compliance with the zoning agreement. From the consumer perspective, this arrangement has a positive impact on ease of access and shopping comfort. This activity is based on an adaptive and contextual economic zone-based trader arrangement model, and has the potential to be replicated in other regions. Overall, this service contributes to strengthening the local economy, improving the quality of public spaces, and the sustainability of trader businesses in Gowa Regency.

Keywords: Trader Arrangement, Economic Zone, Accessibility, Consumer Convenience.

INTRODUCTION

The presence of street vendors and micro-entrepreneurs in public spaces is an integral part of local economic dynamics, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas such as Gowa Regency. Informal trading activities not only provide access to goods and services at affordable prices for the community but also play a crucial role in employment and household economic development. However, the growth in the number of vendors that is not matched by adequate spatial planning often gives rise to urban planning problems, such as congestion, reduced pedestrian accessibility, impaired hygiene, and reduced consumer comfort. This situation demands a planning approach that is not solely focused on regulation but also able to accommodate the economic interests of vendors and the need for public comfort in a balanced manner.

In recent years, the concept of economic zone-based vendor management has been increasingly explored as a more inclusive and sustainable solution. Economic zoning emphasizes grouping trading activities based on location characteristics, commodity type, and consumer traffic intensity, thus creating spatial order and economic efficiency. Research shows that placing vendors in zones aligned with consumer flows and supporting basic infrastructure has a positive impact on increasing vendor income and consumer perceptions of comfort and safety (Yesmin & Calzada Olvera, 2024). In other

words, appropriately designed zoning can improve accessibility without compromising the livelihoods of small businesses.

Gowa Regency, a buffer zone for Makassar City, faces unique challenges in managing informal trade activities. Increased population mobility, residential growth, and the development of new economic centers have encouraged the emergence of vendors in various strategic locations, including sidewalks, road shoulders, and other public spaces. The local government, through regional development planning documents, emphasizes the importance of structuring the trade sector to create an orderly, safe, and competitive business environment (Gowa Regency Government, 2021). However, in practice, structuring policies are often not fully accompanied by a participatory and empowering approach, fueling vendor resistance and reducing the long-term effectiveness of these policies.

Various studies emphasize that successful vendor management must address the social and economic dimensions of the vendors themselves. Pramono and Hanandini (2023) assert that management policies focused solely on physical regulation tend to fail to maintain the sustainability of vendor businesses, especially if they are not accompanied by dialogue, the provision of supporting facilities, and access to economic resources. Furthermore, social capital, in the form of networks, trust, and cooperation among vendors and between vendors and the government, is a key factor in the successful implementation of management policies (Bakhri, 2024). Without strong social capital support, management programs have the potential to lead to conflict and non-compliance.

From a consumer perspective, accessibility and convenience are important determinants of shopping decisions in public trading areas. A well-organized, clean, safe, and accessible environment increases consumer interest and length of stay, ultimately positively impacting local economic activity. Recent research shows that consumers are increasingly sensitive to the quality of public spaces, including the availability of pedestrian paths, parking areas, and sanitation facilities around commercial locations (Yesmin & Calzada Olvera, 2024). Therefore, the arrangement of merchants based on economic zones should be positioned as an effort to improve the quality of public services, not simply a matter of regulating business locations.

Based on these conditions, this community service activity is designed to support efforts to organize traders based on economic zones in Gowa Regency through a collaborative and participatory approach. This activity aims to increase understanding of traders and local stakeholders regarding the importance of economic zoning, while also encouraging the creation of more accessible and comfortable trading areas for consumers. By integrating aspects of spatial planning, trader empowerment, and improving the quality of public services, this activity is expected to become a model for sustainable planning and relevant to the local socio-economic characteristics of Gowa Regency.

A number of other community service activities also reinforce the relevance and novelty of the economic zone-based trader management program. First, the community service activities carried out by Suryanto and Lestari (2021) Research on the arrangement of street vendors based on thematic areas shows that grouping vendors based on commodity type can increase the attractiveness of the area and make it easier for consumers to access products. Second, the mentoring program Rahman, et al (2022) Focusing on the integration of spatial planning and environmental hygiene education, the program demonstrated increased consumer comfort and a positive image of the traditional trading area. Third, collaborative policy-based community service activities implemented by Wulandari and Nugroho (2023) emphasized that synergy between local governments, academics, and the trading community was effective in reducing social conflict during the restructuring and relocation process. Fourth, the latest community service study by Santoso and Kurniawan (2025) regarding the arrangement of micro traders based on urban accessibility shows that the design of economic zones that pay attention to pedestrian paths and public transportation connectivity can increase the frequency of consumer visits and the sustainability of small trader businesses.

In addition to the community service activities described above, several other community service activities further reinforce the urgency of economic zone-based vendor management. The community service activities conducted by Firmansyah and Yuliana (2021) on street vendor management based on public space revitalization demonstrated that management coupled with the provision of basic facilities can improve area order while maintaining vendor income. Furthermore, the community service activities conducted by Hendrawan and Sari (2024), which focused on assisting micro-vendor management through a community-based approach, demonstrated that vendor involvement in decision-making contributes to increased compliance and sustainability of the management program. The findings of both activities confirm that the success of vendor management is strongly influenced by the integration of spatial management, facility provision, and a participatory approach oriented toward local needs.



Figure 1: Community Service Team Discussing with the Community

Based on the description above and the reinforcement from previous community service activities, it can be concluded that the arrangement of traders in Gowa Regency requires an approach that emphasizes not only spatial order but also improving the quality of public services and the economic sustainability of traders. Therefore, this community service activity is aimed at integrating

economic zone-based trader arrangement with aspects of accessibility, consumer convenience, and participatory business empowerment. The novelty of this activity lies in the application *adaptive economic zone* Designed based on mapping consumer behavior and local characteristics of Gowa Regency, combined with managerial assistance and a joint evaluation mechanism between traders, the community, and the local government. This approach is expected to produce a contextual, replicable, and sustainable planning model, while strengthening the function of public spaces as centers of inclusive and consumer-friendly community economic activity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Economic Zoning in Trader Arrangement

Economic zoning theory emphasizes the regulation of economic activity based on spatial function, commodity type, and consumer movement patterns to create order and efficiency in public spaces. In the context of informal traders, zoning serves as an instrument to reduce spatial conflicts while increasing the attractiveness of trade areas. Community service activity by Suryanto and Lestari (2021) This proves that thematic-based zoning can increase consumer access. Similar findings were confirmed by Santoso and Kurniawan (2025). which shows that urban accessibility-based zoning contributes to the sustainability of micro-trader businesses.

Accessibility and Consumer Convenience

Accessibility theory states that ease of access, transportation connectivity, and the quality of pedestrian paths significantly influence the frequency of consumer visits. Consumer comfort is influenced not only by price and product availability, but also by the physical environment and cleanliness of the retail area. A community service program by Rahman et al. (2022) demonstrated that integrating spatial planning and hygiene education improved consumer perceptions of comfort. This aligns with the findings of Santoso and Kurniawan (2025), who confirmed that improved pedestrian access impacts visit frequency and consumer loyalty.

Collaboration and Empowerment in Community Service

Collaboration theory emphasizes the importance of synergy between government, academics, and target communities for the success of community service programs. This approach allows for policy development to be not only top-down but also participatory and sustainable. The community service conducted by Wulandari and Nugroho (2023) demonstrated that collaborative policies can reduce social conflict during the restructuring and relocation of vendors. Meanwhile, Rahman et al. (2022) confirmed that active vendor involvement in education and planning increases compliance and the success of restructuring programs.

METHOD AND PROCEDURES

This method and procedure section explains the approach, stages and mechanisms for implementing community service activities which were carried out for one month. November 2025 This description provides a systematic overview of the process of organizing traders based on economic zones to improve accessibility and consumer convenience in Gowa Regency.

1. Approach and Activity Design

This community service activity uses a participatory and collaborative approach, with a design *community-based action*. This approach positions traders as the primary subjects of activity, not merely objects of policy, ensuring that the economic zone-based restructuring process is accepted and implemented sustainably. Collaboration is carried out between the community service team, local government, village officials, and the trader community to create synergy between academic aspects, policy, and field needs.

2. Preparation and Problem Identification Stage

The initial phase of the activity focused on administrative preparation and initial mapping of field conditions. The community service team coordinated with relevant agencies to obtain institutional support and baseline data on the location and distribution of vendors. Field observations were then conducted to identify key issues, such as stall density, pedestrian access barriers, cleanliness, and customer visit patterns. Focus group discussions (FGDs) with vendors and the surrounding community were used to elicit aspirations and perceptions regarding the need for arrangement and customer comfort.

3. Economic Zoning Design

Based on the identification results, the next stage is designing economic zones. The zoning is structured by considering commodity types, location characteristics, intensity of economic activity, and the function of public spaces. This process is carried out in a participatory manner through discussions with traders to reach agreement on stall placement, customer circulation flow, and use of public facilities. The zoning design results serve as the basis for developing a vendor arrangement model that is adaptive and contextual to the conditions of Gowa Regency.

4. Implementation of Mentoring and Education

The implementation phase includes outreach activities and direct mentoring for traders. Outreach focuses on understanding the concept of economic zoning, the importance of spatial planning, and its impact on accessibility and consumer comfort. Mentoring is provided through stall arrangement practices, environmental cleanliness management, and strengthening customer service attitudes. Furthermore, trader institutions are strengthened by establishing or optimizing trader groups as partners in managing trade areas.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Follow-up

The final stage of the activity is monitoring and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of program implementation. The evaluation is conducted by comparing conditions before and after the restructuring, particularly in terms of accessibility, consumer comfort, and vendor response. Evaluation methods include field observations, brief interviews, and reflective discussions with stakeholders. The evaluation results are formulated into follow-up recommendations and a model for restructuring vendors based on economic zones that can be replicated in other regions.

Table 1

Stages of Community Service Activities for Arranging Traders Based on Economic Zones

No	Activity Stage	Activity Description	Output
1	Preparation & Identification	Coordination, observation, FGD with traders	Map of problems and needs
2	Zoning Design	Participatory development of economic zones	Draft trader zoning model
3	Mentoring & Education	Socialization, stall arrangement, cleanliness education	Organized and educated traders
4	Monitoring & Evaluation	Observation, interviews, evaluative discussions	Recommendations and sustainable models

Source: Results of field activities, 2025

RESULTS

Activity Results

The implementation of this community service activity yielded several tangible results that reflect the effectiveness of the economic zone-based vendor management approach. Results were obtained through field observations, documentation of the management, brief interviews with vendors and consumers, and evaluative discussions with local stakeholders.



Figure 2 Activities Visiting Traders in Gowa Regency

1. Mapping and Determination of Trader Economic Zones

Initial results indicate that the vendor mapping process successfully identified location characteristics, commodity types, and economic activity density. Based on this mapping, vendors were grouped into several economic zones, aligned with the function of public spaces and consumer visitation patterns. The determination of these zones was agreed upon through

discussions with vendors, minimizing potential conflict and increasing acceptance of the restructuring program.

Table 2. Results of Mapping and Determination of Trader Economic Zones

Zone Type	Location Characteristics	Dominant Commodity Types	Number of Traders
Culinary Zone	High traffic area	Food & beverage	28
Daily Zone	Near residential areas	Daily needs	22
Service Zone	Transition area	Small services	10

Source: Primary Data on Community Service Activities, 2025

The table above shows that economic zoning allows for a more organized and functional grouping of vendors. This grouping makes it easier for consumers to find the products they need and creates a more orderly flow of goods within the trading area.

2. Improving Regional Order and Accessibility

Post-restructuring field observations revealed an increase in the orderliness of stall layouts and improved pedestrian accessibility. Circulation routes previously blocked by stalls became more open, facilitating customer movement and increasing a sense of security. Vendors also began implementing spacing between stalls and orienting stalls according to designated zones.

Table 3. Comparison of Area Conditions Before and After Arrangement

Aspect	Before the Activity	After Activity
Pedestrian path	Blocked stall	More open
Stall regularity	Irregular	Arranged according to zones
environmental Hygiene	Low	Increase

Source: Field Observation by Community Service Team, 2025

This comparison shows that economic zone-based planning has a positive impact on the quality of public spaces. Increased accessibility also improves the consumer shopping experience and supports the smooth running of merchant economic activities.

3. Changes in Trader and Consumer Perceptions

The results of brief interviews revealed a positive shift in perceptions among both traders and consumers. Traders reported increased comfort in trading and ease of managing their stalls, while consumers considered the trading area more comfortable, clean, and accessible. This contributed to increased customer visits to several zones.

Table 3. Traders' and Consumers' Perceptions of Area Arrangement

Indicator	Traders (%) Agree	Consumers (%) Agree
More organized area	85	88
Easier access	80	90
Increased comfort	83	92

Source: Interviews with Community Service Respondents, 2025

The table above shows that the majority of respondents felt direct benefits from the restructuring activities. The high level of agreement reflects the success of the participatory approach used in the community service program.

Discussion

1. The Effectiveness of the Economic Zoning Approach in Arranging Traders

The results of the activity indicate that the economic zoning approach is effective in creating order in trading areas without reducing vendor economic activity. Grouping vendors based on commodity type and public space function facilitates consumer product access and reduces overlapping use of space. This finding aligns with community service activities conducted by Suryanto and Lestari (2021), which demonstrated that thematic-based zoning can increase area attractiveness and spatial order. Furthermore, Santoso and Kurniawan (2025) also emphasized that zoning designed with urban accessibility in mind can improve the sustainability of micro-vendor businesses. Thus, economic zoning serves not only as a physical planning tool but also as an adaptive and contextual instrument for strengthening the local economy.

2. Impact of Arrangement on Consumer Accessibility and Convenience

Improving accessibility and consumer comfort was one of the key achievements of this activity. More open pedestrian paths, organized stalls, and a clean environment positively impacted the public's shopping experience. This condition supports the theory that the quality of public spaces influences the intensity and duration of consumer visits. These results align with the work of Rahman, Putri, and Hidayat (2022), who showed that integrating spatial planning and hygiene education can improve consumers' perceptions of comfort in traditional trading areas. Similar findings were also reported by Santoso and Kurniawan (2025), who stated that good accessibility contributes to increased consumer visit frequency. Therefore, the arrangement of merchants based on economic zones has proven relevant as a strategy to improve the quality of public services.

3. The Role of Trader Participation in the Success of Activities

The active participation of traders in all stages of the program is a key factor in the success of this community service program. The involvement of traders from the zoning planning process through evaluation creates a sense of ownership of the results of the restructuring, thus increasing compliance with the mutual agreement. This finding reinforces the results of the community service program by Wulandari and Nugroho (2023), which confirmed that a collaborative approach between academics, government, and traders is effective in reducing social conflict during the restructuring and relocation process. Furthermore, Rahman et al. (2022) also emphasized that involving the target community in education and decision-making enhances the program's sustainability. Thus, a participatory approach has proven more effective than a top-down approach in vendor restructuring activities.

4. Implications for Program Sustainability and Replication

The results of this community service activity have important implications for the sustainability of vendor management in Gowa Regency. The implemented economic zoning model can serve as a prototype for other areas with similar social and economic characteristics. The success of this program aligns with the findings of Suryanto and Lestari (2021), who emphasized

the importance of consistent zoning policies for long-term economic sustainability. Furthermore, Santoso and Kurniawan (2025) highlighted that the sustainability of management is strongly influenced by institutional support and the strengthening of vendor groups. Therefore, synergy between local governments, academics, and vendor communities is a key prerequisite for effective and sustainable replication of economic zone-based management programs.

CONCLUSION

Community service activities related to economic zone-based vendor management in Gowa Regency demonstrated that a participatory and collaborative approach can produce positive changes in the orderliness of trading areas, accessibility, and consumer comfort. The implementation of economic zoning, based on location characteristics and commodity types, has proven effective in reducing overlapping use of public space without hindering vendor economic activity. These results confirm that vendor management does not have to be repressive but can be achieved through mutual agreements that prioritize the empowerment and interests of all parties.

From the vendors' perspective, this activity raised awareness of the importance of orderly stalls, a clean environment, and customer service. The vendors' active participation, from the planning stage through evaluation, fostered a sense of ownership in the results of the reorganization, resulting in a relatively high level of compliance with the agreed-upon zoning guidelines. This demonstrates that the success of the community service program is heavily influenced by the direct involvement of the target community as partners, not simply as recipients.

For consumers and the surrounding community, the economic zone-based arrangement has a tangible impact in the form of a more orderly, safe, and accessible trading environment. Improved pedestrian accessibility and area cleanliness encourage comfortable shopping and have the potential to increase the frequency of visits to the traditional trading area. This impact not only supports the sustainability of traders' businesses but also strengthens the function of public spaces as centers of local social and economic activity. Thus, this activity produces a model for organizing traders based on economic zones that is adaptive, contextual, and has the potential to be replicated in other areas of Gowa Regency. With the support of local government policies, strengthening of trader institutions, and ongoing mentoring, this model is expected to become a long-term solution to improve the quality of public spaces and the economic well-being of the community.

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