Mobile Diet and Calories tracker

By

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A REPORT

SUBMITTED TO

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

BACHELOR OF COMPUTER SCIENCE (HONOURS)

Faculty of Information and Communication Technology
(Kampar Campus)

February 2026

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This Final Year Project proposal is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Computer Science (Honours) at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to my supervisor, Ts Tan Teik Boon, who has given me this bright opportunity to engage in the Mobile Diet and Calories Tracker project. It is my first step to establish a career in mobile app development. A million thanks to you. Finally, I must say thanks to my parents and my family for their love, support, and continuous encouragement throughout the course.

ABSTRACT

This project presents the development of a comprehensive Malaysian Diet Management Mobile Application that aims to improve the accuracy, personalization, and accessibility of dietary tracking for users with various health and fitness goals. The system integrates advanced image recognition technology using the CLIP model to enable users to log meals by simply taking a photo, significantly reducing manual input while providing more accurate calorie and nutrient estimation. A key feature of the application is its ability to deliver condition-specific dietary recommendations for users with medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol. The system also includes personalized meal planning, daily calorie distribution, and intelligent food suggestions based on the user's health profile, dietary preferences, and Malaysian local cuisine. Educational resources on nutrition and healthy eating habits are incorporated to promote long-term behavioral change. The mobile application is developed using Flutter, with Firebase serving as the backend for authentication and real-time data management. A Flask backend powered by the CLIP model handles food image recognition, while nutritional information is retrieved from the USDA FoodData Central database. The combination of these technologies creates a seamless, user-friendly, and intelligent diet management solution tailored for Malaysian users. The project successfully demonstrates how modern technologies such as machine learning and cloud services can be effectively integrated to support healthier dietary habits in a practical and accessible manner.

Area of Study: Mobile Application Development, Machine Learning

Keywords: Diet Management Application, Food Image Recognition, Calorie Tracking, Personalized Nutrition Recommendation, Machine Learning, Flutter Mobile App, Firebase, Malaysian Healthy Diet

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CHAPTER 1

Project Background

1.1 Problem Statement and Motivation

Problem Statement 1 – The system is unable to quickly evaluate the food consumption status after a meal.
Problem Statement 2 – The system lacks the ability to plan meals that suit people suffering from diseases such as diabetes and hypertension.
Problem Statement 3 – Mal-planned and malstructured meals are inadequate.

Motivation

This diet application was conceptualized due to certain shortcomings identified in the currently available diet applications that fail to give personalized and real-time guidance to the user. One of the shortcomings is the inability of the current apps to adjust the intraday calorie limits of users. Patients suffering from diabetes and hypertension require personalized nutrition and diet plans but current automated diet applications fail to address this requirement. This app helps fill the above shortcomings.

1.2 Objectives

This is aimed at building a mobile application for diet management which would help users track and calculate calories by taking pictures of their meals. Users with medical conditions like diabetes and hypertension will have the luxury of the app designing safe condition-specific meal plans. The app will come with an elaborate diet management system that would help users schedule their daily calorie intake with customized meals for their health and fitness goals like

weight loss or exercising. Users will also be provided with information about proper nutrition, fitness and restriction management. Users will be able to get food suggestions depending on their preference.

1.3 Project Scope and Direction

This project focuses on developing a mobile app specifically designed to meet the dietary needs of individuals who prioritize fitness and maintaining a healthy diet. By focusing on a mobile-first approach, the app provides users with a convenient, on-the-go platform that they can easily integrate into their daily routines. The mobile platform ensures that users have immediate access to essential features like nice calorie estimation and personalized meal planning, whether they are at home, at the gym, or dining out. With mobile functionality at its core, the app leverages smartphone capabilities such as camera access for food image recognition, allowing users to quickly estimate the calorie content of their meals without relying on manual input.

The target audience for this app includes individuals who are deeply invested in their fitness journey and those who need to pay close attention to their dietary intake to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Whether users are aiming to build muscle, lose weight, or simply sustain a balanced diet, the app will cater to their unique nutritional needs. By offering tools that help users plan meals, track calories, and receive guidance on foods that align with their health goals, the app becomes a comprehensive solution for people who need to stay on top of their dietary choices. Additionally, the app will focus on educating users about how certain foods impact specific health conditions, ensuring that fitness-conscious individuals and those with special dietary requirements (such as managing diabetes or hypertension) can make informed, health-conscious decisions. The direction of this project is to develop the application into a smarter and more personalized dietary assistant. Besides calorie tracking, the system aims to improve food recognition accuracy through AI integration and provide better meal recommendations based on user health conditions and fitness goals.

In the future, the system can be enhanced with more local food datasets, improved nutrition analysis, and personalized dietary suggestions. This direction allows the application to grow from a simple calorie tracker into a more intelligent nutrition management system.

1.4 Contribution

In our system, there are features that automatically help us to calculate the calories and make us efficient at the same time. In addition to this, we can calculate our daily calories and monitor them according to our workout intensity and goal. We give users alerts in case there are some problems with the food that they consume. Our system can also connect to health information, which will assist the user in controlling his/her diet.

1.5 Report Organization

The report is divided into seven chapters that aim to clearly explain the process of developing the Food Calories Tracker.

In Chapter 1, the project background will be discussed. The topic will include the problem statement, motivation, objectives, scope and direction, contribution, and report organization. In this chapter, the problem that is being faced will be highlighted together with the solution offered.

Chapter 2 will discuss the literature review. In this section, the existing diet management software applications will be mentioned along with their functions and limitations. In addition, this chapter will mention the proposed solution by this project.

Chapter 3 will focus on the methodology employed in this project. In this chapter, the architectural design of the software application and other system designs such as use cases and activities will be explained.

Chapter 4 explains the system design in greater detail. It presents the system block design, system component specifications, and component interaction operations to describe the technical structure of the developed system.

The system implementation will be discussed in Chapter 5. It will include information about hardware configuration, software configuration, configuration of the system, implementation problems, and difficulties encountered while developing the system.
System testing and evaluation is presented in Chapter 6. It will present testing approaches, testing process, and outcomes, as well as discussion of the system performance.
Conclusions are made in Chapter 7. It summarizes the whole project and presents some suggestions for future improvement.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Existing Solutions: Functions of Other Diet Apps

Some of the apps that use such calorie tracking systems in order to assist users in achieving their desired calorie count include MyFitnessPal and Lose It! Such programs allow for logging of foods/ meals via either entering food manually or using a barcode scanner while referencing information contained in an extensive database of generic and branded foods [1]. These programs estimate the caloric value of the foods taken and log total energy intake and expenditures in order to assist users in achieving their required calorie intake per day – whether they are trying to lose weight, maintain their weight, or gain weight [1]. Certain applications go beyond mere calorie counting in that they offer a detailed dietary analysis where users can track their intake of various macronutrients, and even some micronutrients in some cases [1]. In contrast to these programs that aim to automate the process of calorie counting, the Mobile Diet and Calories Tracker uses unbiased technology via Google ML Kit AI image recognition, alongside the USDA FoodData Central API [5][7].

Noom is an application that combines calorie counting with behavioral change methods that can be utilized in psychological treatment using the concept of health coaching and fundamental nutrition to encourage healthy eating practices [2]. In Noom, computers assign calories and nutritional scores to food products and monitor the progress of weight reduction of the user while mentally preparing for switching their diet to obtain high scores [2]. However, for most users, this kind of mental approach is overly simplistic and cannot apply to their health requirements [6]. The current app being developed intends to rectify this through the provision of condition-specific advice for diabetic and hypertensive users [6].

Fitbit and MyPlate give users the ability to organize their meals through planning features for assigning calorie amounts to each meal, which will ensure balance of macronutrients [4]. MyPlate allows users to get a picture of food groups such as fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy [4]. With these features, users can monitor their meals using a calendar or food journaling feature to set portion control goals [4]. Even though the features mentioned above might be helpful in organizing one's meals, when viewed from a more complex perspective, the features might not provide everything needed [4]. The proposed system is supposed to fix this problem through providing an all-inclusive approach for developing personal meal plans [6].

2.2 Limitations of Existing Solutions

However, the calculations on both MyFitnessPal and Lose It! are not very precise because of their flaws [1]. It is very challenging for individuals to accurately measure portion sizes, especially when foods are pre-packaged or out of sight [3]. Furthermore, sources of food are poorly maintained, resulting in inaccurate geographic data [1]. On top of that, the maintenance of dietary logs turns to be very demotivating, hence the term "calorie fatigue," discouraging people from logging diets and other related things [2]. The problem described above is planned to be addressed through the use of Google ML Kit for image recognition technology along with USDA FoodData Central APIs [5][7].

Just like other applications, noom offers a similar kind of instruction with respect to the food you should consume as is offered with respect to other things [2]. These instructions do not take into account hypertension, diabetes, food allergy, or obesity [6]. In case of a diabetic patient, he is probably one of those individuals who are badly impacted because he has to continuously keep counting his carbohydrate intake; hence, he must refrain from using one-size-fits-all recommendations in favor of something practical [6]. This is especially true when there is no specialized application for the task; however, this application is expected to help its users more in the coming years [6].

However, meal planning using Fitbit and Myplate is limited to calorie distribution and the balance between macronutrients which is inadequate for planning and managing nutrition plans [4]. Strict macro planning, such as planning macronutrients for saturated fats reduction for lowering cholesterol or increasing fiber, is also missing from these applications [4]. In addition,

they lack flexibility when it comes to changing the nutrition plan in accordance with current developments, and it is the user who must cope with such difficulties [4]. The planned app intends to include more cyclic dieting options in which users will be offered pre-set meals [6].

2.3 Proposed Solutions

It focuses on the rewards for the users based on their ability to maintain their meal portions through real-time analysis of the composition of the meals [5]. The process is achieved by capturing the photos of the users' meals and through the use of neural networks and image recognition algorithms assigning calorific value of the captured meal [5]. To provide a positive experience for the user, the system gives the rewards related to the calorie consumed by the user, thus ensuring satisfaction [2]. The procrastination problems associated with individuals who eat less meals are addressed by the system since they make it easy to monitor the food intake [1]. It ensures that the individual does not overthink about weight and meal portions since the app uses real-time recognition to determine real-time consumption and calorie portions [5].

It is also possible for people to use the app to calculate and modify health targets such as building muscles or reducing and stabilizing body weight [6]. All these elements help establish the number of calories per day the application will require and apply nutritional theories to produce reliable estimates [1]. Through a direct and uncomplicated presentation format, the app also shows if individuals meet their calorie targets and gives them motivation to follow their diets [2]. The information serves as personal feedback and encourages individuals to incorporate nutritional goals into their healthy lifestyle [6].

It is also aimed at offering educational resources regarding healthy eating habits to ensure that they practice sustainable eating habits [6]. Educational material concerning nutrition, portioning, and balanced meals enables the users to reach their target goals related to health and beyond [6]. It enhances the educational process for the user concerning the issue at hand [6].

CHAPTER 3

SYSTEM METHODOLOGY/APPROACH

METHODS/TECHNOLOGIES INVOLVED

Agile will be implemented due to its flexibility, iteration process, and ability to make quick adjustments according to user needs. The fundamental idea behind the Agile methodology is constant development, which is possible only when tasks are divided into small fragments called sprints.

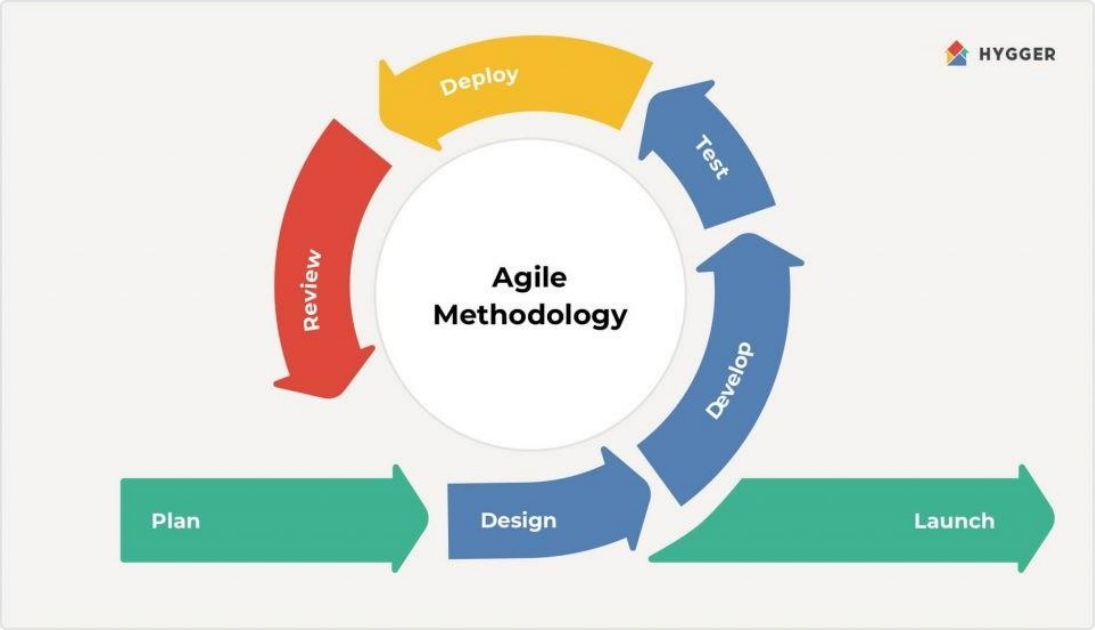


Figure 3 Agile Methodology

3.1.1 System Architecture Diagram

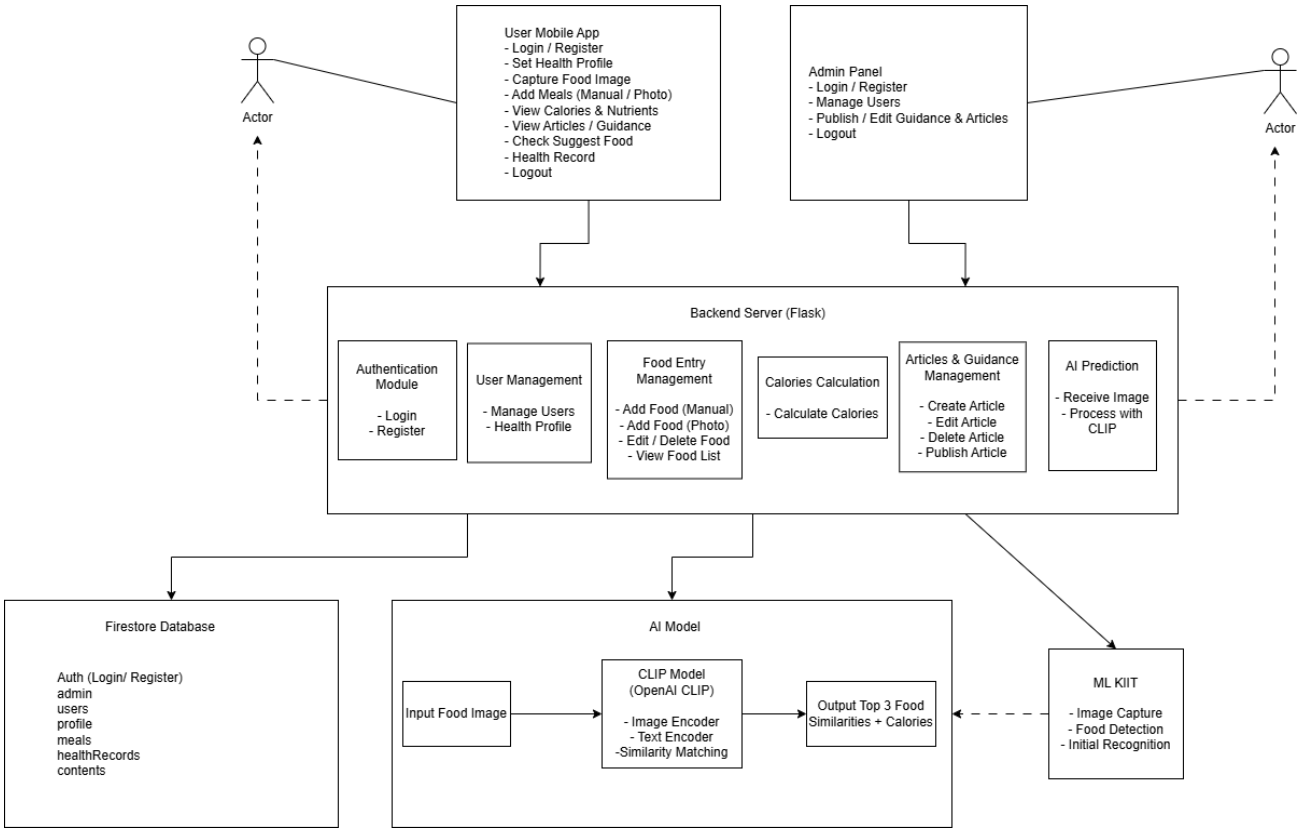
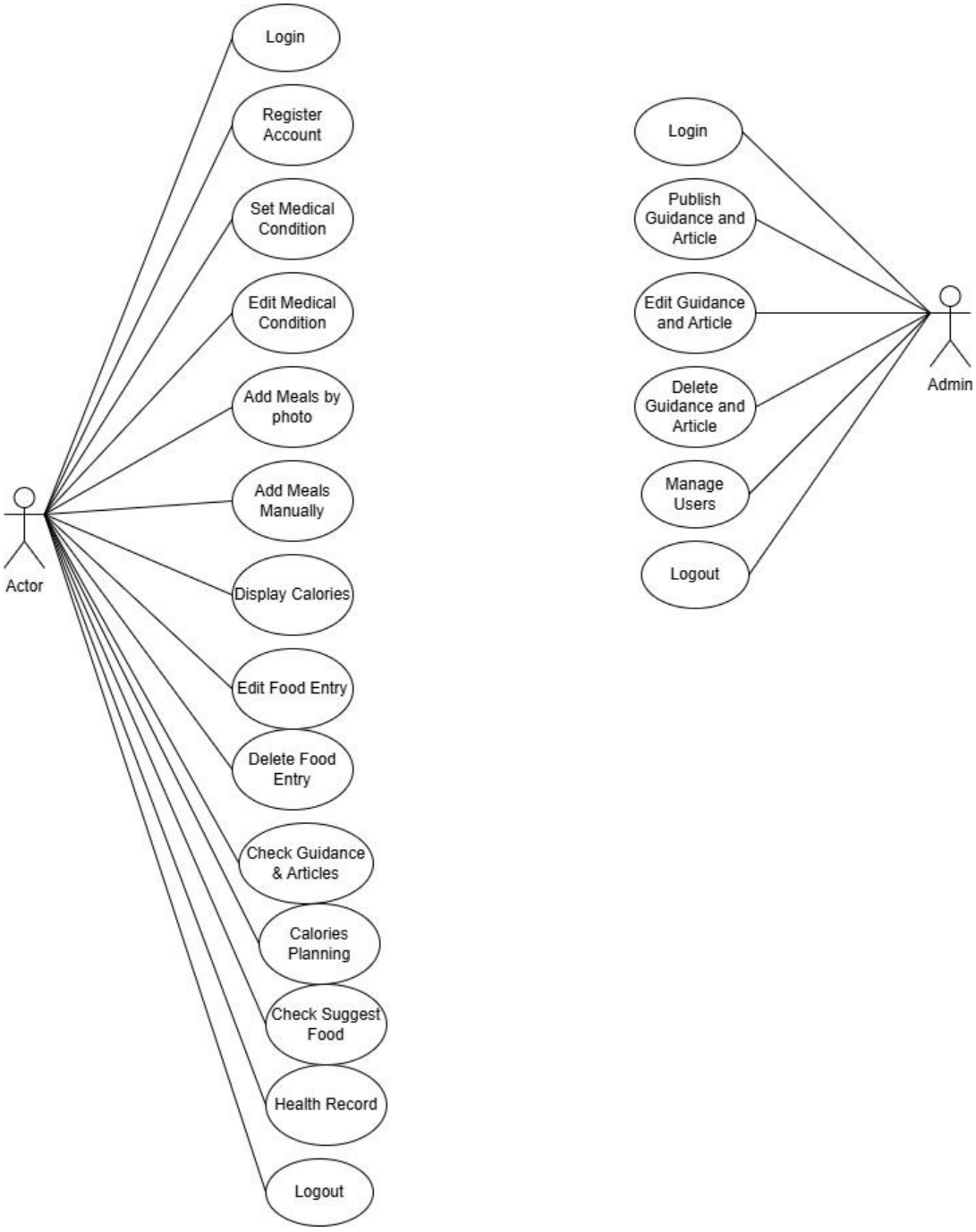


Figure 3.1 System Architecture Diagram

3.1.2 Use Case Diagram and Description



Figures 3.1.2 Use Case Diagram

3.1.2.1 Use Case Description - Login

Use Case ID	UC001	
Use Case	Login	
Purpose	To allow the user to access the system using registered credentials	
Actor	Customer	
Trigger	User selects “Login” option	
Precondition	User has a registered account	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	System displays login form
	2	Customer enters email and password
	3	System validates input format
	4	System verifies credentials
	5	System grants access to the system
	6	System displays main menu
Alternate Flow – Invalid Credentials	3.1	Customer enters incorrect email or password
	3.2	System detects invalid credentials
	3.3	System display error message
Rules		Only registered users can log in

Table 3.1.2.1 Use Case Description - Login

3.1.2.2 Use Case Description - Register Account

Use Case ID	UC002	
Use Case	Register Account	
Purpose	To allow a new user to create an account	
Actor	Customer	
Trigger	Customer selects “Register Account”	
Precondition	Customer is not logged in	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Customer selects “Register Account”
	2	System displays registration form
	3	Customer enters required details (email, password, etc.)
	4	System validates input format
	5	System checks if account already exists
	6	System creates new account
	7	System stores user data in Google Firestore
	8	System displays success message
Alternate Flow – Email Already Exists	5.1	System detects existing email
	5.2	System displays error message “Account already exists”
Rules		Password must meet minimum requirements

Table 3.1.2.2 Use Case Description - Register Account

3.1.2.3 Use Case Description - Set Medical Condition

Use Case ID	UC003	
Use Case	Set Medical Condition	
Purpose	To allow the customer to create their health profile for personalized calorie tracking and recommendations	
Actor	Customer	
Trigger	User selects “Set Medical Condition” option	
Precondition	User is not logged in	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	User selects “Set Medical Condition”
	2	Customer press “Add Condition”
	3	Customer select medical condition
	4	System receive condition and back to profile
Rules		User must complete all required fields of profile

Table 3.1.2.3 Use Case Description -Set Medical Condition

3.1.2.4 Use Case Description - Add Meals by Photo

Use Case ID	UC004	
Use Case	Register Account	
Purpose	To allow the user to capture a food image and estimate calories automatically	
Actor	Customer	
Trigger	Customer selects “Add Meals by Photo” option	
Precondition	- The user is logged in - Camera permission is granted	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Customer selects “Scan Food”
	2	System opens camera interface
	3	Customer captures food image
	4	System processes image using ML Kit
	5	System checks whether food is detected confidently
	6	If detection is not confident, system sends image to backend
	7	Backend performs CLIP prediction
	8	System receives food prediction result
	9	System retrieves calorie information
	10	System displays food name and estimated calories
	11	Customer confirms meal entry
	12	System stores meal record in Firestore
	13	System displays success message

Alternate Flow – Email Already Exists	8.1	System receives low-confidence AI result
	8.2	System displays “Unknown Food”
	8.3	Customer may retry or use manual input
Rules		AI confidence must pass the threshold before calorie estimation

Table 3.1.2.4 Use Case Description - Add Meals by Photo

3.1.2.5 Use Case Description - Add Meals Manually

Use Case ID	UC005	
Use Case	Add Meals Manually	
Purpose	To allow the customer to manually enter meal information	
Actor	Customer	
Trigger	Customer selects “Add Meals”	
Precondition	The user is logged in	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Customer selects “Add Meal”
	2	System displays Add Meal Form
	3	Customer enters required details
	4	Customer press “Save Meal”
Alternate Flow – Invalid Input	3.1	User enters invalid or incomplete meal data
	3.2	System detects invalid input
	3.3	System displays error message “Invalid meal input”
Rules		Meal name and calories are required

Table 3.1.2.5 Use Case Description - Add Meals Manually

3.1.2.6 Use Case Description - Check Guidance & Articles

Use Case ID	UC006	
Use Case	Check Guidance & Articles	
Purpose	To allow the customer to check Guidance & Articles	
Actor	Customer	
Trigger	Customer selects “Guidance”	
Precondition	The user is logged in	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Customer selects “Guidance”
	2	System displays Guidance & Articles
	3	Customer check guidance

Table 3.1.2.6 Use Case Description - Check Guidance & Articles

3.1.2.7 Use Case Description - Calories Planning

Use Case ID	UC007	
Use Case	Calories Planning	
Purpose	To allow the customer to get their calories planning	
Actor	Customer	
Trigger	Customer selects “Calories Planning”	
Precondition	The user is logged in	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Customer selects “Calories Planning”
	2	Customer will require to fill in the information of profile if not exist
	3	Customer click “Save Plan”
Rules		Information Profile must be filled in

Table 3.1.2.7 Use Case Description - Calories Planning

3.1.2.8 Use Case Description - Check Suggest Food

Use Case ID	UC008	
Use Case	Check Suggest Food	
Purpose	To allow the customer to get food suggestion	
Actor	Customer	
Trigger	Customer selects “Suggest Food”	
Precondition	The user is logged in	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Customer select “Food Recommendation”
	2	Customer select “Suggest Food”
	3	Customer select prefer type of pyramid food that there want
	4	System suggest recommendation food for customer
	5	Foods to avoid will provided according to customer medical condition
Rules		Type of pyramid food must be selected

Table 3.1.2.8 Use Case Description - Check Suggest Food

3.1.2.9 Use Case Description - Admin Login

Use Case ID	UC009	
Use Case	Admin Login	
Purpose	To allow the administrator to access the admin panel using valid credentials	
Actor	Admin	
Trigger	Admin selects “Login” option	
Precondition	Admin account exists	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Admin selects “Login as admin”
	2	System displays admin login form
	3	System validates input format
	4	System verifies admin credentials
	5	System grants access to admin panel
	6	System displays admin dashboard
Alternate Flow – Invalid Credentials	5.1	Admin enters incorrect email or password
	5.2	System detects invalid credentials
	5.3	System displays error message “Invalid admin login credentials”
Rules		Only authorized administrators can access the admin panel

Table 3.1.2.9 Use Case Description - Admin Login

3.1.2.10 Use Case Description - Publish Guidance and Article

Use Case ID	UC010	
Use Case	Admin Login	
Purpose	To allow the administrator to create and publish health guidance or article content	
Actor	Admin	
Trigger	Admin selects “Content” option	
Precondition	Admin is logged in	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Admin selects “Content”
	2	Admin press “+” button
	3	Admin fill in all the information and type of content
	4	Admin press the “Create” button
	5	System display Successfull message
Rules		- Article title and content are required - Only authenticated admins can publish articles

Table 3.1.2.10 Use Case Description - Publish Guidance & Articles

3.1.2.11 Use Case Description - Manage Users

Use Case ID	UC011	
Use Case	Manage Users	
Purpose	To allow the administrator to view and manage user accounts	
Actor	Admin	
Trigger	Admin selects “Manage Users” option	
Precondition	Admin is logged in	
Scenario Name	**Step**	**Action**
	1	Admin selects “Users”
	2	Admin click properties on the user that want to operation
	3	Admin can check and modify or block the selected user
	4	System display successful message
Rules		Only authenticated admins can manage users

Table 3.1.2.11 Use Case Description - Manage Users

3.1.3 Activity Diagram

3.1.3.1 Activity Diagram - Set Medical Condition

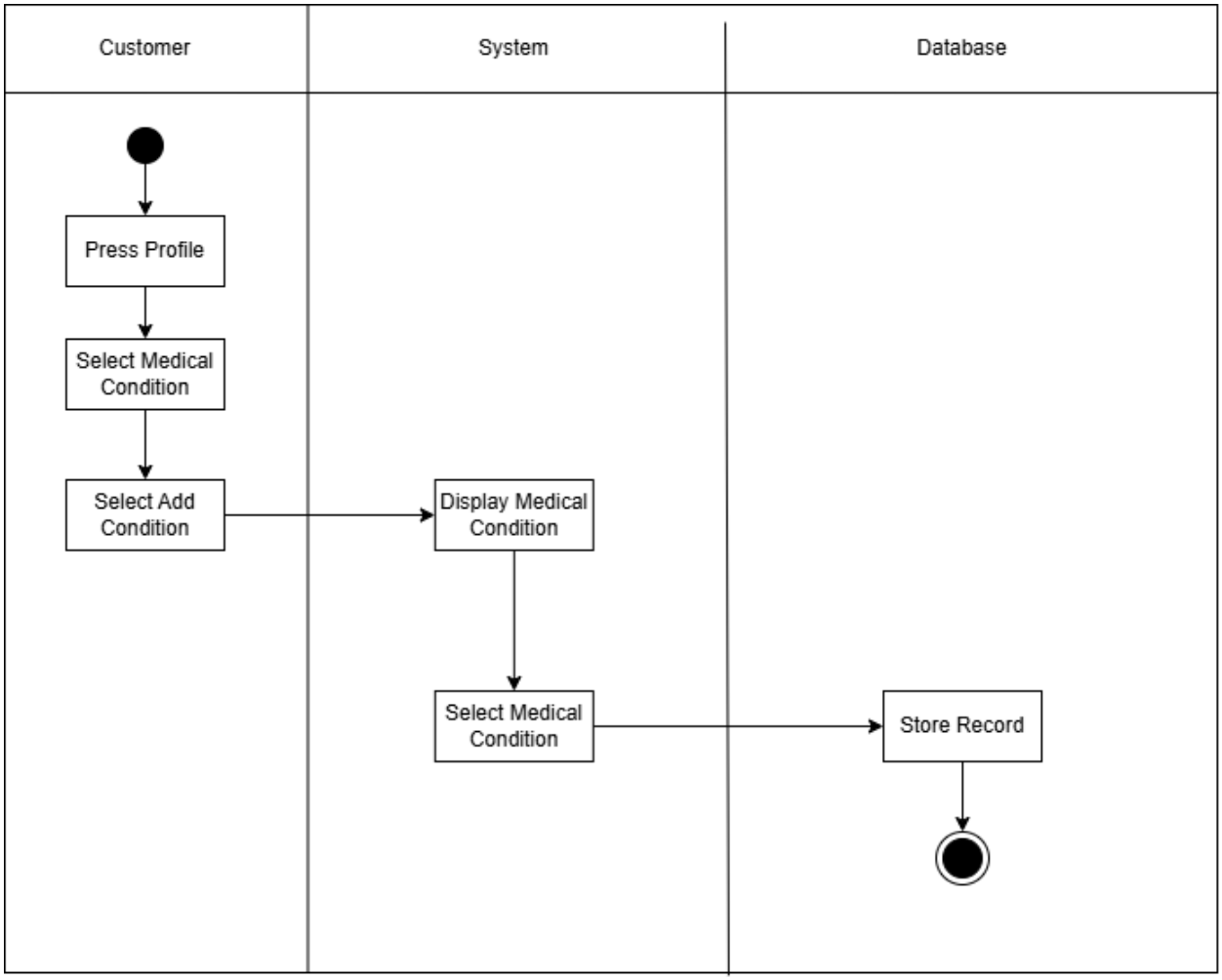


Figure 3.1.3.1 Activity Diagram - Set Medical Condition

3.1.3.2 Activity Diagram - Add Meals by Photo

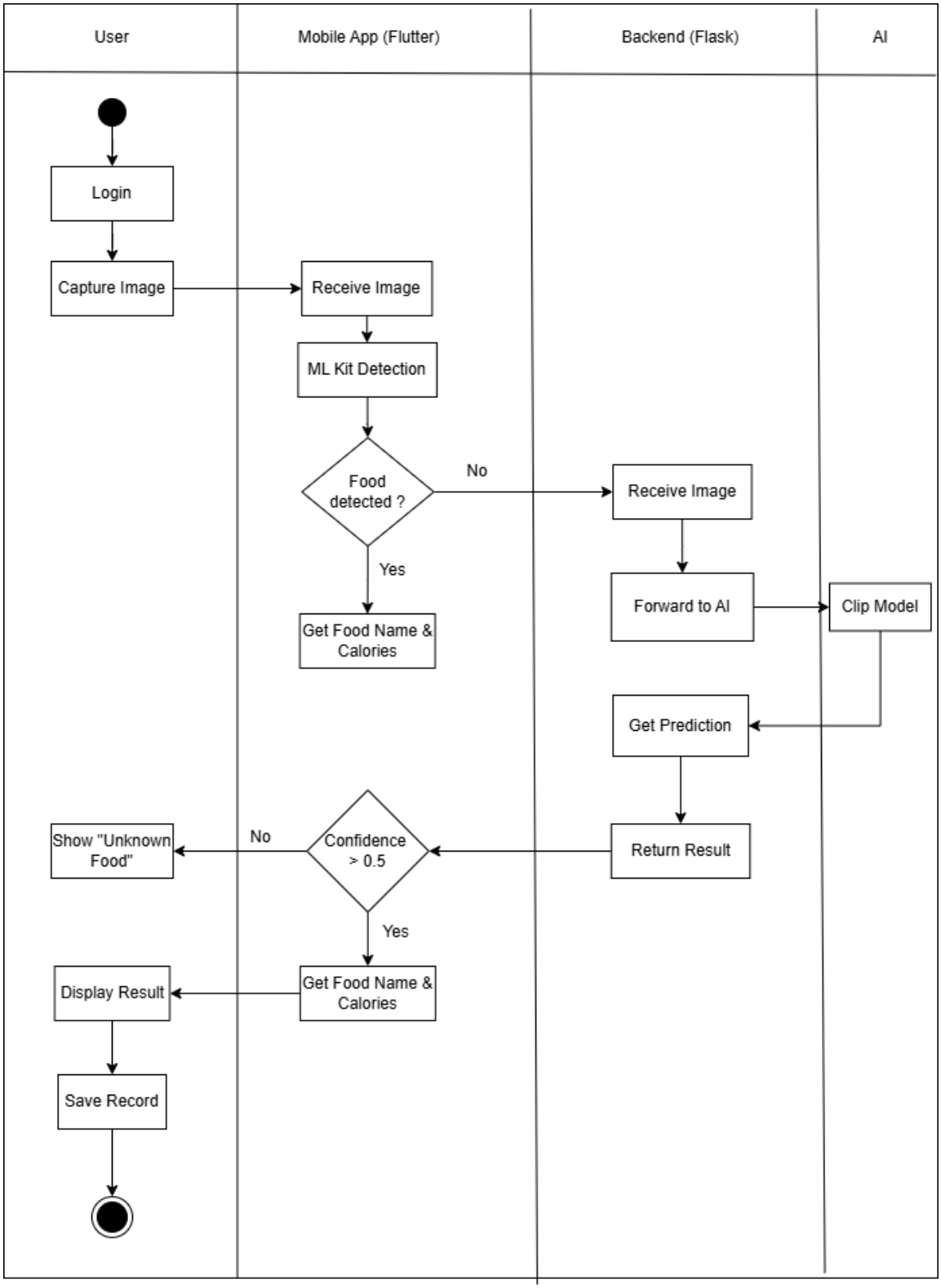


Figure 3.1.3.2 Activity Diagram - Add Meals by Photo

3.1.3.3 Activity Diagram - Add Meals Manually

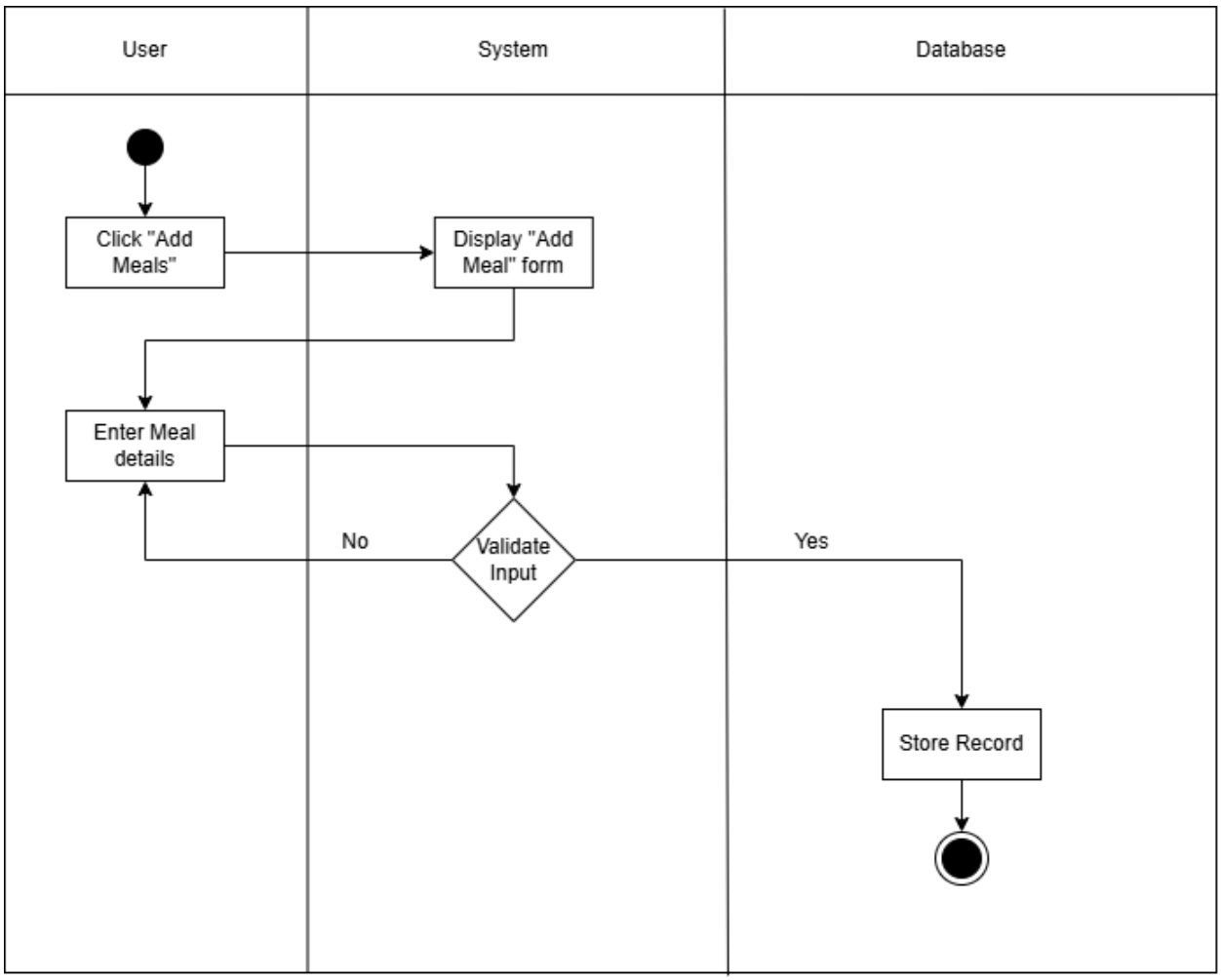


Figure 3.1.3.3 Activity Diagram - Add Meals Manually

3.1.3.4 Activity Diagram - Check Guidance & Articles

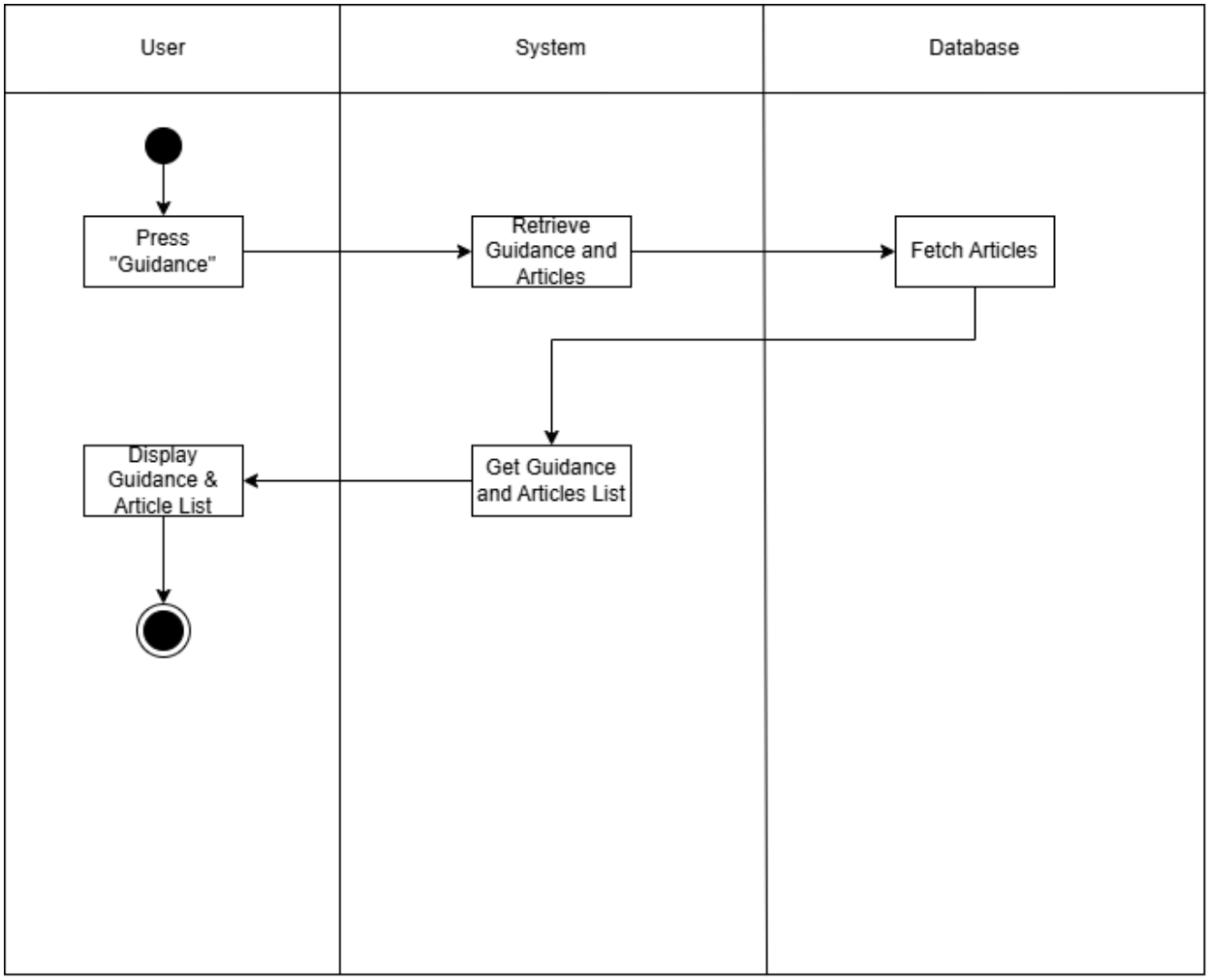


Figure 3.1.3.4 Activity Diagram - Check Guidance & Articles

3.1.3.5 Activity Diagram - Calories Planning

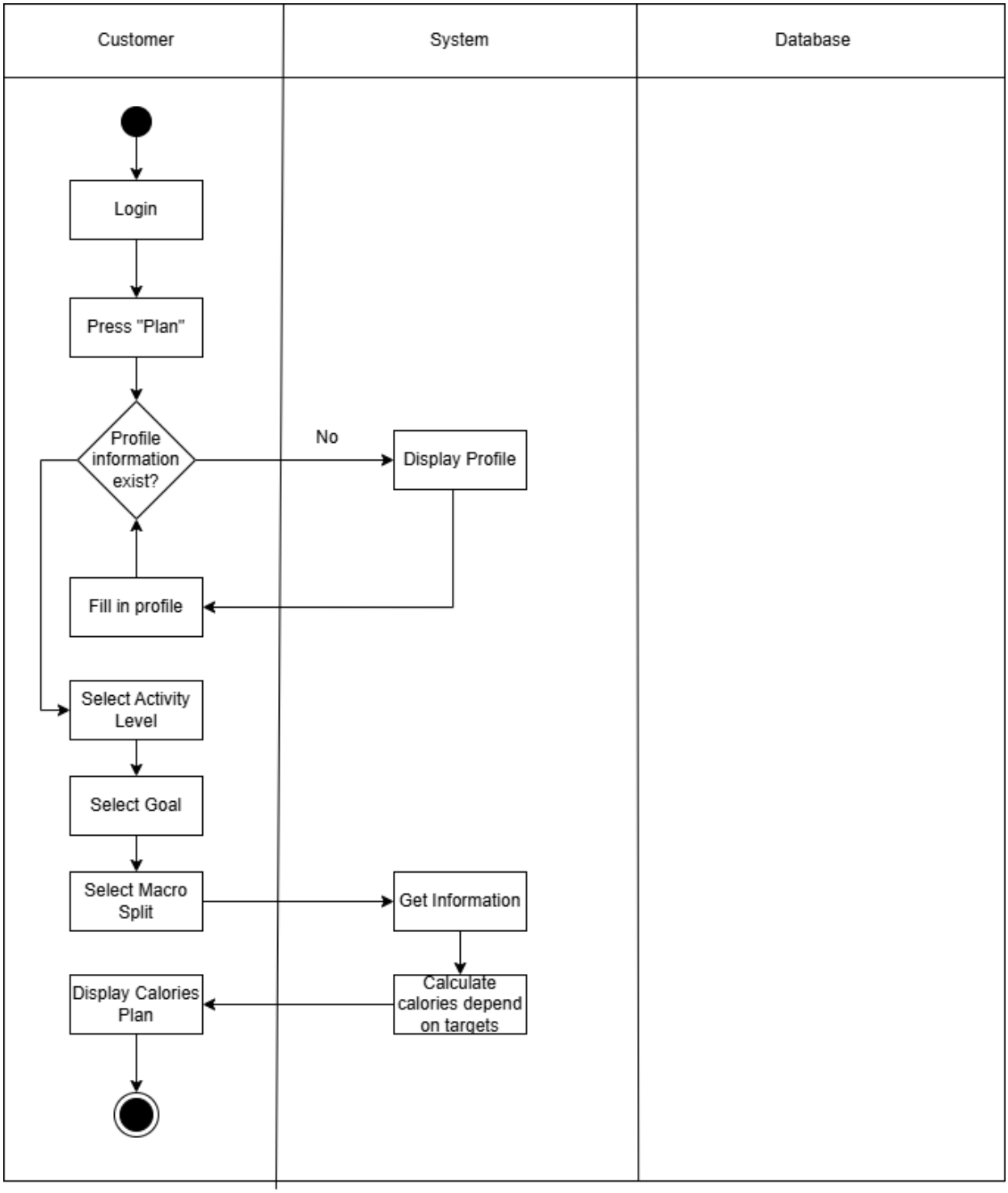


Figure 3.1.3.5 Activity Diagram - Calories Planning

3.1.3.6 Activity Diagram - Publish Guidance and Article

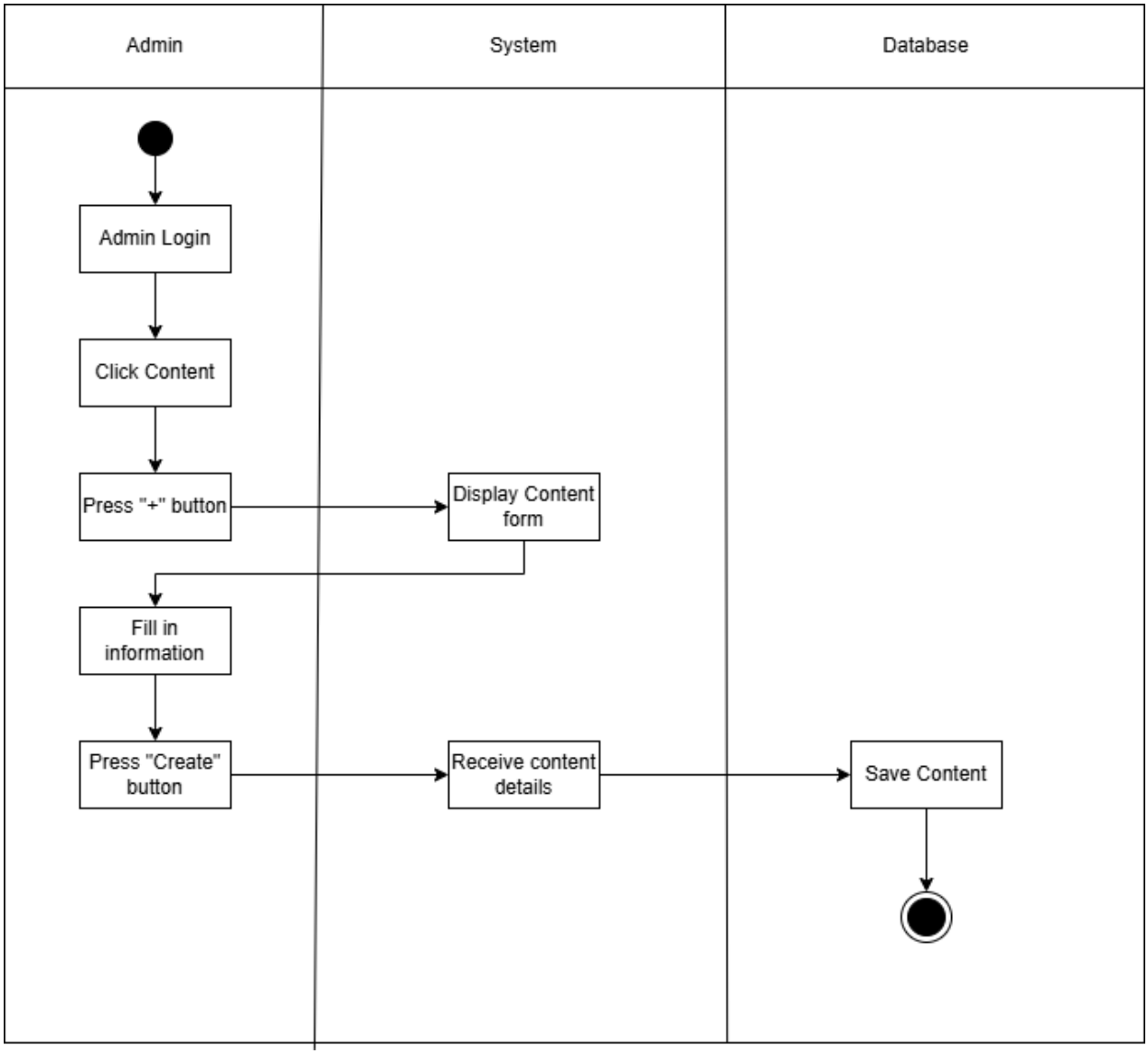


Figure 3.1.3.6 Activity Diagram - Publish Guidance & Articles

3.1.3.7 Activity Diagram - Manage Users

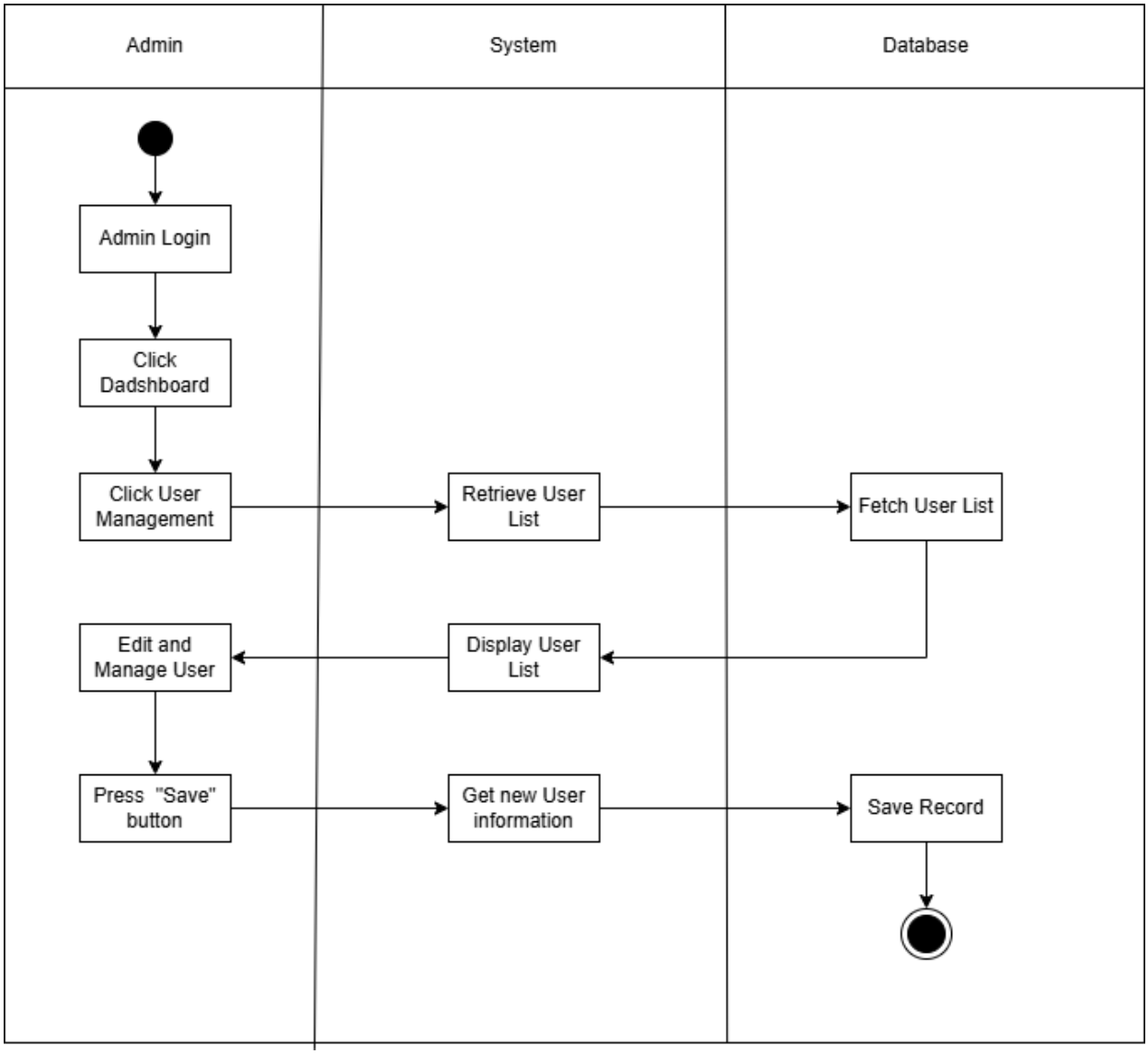


Figure 3.1.3.7 Activity Diagram - Manage Users

CHAPTER 4

SYSTEM DESIGN

4.1 System Block Design

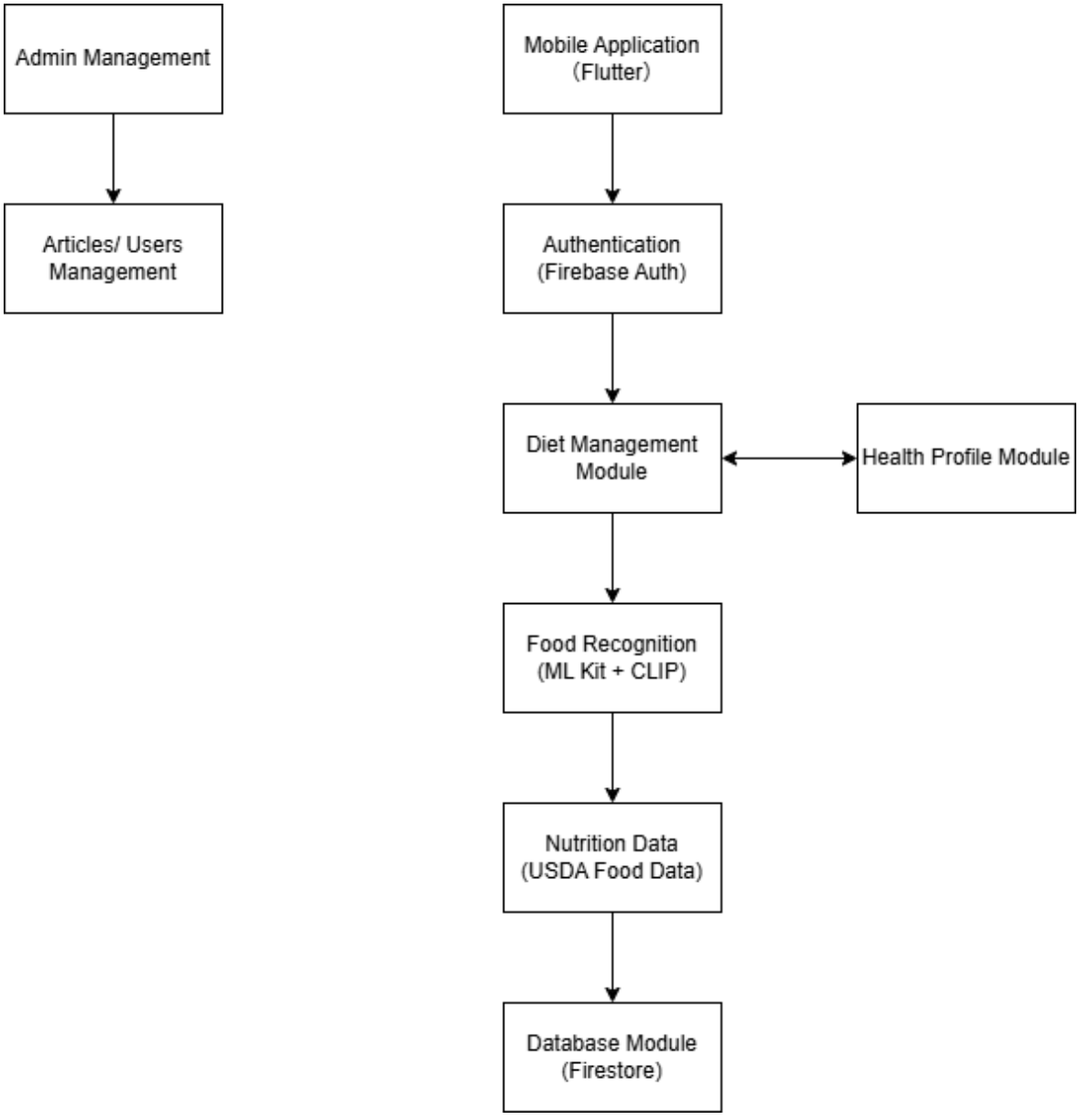


Figure 4.1 System Block Diagram

System block design of the Food Calories Tracker illustrates the high-level structure of the developed application. The system is divided into several major functional blocks, including the mobile application, authentication module, diet management module, health profile module, food recognition module, nutrition data module, database module, and admin management module. Each of the functional units performs a dedicated function and communicates with other units to ensure the functioning of the system as a whole. The modularity concept helps in organizing and improving the system's scalability.

4.2 System Components Specifications

The developed system comprises several major modules that take up different technical roles in facilitating the overall functionality of the Malaysia Food Calories Tracker.

The Mobile Application Module is built on the basis of Flutter framework and works as the front-end of the application. Its responsibility includes user interactions, inputs, navigation between screens, and display of results. The module allows users to access all functionalities provided by both users and administrators.

Authentication Component
It uses Firebase Authentication and is responsible for handling account creation, logging in, logging out, and session management. It controls access to sensitive features such that only registered users and admins have access to them.

The Health Profile Component manages user-specific health information such as medical conditions and dietary preferences. This component enables the system to personalize food suggestions and dietary guidance based on user health conditions.

The Diet Management Component is responsible for handling meal logging, calorie tracking, calorie planning, meal history management, health records, and food suggestion operations. It serves as the main business logic component of the application.

The Food Recognition Component is responsible for recognizing food from meal images. It first performs image recognition using ML Kit on the mobile device. If the confidence level is insufficient, the image is forwarded to the AI backend for further analysis.

The AI Backend Component is implemented using Flask and Python. It receives uploaded food images from the mobile application, performs image classification using the CLIP model, and returns the predicted food label to the frontend.

The Nutrition Data Component is responsible for retrieving nutritional information such as calorie values based on the recognized food label. This component supports calorie estimation for both captured meals and manually entered food records.

The Database Component is implemented using Google Firestore and is responsible for storing user accounts, meal records, health profiles, food history, guidance articles, and administrative content.

4.3 System Components Interaction Operations

The system components interact with one another to support the complete dietary management workflow of the Malaysia Food Calories Tracker. During operation, each component exchanges data with related modules to ensure that user requests are processed correctly and efficiently.

When a user logs into the system, the Mobile Application Component sends the entered credentials to the Authentication Component for validation. Once authenticated, the system grants access and retrieves relevant user information from the Database Component.

When the user captures a food image, the Mobile Application Component sends the image to the Food Recognition Component for analysis. The image is first processed locally using ML Kit. If the recognition confidence is insufficient, the image is forwarded to the AI Backend Component, where the CLIP model performs additional food classification. After the food label is predicted, the result is sent to the Nutrition Data Component to retrieve calorie information. The calculated

calorie result is then returned to the Mobile Application Component and displayed to the user. Once confirmed, the meal record is stored in the Database Component.

When the user adds a meal manually, the Mobile Application Component collects the meal details from user input and sends them directly to the Diet Management Component. The meal data is processed and then stored in the Database Component without requiring image recognition.

When the user accesses food suggestions, the Mobile Application Component sends the selected food preference together with the user's health profile information to the Diet Management Component. The system processes this information and returns suitable food suggestions based on the selected category and health condition.

When the user accesses guidance articles, the Mobile Application Component retrieves article content from the Database Component and displays it through the frontend interface.

For administrative operations, the Mobile Application Component sends admin actions such as article publishing, article editing, and user management requests to the Admin Management Component.

Through these interactions, the system ensures that frontend operations, backend AI processing, data retrieval, and persistent storage work together in a coordinated manner to support the complete dietary management process.

CHAPTER 5

SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Hardware Setup

The mobile application's hardware requirements are modest since the mobile application is supposed to run on regular mobile phones without the use of any special hardware. Nevertheless, the following hardware elements are expected to participate in the application's operation:

Table 4.1 Specifications of laptop

Description	Specification
Model	Rog Strix G15 G512L
Processor	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-10300H CPU @ 2.50GHz 2.50 GHz
Operating System	Windows 10 Home Single Language
Graphic	NVIDIA Geforce GTX 1650 Ti
Memory	16 GB DDR4
Storage	512 GB

Table 4.1 Specifications of laptop

5.2 Software Setup

The primary development environment in my workspace is Android Studio which will be used in developing the Android application. In my Android studio environment, the language that has been set up is Kotlin. The reason why I developed the application using Kotlin was because of its

clarity and the fact that the minimum required devices had to have an API level 21 and above (Android 5.0). Integration of dependencies such as Firebase and Material Design 3 was done with the help of the IDE provided by Android Studio. The implementation of Android Navigation Component was also done through the IDE.

5.2.1 Setting Up Firebase and Firestore

Firebase was used for providing secure user authentication and cloud-based data management functionality. This way, users could create and sign in into their own accounts using password-protected accounts and credentials. Also, the use of Firebase helped store and sync up user profiles and health objectives via its NoSQL cloud-based database called Firestore. Access by using Firestore security rules was granted for users to make sure the data was safely stored. The ability to communicate with Firestore to store and get data and user authentication functionality was provided via Firebase SDK of Kotlin that was implemented into the project via the build.gradle file of Android Studio.

```
rules_version = '2';
service cloud.firestore {
  match /databases/{database}/documents {
    match /profiles/{userId} {
      allow read, write: if request.auth != null && request.auth.uid == userId;
    }

    match /users/{userId}/meals/{mealId} {
      allow read, write: if request.auth != null && request.auth.uid == userId;
    }

    match /users/{userId} {
      allow read, write: if request.auth != null && request.auth.uid == userId;
    }
  }
}
```

Figure 5.2.1 Rules of firestore database

5.2.2 USDA FoodData Central API

Adding the API of USDA FoodData Central added significant improvements to the precision in terms of the nutritional information needed for calculating heater calorie estimation capabilities. In the case, the API was successfully implemented using http requests in Kotlin that the application could use to get the minute nutritional information (e.g., calories, macro-nutrients, among others), analyzed using image recognition, and associated with images. For the implementation of this API, it would only require an API key and setting the endpoints to check for errors in network/data domain. The extra calorie tracking feature from the API maps the food items recognized to the available nutritional information, making the process more precise.

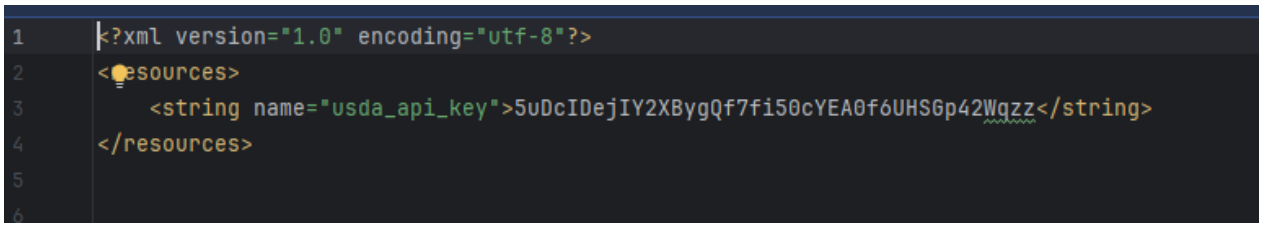
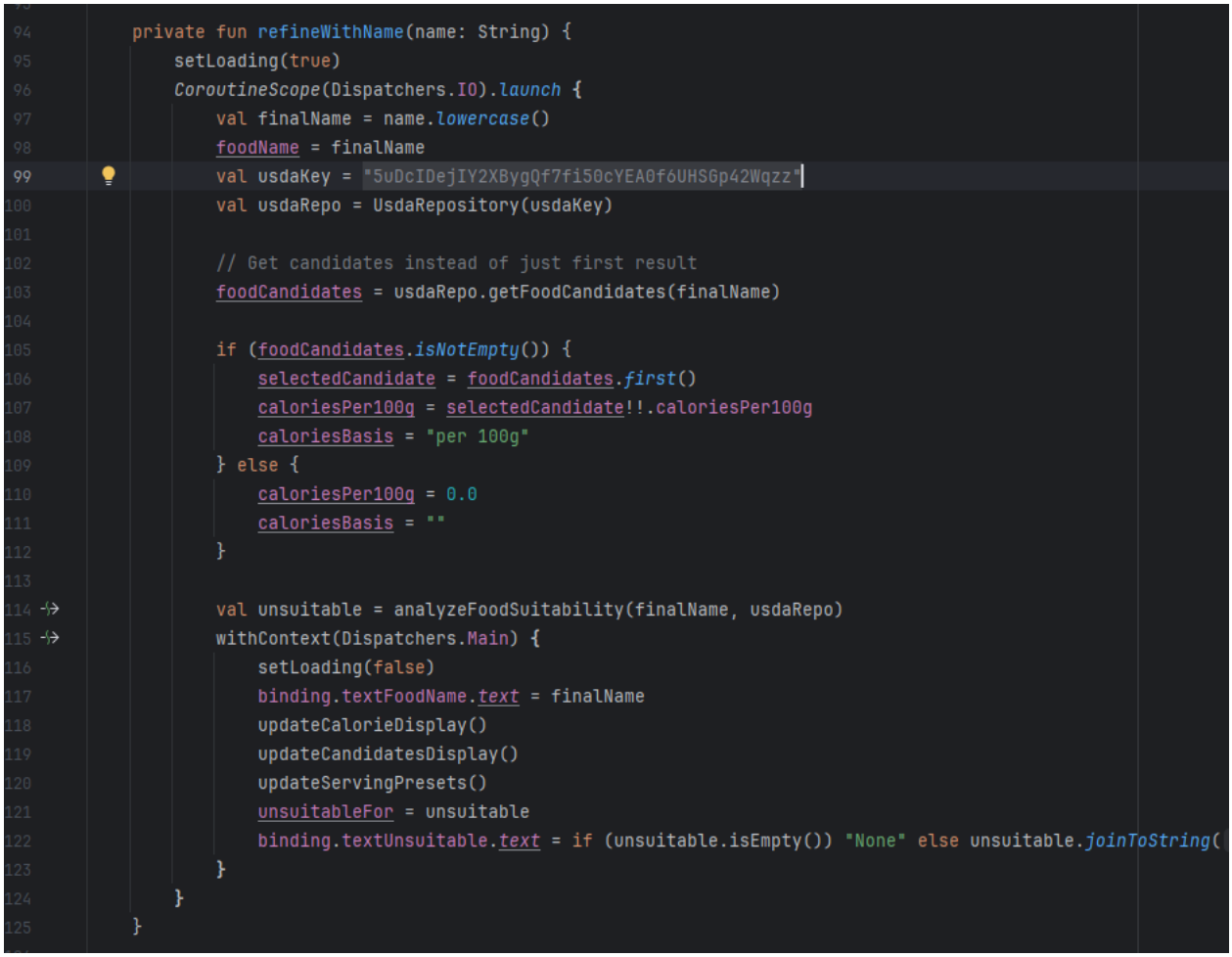


Figure 5.2.2 API Integrate with USDA Food Central



```
94      private fun refineWithName(name: String) {
95          setLoading(true)
96          CoroutineScope(Dispatchers.IO).launch {
97              val finalName = name.lowercase()
98              foodName = finalName
99              val usdaKey = "5uDcIDejIY2XBygQf7fi50cYEA0f6UHSGp42Wqzz"
100             val usdaRepo = UsdaRepository(usdaKey)
101
102             // Get candidates instead of just first result
103             foodCandidates = usdaRepo.getFoodCandidates(finalName)
104
105             if (foodCandidates.isNotEmpty()) {
106                 selectedCandidate = foodCandidates.first()
107                 caloriesPer100g = selectedCandidate!!.caloriesPer100g
108                 caloriesBasis = "per 100g"
109             } else {
110                 caloriesPer100g = 0.0
111                 caloriesBasis = ""
112             }
113
114             val unsuitable = analyzeFoodSuitability(finalName, usdaRepo)
115             withContext(Dispatchers.Main) {
116                 setLoading(false)
117                 binding.textFoodName.text = finalName
118                 updateCalorieDisplay()
119                 updateCandidatesDisplay()
120                 updateServingPresets()
121                 unsuitableFor = unsuitable
122                 binding.textUnsuitable.text = if (unsuitable.isEmpty()) "None" else unsuitable.joinToString(
123             }
124         }
125     }
```

Figure 5.2.2.1 API Call Out And Use

```
private fun analyze() {
    val uri = imageUri ?: return
    setLoading(true)
    CoroutineScope(Dispatchers.IO).launch {
        val mlGuess = runCatching { labelWithMlKit(uri) }.getOrNull()
        val cleanedGuess = normalizeLabel(mlGuess)

        val initialName: String = if (!cleanedGuess.isNullOrBlank()) cleanedGuess else {
            val analyzer = AiFoodAnalyzer()
            val ai = analyzer.analyze(uri)
            if (ai.isSuccess) ai.getOrNull()!!.name else ""
        }

        val finalName = fallbackHeuristics(initialName)
        foodName = finalName

        val usdaKey = "5uDcIDejIY2XBygQf7fi50cYEA0f6UHSGp42Wqzz"
        val usdaRepo = UsdaRepository(usdaKey)

        // Get candidates instead of just first result
        foodCandidates = usdaRepo.getFoodCandidates(finalName)

        if (foodCandidates.isNotEmpty()) {
            selectedCandidate = foodCandidates.first()
            caloriesPer100g = selectedCandidate!!.caloriesPer100g
            caloriesBasis = "per 100g"
        } else {
            caloriesPer100g = 0.0
            caloriesBasis = ""
        }
```

Figure 5.2.2.2 API Call Out And Use

5.2.3 Google ML Kit

AI-powered image recognition technology was introduced using Google ML Kit to determine the number of calories in the meals captured in the user-uploaded photos. In this regard, the ML Kit Vision API was used to conduct food classification through its image labeling and object detection functionalities. It was deployed by importing the ML Kit library into the build.gradle file of the project and implementing on-device image analysis. The model learned to identify

common foods, whose results were then mapped against nutritional information obtained from the USDA FoodData Central API.

```
    // Google Play Services (仅保留基础依赖)
    implementation("com.google.android.gms:play-services-base:18.2.0")

    // Kotlin Coroutines
    implementation("org.jetbrains.kotlinx:kotlinx-coroutines-core:1.7.3")
    implementation("org.jetbrains.kotlinx:kotlinx-coroutines-android:1.7.3")
    implementation("org.jetbrains.kotlinx:kotlinx-coroutines-play-services:1.7.3")

    // ML Kit Image Labeling
    implementation("com.google.mlkit:image-labeling:17.0.7")

    testImplementation(libs.junit)
    androidTestImplementation(libs.androidx.junit)
    androidTestImplementation(libs.androidx.espresso.core)
}
```

Figure 5.2.4 Implementation of ML Kit

5.2.4 Hugging Face and Clip

Hugging Face and CLIP are used in the system to support backend food image recognition for the “Take Meals by Photo” feature. In this project, Hugging Face provides access to the pre-trained CLIP model through the Transformers library, allowing the system to perform food classification without manually training a custom deep learning model from scratch.

CLIP (Contrastive Language–Image Pretraining) is used as the backend image recognition model to classify food images when the initial on-device recognition result is insufficient. The model compares the uploaded meal image against a predefined list of food labels and predicts the most suitable food category based on similarity between image and text representations.

The CLIP model is integrated into the Flask backend using the Hugging Face Transformers library. When a food image is uploaded from the Flutter application, the backend processes the

image and passes it to the CLIP model for prediction. The predicted label is then returned to the frontend for calorie lookup and meal confirmation.

food-ai-backend > server.py

```python
import io
import os
from typing import List, Dict, Any

import torch
from flask import Flask, jsonify, request
from flask_cors import CORS
from PIL import Image, UnidentifiedImageError
from transformers import CLIPModel, CLIPProcessor


APP_HOST = os.getenv("HOST", "0.0.0.0")
APP_PORT = int(os.getenv("PORT", "5000"))
CONFIDENCE_THRESHOLD = float(os.getenv("CONFIDENCE_THRESHOLD", "0.5"))

MODEL_ID = "openai/clip-vit-base-patch32"
```

Figure 5.2.5.1 Implementation of Clip

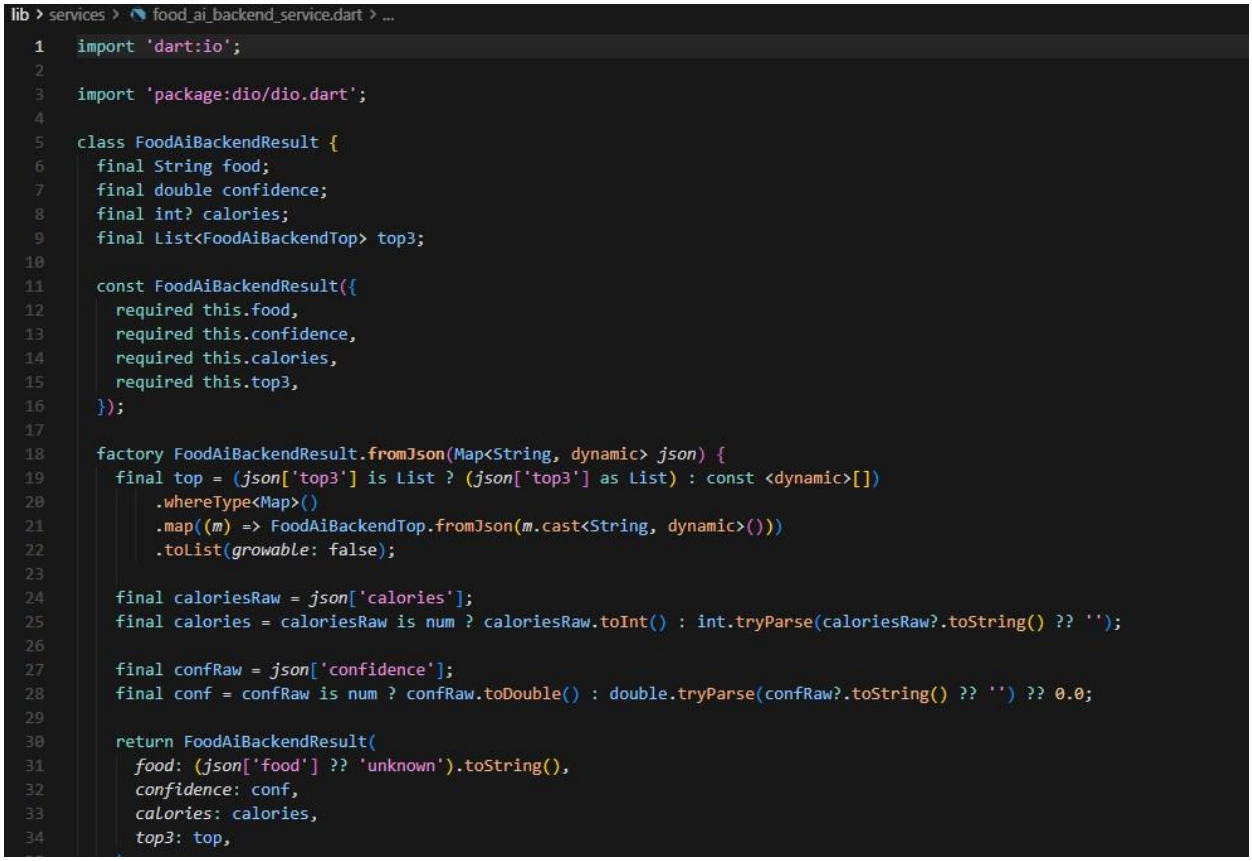


Figure 5.2.5.2 Flutter call out API

5.3 Setting and Configuration

The system configuration began with the setup of the Flutter development environment. Flutter SDK was installed and configured together with Android Studio to support mobile application development and testing. The IDE Android Studio was used for the creation, testing, and execution of the app on emulator as well as real devices. Certain Flutter dependencies that were required for the functionality of the system were included in the pubspec.yaml file. These dependencies included Firebase, Camera, Image, HTTP, and Local State packages.

Firebase was configured as the primary backend service for authentication and cloud data storage. A Firebase project was created and connected to the Flutter application. Firebase Authentication was configured to support user login and registration, while Cloud Firestore was

set up as the main database for storing user records, meal history, health profiles, and content data. To establish the connection between the Flutter application and Firebase services, the google-services.json configuration file was integrated into the Android project.

For AI-based food recognition, a separate backend environment was configured using Python. A dedicated Python environment was prepared to support backend dependencies required for food prediction. Flask was installed and used as the lightweight backend framework to expose API endpoints for food recognition. In addition, the Hugging Face Transformers library was installed to support loading and running the CLIP model[13]. The openai/clip-vit-base-patch32 model was configured in the backend and loaded locally to perform food image classification based on predefined food labels.

To enable communication between the mobile application and the AI backend, API connection settings were configured between Flutter and Flask. The Flutter frontend sends captured food images to the Flask backend through HTTP requests for AI-based prediction. Different API base URLs were configured depending on the testing environment. For Android emulator testing, the localhost connection was mapped using 10.0.2.2, while physical device testing required the use of the local area network. This configuration ensured stable communication between the mobile frontend and backend AI service during development and testing.

5.4 Implementation Issue and Challenges

Several implementation issues and challenges were encountered during the development of the Malaysia Food Calories Tracker. One of the main challenges was the inaccuracy of food recognition when relying only on ML Kit. In many cases, ML Kit returned irrelevant labels such as “hand,” “person,” or “unknown,” which reduced the reliability of food identification, especially for local Malaysian dishes. To improve recognition accuracy, a secondary AI recognition mechanism was introduced using the CLIP model through a Flask backend. When ML Kit failed to provide a confident result, the captured image was sent to the backend for CLIP-based food classification [14].

Another challenge was ensuring accurate calorie estimation after food recognition. Since CLIP only performs food classification and does not provide nutritional values, the system required an additional nutrition source for calorie retrieval. This was addressed by integrating USDA FoodData Central as the nutrition lookup source. After CLIP predicted the food label, the system sent the label to USDA to retrieve calorie-related nutritional information. This improved the overall calorie estimation process by separating food recognition from nutrition retrieval.

Another implementation challenge involved establishing stable communication between the Flutter and the Flask backend during testing. This issue was especially noticeable when switching between Android emulator testing and physical device testing. Different environments required different backend addresses, which initially caused connection failures. This issue was resolved by configuring separate endpoints, using 10.0.2.2 for emulator access and the local LAN IP address for real-device testing.

Database structuring also presented challenges during implementation. Since the system supports both user and admin functionalities, it was necessary to organize Firestore in a way that separates user-specific meal records, health profiles, and administrative content. This issue was resolved by structuring Firestore into organized collections for user data, meal records, health records, and admin-managed content, which improved maintainability and data retrieval efficiency.

Another challenge was the initial loading performance of the CLIP model. During the first execution, the model required downloading and local caching, which increased startup time and storage usage. This issue was reduced by allowing the model to be cached locally after the first run, which significantly improved subsequent response speed. In addition, ensuring consistency between manually entered meal records and AI-generated meal records required a unified data format. This was resolved by standardizing the meal data structure so that all meal records could be processed consistently regardless of their source.

5.5 Concluding Remark

This chapter presented the implementation of the Malaysia Food Calories Tracker, including the system setup, configuration process, and implementation details of the main system components. The system was successfully developed using Flutter for mobile application development, Firebase for authentication and cloud data storage, Flask for backend processing, and AI-based food recognition supported by CLIP and USDA FoodData Central.

During implementation, several technical challenges were encountered, particularly in food recognition accuracy, calorie retrieval, backend communication, and database organization. These issues were addressed by integrating CLIP as a secondary food recognition model, using USDA FoodData Central for nutritional lookup, configuring flexible API endpoints for testing, and organizing Firestore collections more effectively.

CHAPTER 6

SYSTEM EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION

6.1 System Testing and Performance Metrics

The developed system was evaluated through several testing approaches to ensure that all major functions operated correctly and fulfilled the project objectives. Since the system was designed based on user and admin use cases, **Use Case Testing** was applied as the primary testing method to validate whether each functional module performed according to the defined use case diagram and descriptions. This testing approach focused on verifying the correctness of major user and admin interactions such as login, meal tracking, calorie display, health profile management, article viewing, and administrative operations.

As far as Use Case Testing is concerned, Functional Testing has been done to check that every functionality performs its desired task. This includes checking the functionality regarding user input, submitting form, pressing button, navigation process, and data update processes. Integration testing has been done to make sure that communication is established between various parts of the integrated system including Flutter and Firebase, Flutter and Flask backend, CLIP food recognition, USDA nutrition lookup, and Firestore database.

Several performance metrics were used to assess system effectiveness. These included feature completion rate, food recognition accuracy, calorie estimation response time, Firestore data storage success rate, and API response reliability. These metrics were used to evaluate both the functional performance and technical stability of the system.

Use Case	Expected Result	Actual Result	Status
Login	User logs in	Success	Pass

	successfully		
Register Account	New user account created	Success	Pass
Set Medical Condition	Health condition saved	Success	Pass
Edit Medical Condition	Health condition updated	Success	Pass
Add Meals by Photo	Food identified and calories displayed	Success	Pass
Add Meals Manually	Meal saved successfully	Success	Pass
Display Calories	Calories displayed correctly	Success	Pass
Edit Food Entry	Meal record updated	Success	Pass
Delete Food Entry	Meal record deleted	Success	Pass
Check Guidance & Articles	Articles displayed successfully	Success	Pass
Calories Planning	Daily calorie plan generated	Success	Pass
Check Suggest Food	Suggested food displayed	Success	Pass
Health Record	Health history displayed	Success	Pass
Logout	User logged out successfully	Success	Pass
Admin Login	Admin logs in successfully	Success	Pass
Publish Guidance & Articles	Article published successfully	Success	Pass
Edit Guidance & Article	Article updated successfully	Success	Pass
Manage Users	User account	Success	Pass

	managed successfully		
Admin Logout	Admin logged out successfully	Success	Pass

Table 6.1 Use Case Testing Result

Performance Metric	Result
Feature Completion	Successful
Food Recognition Accuracy	Acceptable
Data Storage Reliability	Stable
API Response Reliability	Consistent

Table 6.2 Performance Metrics Result

The results indicate that the system was able to execute all major user and admin functions successfully. Food recognition performance was acceptable for practical use, while backend and database integration remained stable throughout testing.

6.2 Testing Setup and Result

System testing was conducted using an Android mobile device and Android emulator in a controlled testing environment. The frontend application was executed using Flutter, while Firebase Authentication and Cloud Firestore were enabled for user authentication and data storage. Deployment of Flask was done on the local computer to enable CLIP-based food recognition. USDA FoodData Central was used to retrieve nutrition information. The test cases were done from the point of view of both a user and an administrator.

The testing results showed that the developed system functioned as expected across the major user and admin modules. Core functionalities including account login, meal entry, calorie tracking, article viewing, and administrative content management were successfully executed. Most tested use cases achieved the expected outcomes without major failure, indicating that the system was functionally stable and met its intended operational requirements.

6.3 Objectives Evaluation

This system was tested using the objectives stated in chapter one to establish if the set objectives had been achieved. After the testing process, it was evident that the set objectives had been met.

Objective	Evaluation
Develop a mobile diet management application	Achieved
Provide personalized food suggestions	Achieved
Implement a diet management system	Achieved

Table 6.3 Objectives Evaluation

Objective one has been accomplished by creating a mobile application that will help the users take pictures of their meals and identify calories from them. This is done through artificial intelligence-based food identification within the app.

The second objective was achieved by implementing a personalized food suggestion feature. The system allows users to receive food recommendations based on their preferred food category, such as vegetables, meat-based meals, or healthier food options. In addition, the system considers the user's health condition to provide more suitable food suggestions and avoid unsuitable choices.

The third objective was achieved through the implementation of a diet management system that enables users to monitor daily calorie intake, record meal history, and manage food entries. This allows users to better track their dietary habits and align their meal intake with their personal health and fitness goals.

Overall, the evaluation results show that the developed system successfully achieved all defined project objectives and fulfilled the intended purpose of the project.

6.4 Concluding Remark

The developed system was tested using use case-based, functional, integration, and performance testing approaches to verify its correctness, stability, and effectiveness. The testing results showed that the major user and admin functions operated successfully and that the system performed reliably under normal usage conditions.

Integration of mobile calorie tracking, AI-based food recognition, personalized dietary support, and admin content management demonstrated that the system is functional and suitable for practical use. Overall, the testing results confirmed that the developed application is capable of serving as an effective mobile dietary tracking and management solution.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Conclusion

The project gave insights on the development of the Food Calories Tracker, which is a mobile app whose purpose is to assist users with their diets through the management and tracking of their calorie intakes using an advanced technology.

The project was able to fulfill the main functions of the system, such as user authentication, meal tracking, food recognition using images, estimation of calories, managing one's health profile, recommending foods and managing contents as an administrator. By combining Flutter, Firebase, Flask and CLIP along with USDA FoodData Central, the system was able to offer users an efficient way to manage their diet and meals.

In conclusion, the entire process of developing the application was smooth, considering features such as calorie counters, tailored foods, and meal planners. In addition, the consumers of the application will be able to utilize the application as a purposive application in dieting.

7.2 Recommendation

Despite the success of the developed system in achieving its objectives, there are some improvements possible in future. First, even though calorie estimation works well for the most part of the cases, this process is dependent on food label prediction and external nutrition search, which does not necessarily reflect portion size and cooking process of the captured meal. In the future, portion size estimation can be included in the project and used together with nutrition facts for more precise calorie counting.

Secondly, the backend of the current system utilizes local Flask application installation that needs to be manually activated for using the application. In the future, backend deployment on an online server could be considered in order to make the process simpler and more user-friendly.

Moreover, the current food recommendations system is relatively primitive since food suggestions are only generated according to selected food categories and filtered by health conditions. In the future, food recommendations could be improved in terms of personalization by considering user eating history and trends.

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POSTER

MOBILE DIET AND CALORIES TRACKER

Final Year Project 1 | Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman

Introduction

Maintaining a healthy diet can be challenging as many existing apps require time-consuming manual calorie logging and often lack personalized feedback. This project introduces a mobile app that uses AI-powered photo recognition and trusted nutrition data to provide faster, more accurate, and personalized diet management for users.

Methods

The app uses AI-powered image recognition (Google ML Kit) to scan meal photos and estimate calorie content, integrated with USDA FoodData Central API for accurate data. Firebase and Firestore support real-time data storage.

Key Features

- **Photo Scanning**: Capture meal photos to instantly get calorie estimates using AI.
- **Manual Entry**: Allow users to manually input calorie data for flexibility.
- **Daily Needs**: Display daily calorie requirements based on personalized goals.

Results

Users can easily record their calorie intake, manage food distribution, and enjoy a convenient and user-friendly diet management experience.

Technologies

- Kotlin
- Firebase / Firestore
- Google ML Kit
- USDA API
- Material Design 3