

Local Governance and Bureaucratic Reform in Public Policy Perspective: What and How?

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the relationship between local governance and bureaucratic reform from a public policy perspective, focusing on the fundamental questions of what constitutes reform and how it is effectively implemented at the local level. Employing a descriptive qualitative method through literature review and case studies in selected regional governments in Indonesia, this research finds that the success of bureaucratic reform at the local level is strongly influenced by adaptive leadership, active public participation, and institutional capacity to build transparent and accountable systems. The novelty of this study lies in the integration of good governance principles with bureaucratic reform frameworks as a unified approach to improving public sector performance in local governance. Furthermore, this research identifies structural barriers such as weak political will, resistance from bureaucratic actors, and the misalignment between national policies and local needs. The study recommends a contextual approach in designing and implementing bureaucratic reform policies at the local level, including institutional capacity-building, improved vertical and horizontal coordination among government agencies, and enhanced civic engagement in policy supervision and evaluation. The findings contribute theoretically and practically to the discourse on democratic local governance and sustainable bureaucratic reform within the framework of public policy.

I. Introduction

Regional government is one of the main pillars in the implementation of decentralization and democracy in Indonesia (P. et al., 2025). Since the implementation of regional autonomy through Law Number 22 of 1999, which was later refined by Law Number 23 of 2014, regional governments have broader authority in regulating and managing their own households (Nurhayati et al., 2025). The implementation of regional autonomy is expected to improve the quality of public services, strengthen community participation, and accelerate development based on local potential and needs (Otonomi et al., 2025). However, in practice, regional government implementation is inseparable from various classic problems, such as weak governance, corruption, and bureaucratic inefficiency. These problems demonstrate a gap between the legal norms governing regional governance and their implementation in the field.

Bureaucratic reform is one of the strategic agendas to encourage the realization of effective, transparent, and accountable regional government (Mayasari et al., 2025). The Indonesian government has initiated various bureaucratic reform policies since 2004 through the implementation of a merit system, performance evaluations, and organizational restructuring. However, these policies tend to be top-down and often ignore the contextual aspects of regions, so their effectiveness in driving real change at the local level is questionable. Bureaucratic reform in regions faces significant challenges, such as resistance from bureaucratic actors, limited institutional capacity, and weak regional leadership in driving the change agenda (Ansani, 2025). Therefore, it is important to re-examine how bureaucratic reform is developed and implemented within a public policy framework that considers local dynamics.

Good regional governance cannot be separated from the bureaucracy's ability to carry out its service, regulatory, and development functions. The quality of the bureaucracy determines the effectiveness of public policy formulation and implementation, and influences public trust in government institutions (Fransiska et al., 2025). Therefore, bureaucratic reform that is not only administrative but also substantive is a necessity. The substance of reform includes changes in institutional structure, bureaucratic behavior, and the patterns of relationships between government, society, and the private sector (Murdiana, 2025). In this context, the renewal of local governance must be understood not only as a technocratic issue, but also as a complex political and social problem.

The success of bureaucratic reform is largely determined by the characteristics of regional leadership (Yanda et al., 2025). Leaders who have a reformist vision, a commitment to the values of integrity, and skills in building cross-actor coalitions tend to be more successful in driving change in local bureaucracies (Prasetyo & Kurniati, 2025). On the contrary, transactional and short-term oriented leadership actually strengthens the status quo and fosters a culture of patronage. In addition, community participation in the process of

formulating and evaluating public policies is an important factor in strengthening the accountability of local government (I.M et al., 2025). Unfortunately, however, participatory mechanisms in many regions are still ceremonial and have not been able to exert a substantive influence on decision-making. This indicates the need for a new approach to viewing the relationship between local governance and bureaucratic reform.

In public policy practice, it is important to understand that bureaucratic reform is not merely procedural change, but a transformation of values and bureaucratic work culture (Mendra et al., 2025). Reforms that only focus on regulatory adjustments without addressing the aspects of bureaucratic behavior and mindset tend to fail to create sustainable change. Therefore, reform must be linked to efforts to improve governance comprehensively, including transparency, accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency of regional government institutions (Otonomi et al., 2025). A holistic public policy framework is needed to understand the complexities of bureaucratic reform at the local level. This also includes mapping actors, power analysis, and empirical evaluation of policy outcomes.

The gap between national policy and local realities is one of the main causes of the failure of bureaucratic reform in regions. Many regional governments have difficulty adopting reforms created at the central level due to a lack of human resources, supporting infrastructure, and understanding of the policy objectives themselves. Furthermore, a "one-size-fits-all" approach often does not suit the social, economic, and cultural characteristics of specific regions. In some cases, reform policies even create resistance and internal conflict within the bureaucracy. This highlights the importance of a decentralized approach in the bureaucratic reform process.

One aspect often overlooked in regional bureaucratic reform is the need to build institutional capacity sustainably. This capacity includes a responsive organizational structure, competent human resources, a clear performance management system, and information technology that supports public service processes (Prasetyo & Kurniati, 2025). Symbolic bureaucratic reform will not be able to overcome the structural challenges that hinder the efficiency and effectiveness of regional bureaucracy. Without this, bureaucratic transformation will not be able to make a real contribution to improving regional governance.

This research aims to analyze how the implementation of bureaucratic reform is carried out by regional governments from a public policy perspective. In addition, this research also aims to identify the factors that hinder and support the integration of good governance principles into bureaucratic reform policies at the local level. This research examines the extent to which national reform policies can be adapted by regional governments according to local dynamics and capacity. Furthermore, this research is also conducted to understand the roles of key actors such as regional heads, bureaucratic officials, and civil society in supporting or hindering the bureaucratic reform agenda. This research is expected to provide context-based recommendations for

strengthening the implementation of regional bureaucratic reform more effectively, transparently, and accountably.

Based on the background description above, the following research questions are formulated:

1. How is the implementation of bureaucratic reform at the regional government level from a public policy perspective?
2. What are the inhibiting and supporting factors for the integration of good governance principles with bureaucratic reform policies in regional government?

Similar previous research has been widely conducted. The first study by M. Fathu Rikza in the *Public Service and Governance Journal* highlights how regional autonomy should impact the quality of local governance. The research object is several regional governments in Indonesia, using a descriptive qualitative approach that emphasizes document studies and interviews with public officials. The results show that the main obstacles to bureaucratic reform are the weakness of local institutional capacity and the centralistic tendency in national policies. The recommendations include the need for differentiated reform policies based on regional characteristics (Rizka, 2022).

Fitriani Abbas and Anwar Sadat's research, published in the *Jurnal Studi Ilmu Pemerintahan*, investigated the relationship between public service quality and the success of bureaucratic reform in Indonesian regional governments. Employing a qualitative methodology with a case study approach across several regencies/cities, their findings highlighted the crucial roles of local leadership and public participation in determining the effectiveness of reform implementation. The study recommended integrating a public participation-based service model into the structure of bureaucratic reform policies. This suggests that successful bureaucratic reform in Indonesia's regional context requires not only structural changes but also active engagement from local leaders and the citizenry, fostering a collaborative approach to service delivery (Abbas & Sadat, 2020).

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, combining analysis of public policy structures, local leadership characteristics, and regional political dynamics to examine the effectiveness of bureaucratic reform. Unlike previous studies that tended to focus solely on administrative aspects or public service delivery, this research critically highlights how local democratic values and institutional resistance influence the reform process. It also offers an evaluative perspective based on actor mapping and institutional capacity, an area that has not been extensively studied. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of a bottom-up approach in designing bureaucratic reform policies, which have historically been dominated by a top-down approach from the central government. Therefore, this research provides both conceptual and practical contributions to the development of a more contextual and sustainable framework for bureaucratic reform at the regional level.

2. Research Method

This research is a normative legal study that aims to examine bureaucratic reform in regional government from the perspectives of law and public policy. A normative approach is used because the main focus is analyzing the legal norms governing regional governance, including legislation and bureaucratic policies. The methods employed include a statute approach, a conceptual approach, and a comparative legal approach to assess the effectiveness of these norms in their implementation. The study examines the relationship between good governance principles, regulations on regional autonomy, and the implementation of bureaucratic reform policies at the local level.

Data collection is conducted through a literature review, examining various primary and secondary legal sources. Primary sources include Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, Presidential Regulations on Bureaucratic Reform, and other relevant technical regulations. Secondary sources include academic literature, scientific journals, previous research, and opinions from experts in state administrative law. All data is carefully collected to gain a comprehensive understanding of the legal framework governing bureaucratic reform and regional government practices. Official documents from relevant ministries and agencies are also used to strengthen the normative analysis.

Data analysis uses a qualitative descriptive method with an interpretive approach to legal norms. Each norm is analyzed based on the principles of state administrative law and public policy principles such as efficiency, accountability, and participation. The analysis assesses the alignment between the normative goals of bureaucratic reform and the implemented outcomes reflected in various regulations and policy documents. Comparative analysis is also conducted by comparing bureaucratic reform models across several regions as case studies to identify variations in implementation. The analysis aims to provide in-depth legal arguments concerning the relevance and effectiveness of the normative framework in achieving good regional governance.

3. Results and Discussion

Implementation of Bureaucratic Reform at the Regional Government Level in the Perspective of Public Policy

Bureaucratic reform at the regional government level cannot only be interpreted as administrative or procedural changes, but must be understood as an integral part of the public policy cycle. From a public policy perspective, every change initiated by the state or government, including bureaucratic reform, is a response to systematic and structured public problems (Rahmawati, 2025). Reform was born from the need to improve bureaucratic performance so that it can carry out public service, regulatory and development functions more effectively (Dere et al., 2025). Therefore, analysis of bureaucratic reform implementation must be placed within a public policy framework encompassing the formulation, implementation, and evaluation processes. This perspective allows us to assess

whether the reform is designed and implemented rationally, participatorily, and results-oriented.

The public policy theory proposed by Harold D. Lasswell states that public policy is "a project of goals, values, and practices" (Iriawan, 2024). In the context of bureaucratic reform, such policies arise as a rational choice by the state to improve bureaucratic governance deemed corrupt, slow, and unresponsive. However, within the regional framework, this choice becomes complex because it must contend with heterogeneous local realities. Regional governments often face capacity limitations, political resistance, and bureaucratic cultures that are not conducive to change (Wardana & Frinaldi, 2024). It is therefore crucial to examine how bureaucratic reform policies are processed and interpreted at the local level, and how the elements of public policy influence this process.

The elements of public policy consist of problem identification, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation (Muadi et al., 2016). Bureaucratic reform, as a policy, begins with problem identification: the existence of inefficient, unaccountable, and non-public service-oriented regional bureaucracies. Policy formulation is carried out by the central government through the Ministry of PAN-RB (Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform) and is outlined in the national roadmap and derivative regulations such as Presidential Regulations. However, the decision-making and implementation processes at the regional level are not smooth, often being top-down, not context-based, and lacking participation from regional actors. Implementation at the local level requires political commitment from regional heads, organizational capacity, and clear policy instruments. Evaluation of this implementation is often not comprehensive, focusing only on administrative indicators rather than on substantive changes in governance.

Principles of public policy such as efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, fairness, and accountability are important parameters in assessing the success of regional bureaucratic reform (Apriani & Ramadhany, 2025). Efficiency in reform should manifest in a streamlined bureaucracy that responds quickly to public needs; however, in reality, many regions only adjust structures without improving performance. Effectiveness also remains a challenge because reform policies do not produce significant changes in the quality of public services in many areas. The principles of fairness and responsiveness have not been evenly realized due to high capacity disparities between regions, making central government policies difficult to translate in underdeveloped areas. Accountability, as a core principle of good governance, is often not understood as public accountability but only as administrative accountability and reporting to the central government. This indicates that the principles of public policy have not been fully implemented as guidelines in the implementation of regional bureaucratic reform.

Top-down and bottom-up models of public policy implementation provide a framework for understanding why regional bureaucratic reforms often fail. The top-down model explains that implementation failures are caused by weak central instructions, inadequate resources, and inconsistencies between levels of government (Maharaksa et al., 2025). Namun di sisi lain, pendekatan *Bottom-Up*

menunjukkan bahwa aktor implementor di tingkat bawah (*street-level bureaucrats*) memainkan peran besar dalam menentukan hasil kebijakan, sehingga ketidakterlibatan mereka dalam perumusan kebijakan reformasi menjadi masalah utama (Aziz et al., 2020). Successful implementation requires synergy between these two approaches in the form of interactive governance, where all parties—central and regional governments, and civil society—actively participate in policy formulation and implementation. Regional bureaucratic reform will fail if viewed solely as a unilateral administrative process driven by the central government.

Conceptually, public policy should be evidence-based, participatory, and adaptive to the social and political environment (Baskoro, 2024). In practice, bureaucratic reforms in regional areas often prove symbolic, neglecting local needs and lacking robust empirical evidence. This is evident in organizational streamlining efforts implemented uniformly across regions without considering workload, service demands, or local community structures. The consequence is not only ineffectiveness but also potential deterioration of public services due to the elimination of crucial service units. Effective public policy necessitates consideration of local contexts and dynamic adaptation to evolving regional capacities.

From a procedural perspective, bureaucratic reform policies have yet to fully meet the standards of an ideal policy cycle, particularly regarding policy feedback and learning. The lack of mechanisms for incorporating feedback from local stakeholders and lessons learned from past implementations hinders the iterative improvement and refinement of policies. A robust policy cycle would involve continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment based on real-world outcomes and stakeholder input, ensuring that reforms are responsive to evolving needs and challenges. The absence of such a feedback loop contributes to the perpetuation of ineffective and even counterproductive policies (Rio Febriant Rizaldy et al., 2024). Evaluations of bureaucratic reform policy implementation at the regional level have not been systematically used as input for subsequent policy improvements. For example, the Indonesian Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPAN-RB) often sets reform policies based on the central government's administrative logic without comprehensively evaluating their effectiveness on the ground. This demonstrates that the policy learning mechanism, which should be part of the policy cycle, has not yet become ingrained in Indonesia's bureaucratic system. As a result, regional bureaucratic reforms are often reactive, normative, and not oriented toward long-term results.

From a policy capacity perspective, bureaucratic reform also reveals limitations in the institutional capacity of regional governments to implement policies consistently and effectively. This includes shortcomings in human resources, funding, technology, and inter-agency coordination, all of which hinder the successful and sustainable implementation of reform initiatives (Gumilar, 2020). Policy capacity encompasses not only the technical skills of bureaucrats but also analytical capacity, organizational capacity, and political capacity. Many regions remain weak in developing reform planning documents, establishing measurable performance indicators, and managing conflicts between bureaucratic

units. Without adequate policy capacity, public policies will fail at the implementation stage. Therefore, building local capacity must be a central part of the national bureaucratic reform strategy.

In public policy theory, effective policies emerge from the interaction of various actors, including government, civil society, academics, and the private sector. A collaborative and participatory approach is crucial for developing policies that are responsive to local needs and sustainable in the long term (Noor et al., 2023). However, in many cases in Indonesia, the bureaucratic reform process is still controlled by bureaucratic elites and lacks substantive public participation. As a result, the policies produced do not reflect the needs of the community and often lack adequate social legitimacy. Therefore, integrating collaborative principles into the policy process is crucial to ensuring that reforms are more inclusive and adaptive.

The Multiple Streams Framework explains that the success of bureaucratic reform is determined by the convergence of the problem stream, the policy stream, and the political stream. The alignment of these three streams—the identification of a pressing problem, the availability of viable policy solutions, and the political will to enact change—is essential for successful reform implementation. A lack of alignment in any of these streams can lead to stalled or ineffective reforms. (Hoefer, 2022). In this context, bureaucratic reform will only succeed if there is a strong awareness of bureaucratic problems (problem recognition), relevant policy solutions (policy alternatives), and supportive political momentum (political will). However, what often happens in regions is a disparity between these three streams. Bureaucratic problems are recognized, but policy solutions are not suitable for local capacity, and the political stream is often filled with the transactional agendas of local elites. The absence of this policy window explains why many bureaucratic reform policies stall at the implementation stage.

Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the implementation of bureaucratic reform at the regional government level, from a public policy perspective, faces various structural and conceptual obstacles. Reform policies have not fully followed the principles of participatory, adaptive, and locally-grounded public policy. The central government still dominates the reform process without considering the complexities of regional policies. In addition, the approach used is more procedural and does not address substantive bureaucratic challenges such as service culture, integrity, and actual efficiency. A public policy perspective requires a change in perspective on reform, shifting from simply reorganizing structures to transforming the values and management systems of regional governments.

Inhibiting and Supporting Factors of Integration of Good Governance Principles with Bureaucratic Reform Policies in Regional Government

Bureaucratic reform is a strategic agenda to create effective, transparent and accountable governance in Indonesia (Maysura, 2025). Since the enactment of Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, regional governments have been granted broader authority to manage government

affairs. However, in practice, regional autonomy has not fully succeeded in promoting the principles of good governance at the local level. The implementation of bureaucratic reform tends to focus solely on administrative procedures, resulting in suboptimal integration of values such as participation, accountability, transparency, and effectiveness. This problem highlights the importance of further investigating the factors that support and hinder the integration of good governance principles in regional bureaucratic reform.

The principles of good governance, according to [Source needed - specify the source of the nine elements], consist of nine key elements: participation, the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision (Pelu et al., 2023). Within the context of bureaucratic reform policies, these principles should serve as both normative and operational foundations for all units of regional government bureaucracy. However, the integration of these principles is often hampered by hierarchical bureaucratic structures and a lack of innovation. Many regional governments implement bureaucratic reform merely to meet assessment indicators from the central government, rather than as an instrument for changing values and work culture. This creates a semblance of reform—formally appearing to progress, yet failing to substantively improve governance quality.

One of the main obstacles to integrating good governance principles into bureaucratic reform is the low institutional capacity at the regional government level. Many regions experience limitations in professional human resources, adaptive organizational structures, and results-based performance management systems. These limitations hinder the implementation of effectiveness and efficiency principles, with bureaucracies often being slow and unable to meet the demands for quick and quality public services. Weak mastery of information technology and a low public service culture pose significant obstacles to integrating e-government systems, which should support transparency and accountability (Hamim et al., 2024).

In addition to capacity limitations, bureaucratic resistance to change is also a crucial impediment. A bureaucratic culture that rejects innovation and tends to maintain the status quo hinders the incorporation of participatory and transparent principles in the policy-making process (Putra et al., 2025). Bureaucratic reform often faces internal institutional resistance because it is perceived as disrupting the comfort and self-interest of civil servants. This is exacerbated by the persistent practice of patronage in local political systems, where bureaucratic positions are often granted based on political connections rather than competence. In this context, integrating the principles of meritocracy and accountability becomes extremely difficult.

Another factor is the weak oversight of bureaucratic reform policy implementation at the regional level. Oversight by the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD), regional inspectorates, and external oversight bodies such as the media and NGOs remains very limited and reactive. Many reform policies fail to achieve their objectives due to a lack of data-driven

monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that are responsive to field dynamics. Internal oversight remains largely administrative and has not yet addressed the substantive aspects of bureaucratic performance (Apriyen et al., 2025). The principles of accountability and transparency in good governance necessitate an open, participatory, and corrective evaluation system.

On the other hand, several supporting factors can encourage the integration of good governance principles into bureaucratic reform policies. One is the strong commitment of regional leadership to the values of integrity and public service. Regional leaders with a reformist vision, an understanding of modern governance, and the ability to build cross-sectoral coalitions tend to be more successful in driving substantial bureaucratic change. Regions with responsive government leaders are able to develop public service practices based on good governance. Transformational leadership is an important parameter in internalizing good governance values into the regional bureaucratic structure.

Another supporting factor is the digitalization of public services through the implementation of an electronic-based government system (SPBE). The adoption of SPBE can significantly enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in government operations, thereby facilitating the integration of good governance principles. However, the success of SPBE implementation depends on factors such as adequate infrastructure, skilled personnel, and a supportive policy environment (Iman et al., n.d.). Information technology allows public service processes to become more transparent, faster, and accessible to all citizens. The implementation of SPBE in several regional governments has increased public satisfaction indices and reduced opportunities for corruption (Hukum et al., 2024). Digitalization also helps strengthen the integration of accountability and efficiency principles through real-time and systematic online reporting. However, this success depends on the readiness of digital infrastructure and the quality of the human resources managing the system.

Public participation is also an important factor in supporting the integration of good governance principles. Regional governments that open up space for participation in policy planning and oversight are more likely to be accountable and responsive to the needs of citizens. This is evident in the participatory planning meeting model (Musrenbang), which, if implemented substantively, can serve as a forum for dialogue between the government and citizens (Razak et al., 2020). Civil society involvement in decision-making can curb the dominance of bureaucratic elites and strengthen social control over reform implementation. Therefore, strengthening public participation mechanisms is key to bureaucratic reform policies aiming to integrate good governance principles.

Open access to public data and information is a crucial indicator of the extent to which transparency has been integrated into bureaucratic reform. Regional governments providing open access to planning documents, budgets, and performance reports are more easily monitored by the public and independent oversight bodies. Unfortunately, in practice, many regions still

lack adequate and integrated information portals, or if they exist, they are merely formalities to meet regulations. The data provided is outdated, difficult to access, or incomplete, hindering evidence-based oversight by citizens. Yet, information transparency is the foundation of public trust and the precursor to accountable governance.

A region's ability to develop and implement evidence-based public policies is crucial for successful bureaucratic reform oriented towards good governance principles (Tsani et al., 2024). Policies developed without a strong data basis are often off-target, inefficient, and risk exacerbating inequalities in public services. Regional governments need to build planning and decision-making systems that utilize accurate data from surveys, performance evaluations, and local community needs. This demonstrates that the principles of effectiveness and efficiency in governance will not be realized without adequate information and data systems. Therefore, strengthening planning and data management units in regional bureaucracies is a strategic step in supporting the integration of good governance principles.

Cross-sector collaboration between regional governments, the business world, academics, and civil society is also a significant supporting factor in integrating good governance principles. Collaborative governance can identify problems more comprehensively and develop joint solutions based on public aspirations. The quadruple helix governance model promotes a more open, adaptive, and innovative policy process by incorporating diverse perspectives (Firmansyah et al., 2022). In some regions, this approach has resulted in more targeted and responsive public service reforms. However, challenges include the limitations of ongoing dialogue forums and the lack of a collaborative work culture among stakeholders.

Consistent and contextually relevant national policy support also plays a vital role in the success of bureaucratic reform in regions. The central government needs to provide a regulatory framework that is not only normative but also adaptive to the differences in capacity and socio-economic conditions between regions. Overly centralized and uniform bureaucratic reforms ignore local diversity and create resistance to implementation. The alignment between central policies and regional needs is crucial to ensure that reforms are not limited to regulations but address real-world challenges. In this regard, the principles of fairness and responsiveness are key benchmarks for successful harmonization of policies across levels of government.

Bureaucratic reform that successfully integrates good governance principles will create a sustainable governance ecosystem oriented towards public value. Regional governments are expected to be not only service providers but also facilitators and protectors of citizens' interests. Bureaucratic reform should not be seen as a purely administrative effort but as a structural and cultural transformation in public governance. If the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness are truly realized, public trust in government will increase and the legitimacy of local democracy will be strengthened. Therefore, the integration of good governance principles

not only supports the success of bureaucratic reform but also strengthens the quality of democracy and regional development as a whole.

4. Conclusion

Bureaucratic reform is a complex public policy process involving numerous actors, interests, and local socio-political contexts. Within a public policy framework, reform should be designed based on the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, participation, and accountability, not merely as a top-down administrative agenda. However, implementation at the regional level is often hampered by limited institutional capacity, weak leadership commitment, and a lack of adaptation to local needs. Top-down implementation models, uncombined with bottom-up approaches, tend to fail in creating substantial reform. Therefore, a participatory, contextual, and responsive public policy approach is crucial to ensuring the success of bureaucratic reform at the regional level.

Integrating good governance values still faces many challenges. Major obstacles include weak bureaucratic capacity, resistance from bureaucratic officials, a work culture unaccommodating to change, and weak oversight and public participation systems. On the other hand, successful integration of good governance principles is strongly supported by reformist leadership commitment, the use of digital technology in public services, and open spaces for public participation in the policy process. Empirical studies show that regions with participatory and transparent governance have stronger reform achievements. This means that good governance principles are not merely supplementary elements but prerequisites for successful bureaucratic reform itself.

Recommendations from this analysis include the need for more contextual, participatory, and evaluation-based bureaucratic reform policy designs. The central government needs to revise its one-size-fits-all approach by providing flexibility and adaptation at the regional level. Improving institutional capacity, investing in information technology, and fostering integrity among regional leaders should be priorities. In addition, strengthening performance-based monitoring and evaluation systems and actively involving civil society can strengthen the integration of good governance principles. Genuine bureaucratic reform can only be achieved through changes in values, structure, and power relations within democratic and accountable regional governance.

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